The Telegraph

4 JANUARY 1998

POST MORTEM

Living in Ivory Tower

No matter how modern we are, we love to take refuge in fantasy and the British monarchy was the most visible update of our fairy tales of yore ('The Royals' November 16). Conceit is a part of the British tradition and so while we hate the royals, we also love them. Perhaps because there is this ring of mystery around them: of high and luxurious living. Things the commoner can never experience, but dream of. And like all fairy tales, this too. will end.

Avijit Chatterjee, Calcutta



The British royalty has remained in our consciousness for long — like a never-ending television soap where viewers go through the ups and downs in the lives of the protagonists. Like all soaps, there was beauty, glamour, romance and scadal in this royal soap.

Aniruddha Saha, Calcutta

In modern times no one can cling to power because of heredity for monarchy contradicts the very concept of people's sovereignty. This is a relic of the past when common man was fed on the opium of religion and divine right. The sooner the world gets rid of this relic of monarchy the better it is. Why should the public pay for the upkeep of a large number of members of a royal family when they are contributing nothing towards society. If the British royalty has continued to survive it is because of the conservatism of the British people. As for scandals, the royals are as much human beings as commoners and they are prone to human weaknesses.

M.S. Quraishy, Calcutta

Save the Tiger

Well done cricketers! That they have come forward to the rescue of the dwindling population of royal Bengal tigers from the cruel hands of poachers is heartening news ('On the Tiger's Trail', December 7).

Why is the Indian captain and Mohammad Azharuddin absent from the campaign? I wish international cricketers like Lara, Donald, Warne and Akram could be roped in for the save-the-tiger campaign.

Cricketers can also come forward in other areas like smoking, child labour and AIDS and help the government and NGOs fight them.

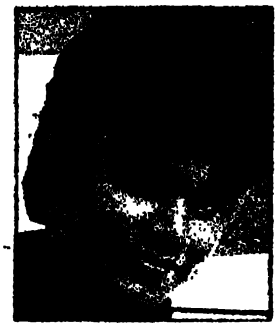
Mili Das, Bihar

It's high time these cash-rich cricketers did something for society. Considering their dismal performance on the field where they tend to fail in all departments of the game and at the same time appear in costly ad campaigns endorsing branded products which in turn glorify them as big time achievers, I think it is time for some self-introspection. They could, at least, lend their name and face to some socially or environmentally useful work.

Tapti Sen, Calcutta

Cricketers are always branding goods and services. It's either sports shoes, or electronic goods or textile companies or pharmaceutical goods. It's time they turned to nature.

Suvra Mukherjee, Howrah



PAGE 4

The Spirit of Independence

Last year, the 50th year of our independence was the buzzword.Everyone was doing something to commemorate it. *The Telegraph Magazine* decided to take a look at all those Indians who displayed the spirit of independence in their personal and professional lives.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

The Greening of Television



Meet the brothers — Nikhil and Niret Alva —who made India's longest-running prime time environment serial; *Living on the Edge*.

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Soni Razdan loves to spend her leisure time reading and sleeping.

Cover: (Clockwise) Sonia Gandhi, A.R. Rahman, Jaya Bachchan, Suneet Varma, Prakash Padukone and Maneka Gandhi

The spirit of Independence

And those who displayed it last year. **Seema Goswami** takes a look

In 1997, the 50th year of our independence from the British colonialists, freedom was the buzzword Everyone from classical musicians to rock and rollers were holding special concerts to herald the event. Leaders from assorted countries dropped in to see how India was doing at the half-century mark And exhibitions and symposiums were the order of the day But amidst all this self congratulation, there were many Indians who displayed the spirit of independence in their own personal and professional lives **The Telegraph**



Jayalalitha

Magazine *decided to take a look — and these are some of the names that we came up with*

POLITICS

Sonia Gandhi

Long may Sitaram Kesri plead, and Congress workers may spend even longer time working up a sweat outside her residence (doing the *bhangra*, what else?), but the Sphinx of 10 Janpath believes in keeping her own council Sure, she will grant an audience to the chosen ones of the party high command and even share a cappucino (just kidding, milky tea is what they really get) with them But prod her on what her political intentions are, and whether she intends to campaign for the Congress, and all you will get is a smile to rival Mona Lisa's in its inscrutability (Really, the Italian references do seem to be piling up!) But then, the second Mrs G realises that all she has going for her is her fiercely independent spirit, which will not allow the khadi-clad lot to manipulate her as they wish Like her famous mother-in-law, she is no *gungi gudiya* (dumb doll), but a woman who knows her own mind — never mind that she doesn't allow anyone else a peek into its recesses

Mani Shankar Aiyar



Jayalalitha

Love her, hate her or even despise her — but there's no way you can ignore the former Tamil Nadu chief minister's tenacity and strength of character This is a woman who has had her blouse ripped off in the state Assembly, been kicked and pinched black and blue when she accompanied her lover, M.G Ramachandran's body at his funeral, been accused of having an unnaturally close relationship with her female aide, Sashikala, and had her house overrun by raiding



Ritu Kumar

parties looking for gold, diamonds and the like. And yet, rather than allow herself to be defeated by this endless persecution (some of it baseless, some not), Jayalalitha remains as indomitable as ever. Not just that, she's actually back in the centre of things, with political parties vying for her support in Tamil Nadu. And poor Sitaram Kesri is having to contend with a full-scale revolt over his failure to align with her AIADMK.

Mani Shankar Aiyar

He's always been a bit of a maverick politician, managing the difficult feat of landing on the losing side in dispute after dispute. But you have to say this for Mani: he never says die. It was Aiyar who first raised the issue of the DMK's complicity in Rajiv Gandhi's death, even though at that time he was dismissed as a babble-rouser. He suffered the ignominy of losing his parliamentary seat in the last elections, despite being one of the few MPs who had actually done good work in that area. And now, when he has a chance of making a comeback, he's raised the banner of revolt against Kesri and ruined whatever slim chance he had of landing a Congress ticket.

But Mani is still smiling; proving that you can't keep a good man down for long.

Mamata Banerjee

She may be a hate object as far as Calcutta's middle class is concerned (because of her propensity to call a *bandh* at the drop of a Gandhi *topi*), but Mamata has the masses — yes, in Marxist West Bengal, they're still called that — eating out of her hand.

But rather than stick to the safety of the party umbrella, Banerjee has stuck her neck and formed her own party, the Trinamool Congress, which she says is the real McCoy.

Reason: she couldn't stand the heavy-handed ways of those in charge of the state unit. And since she is the one who brings the votes in, why should she stand for this nonsense?

Why indeed?

FASHION

Ritu Kumar

Seasons may come and seasons may go, but Ritu Kumar goes on forever. One reason for that may well be that Kumar doesn't follow the trend, but sets one. Everyone else may be dabbling with the fabrics of the season (velvet, crepe, muslin, or whatever they may be) and the cut as laid down in the workrooms of Paris and Milan, but Ritu believes in doing her own

The second Mrs G realises that all she has going for her is her fiercely independent spirit, which will not allow the khadi-clad lot to manipulate her as they wish

Mamata Banerjee





Ayesha Dharker



Madhuri Dixit



Kamalahasan

thing. And given that she has been around for nearly three decades now, it's clear that her vision is what the market is looking for.

What's more, Kumar does all this without the usual hype, hoopla, and the regular fashio shows that most fashion designers would be lost without. In her view, what's important is how her clothes look on real people, not on scrawny models who would probably look gre in bin bags.

Gitanjali Kashyap

In a fashion industry where everyone excells a making loose, shapeless *salwar kameezes* with tent-like silhouettes for ladies who lunch, lunch, lunch and lunch, Gitanjali Kashyap's clothes stand out like a catsuit among a sea of *pyjamas*. Kashyap herself has a figure that mo models would die(t) for, and she makes clothe that make the most of trim waists, long legs and slim hips. And for those with generous (even ample) bosoms, the designer employs darts that hold in even as they emphasise curves.

These are not easy clothes to sell by any means. For one thing, they would need to be altered — even if only minimally — for most clients so that they fit perfectly. And for another, most women with fat wallets are too fat to wear them. All the more reason to commend Kashyap for daring to make them.

Suneet Varma

In a country where most homosexuals cower i the closet, living in mortal fear of being outed Varma is the one man who has had the coura to come right out and say that he is gay. And yet unlike most open homosexuals (think

Sylvie, the hairdresser, and Ashok Row Kavi, self-anointed gay activist) Suneet doesn't make a big deal out of his lifestyle choice.

Not for him dressing in drag with tons of make-up and a hair-piece that would look more in place on a raccoon. Or even thrusting his homosexuality in everyone's faces. Suneet is comfortable with his sexuality, and open about it. But he makes it clear that that's not all there is to him — and that's how it should be.

FILMS

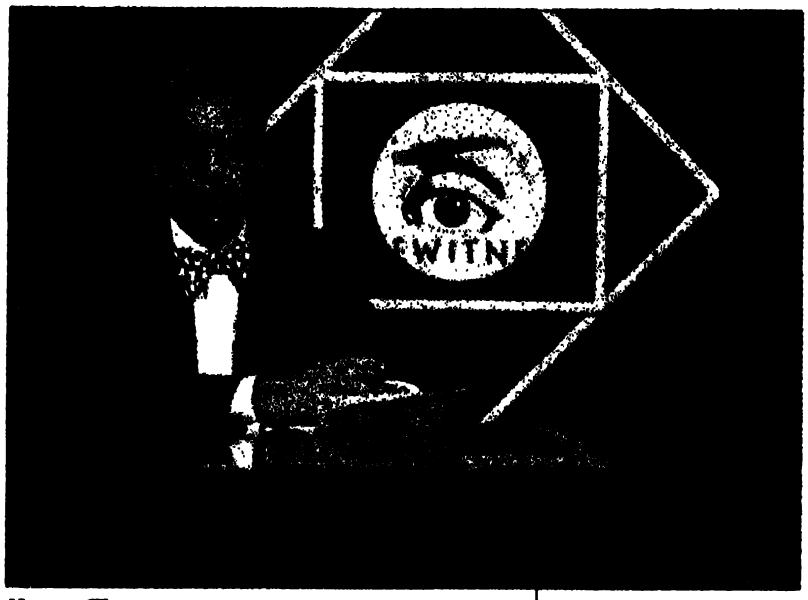
Jaya Bachchan

She may have taken on her husband's name when she got married, but that's only because she doesn't set much store by the usual feminist rubbish (and after all, isn't your maiden name also inherited from another man: your father). But when it comes to the crunch, Jaya Bachchan has always decided what course her life will take. Most people may not agree with her choices (staying at home, looking after the kids, etc.) but the important thing is that these were her *own* decisions.

And now that her kids are all grown up and living their own lives, Jaya has gone back to her first love: acting. But not for her the regulation mother roles, complete with chiffon saris, pearls around the neck, and some discreet greying at the temples. Instead, she is playing the bereaved mother of a revolutionary son who begins to understand him only after he is dead. And there's nobody who could do better justice to this pivotal role in *Hazar Chaurasi Ki Ma.*

Kamalahasan

Sometimes he can take the spirit of independence too far. For instance, when he invited Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of



Karan Thapar

Edinburgh to attend the *mahurat* of his latest film, and then made them listen to an anti-imperialist tirade (thankfully, it was in Tamil, so the Queen had no difficulty in smiling benignly through it).

But then, Kamal has always been a bit of an odd ball. Who else, for instance, would perform a classical dance in a Hindi movie? Or play a dwarf with the help of an American make-up expert? Or, for that matter, dress up as a Tamil *maami* (aunt) in a remake of the Hollywood hit, *Mrs Doubtfire?* Most film heroes would balk at thus ruining their (sex symbol) image; but not Kamalahasan. For him, it's not worth doing unless it's completely off the wall. Only in his case, it works.

Madhuri Dixit

The critics lost no time in writing her off after a couple of box-office turkeys. She was too old, they said, too fat, and too far downhill to ever think of making a comeback.

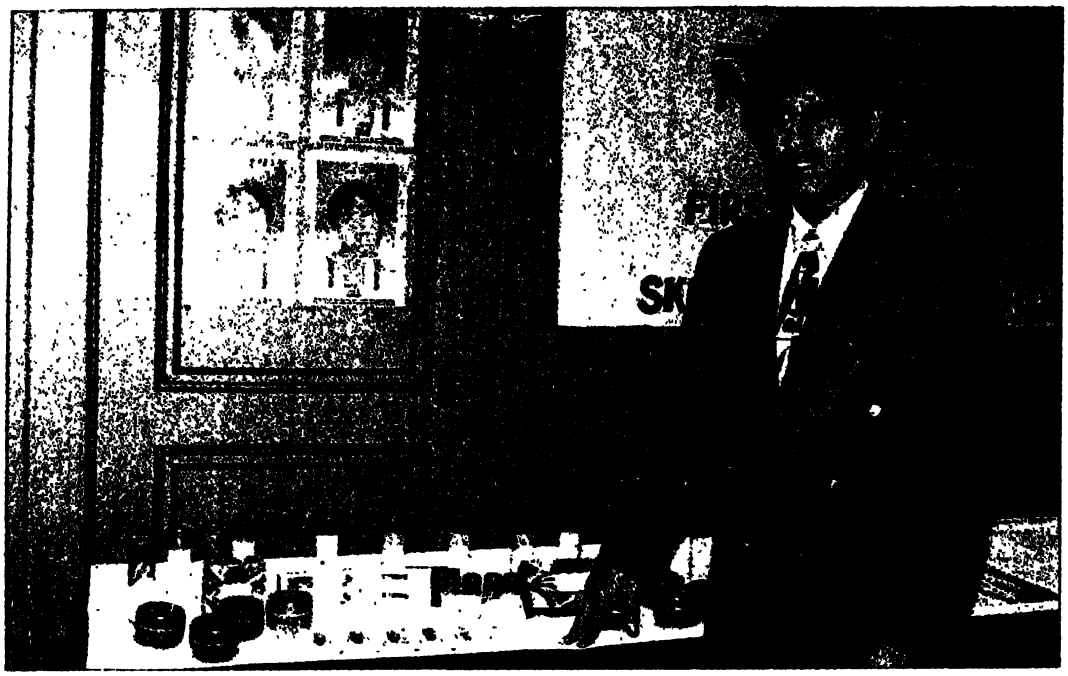
But rather than retaliate by booking in for emergency liposuction, slapping on even more make-up, and going in for an X-rated version of the *Dhak dhak* number, Madhuri decided to show all those sneering souls that there was more to being an actress than the regulation *jhatkas.* So, she washed her face clean of all that gook, put on a simple

Sometimes Kamalahasan can take the spirit of independence too far. For instance, when he invited Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh to attend the *mahurat* of his latest film, and then made them listen to an anti-imperialist tirade (thankfully, it was in Tamil

Ajat Sharma



Rajat Sharma's the man who made Hinglish the lingua franca of television (well, at least Zee Television), and his news broadcasts came as a refreshing change to the ponderous propaganda of Doordarshan



Manoj Prabhakar

cotton *sari* and three-quarter sleeves blouses, and gave the performance of her lifetime in *Mrityudand*

The strategy worked. Dixit is now back in the reckoning, and what's more, she looks better than ever.

TELEVISION

Rajat Sharma

He's the man who made Hinglish the lingua franca of television (well, at least Zee Television), and his news broadcasts came as a refreshing change to the ponderous propaganda of Doordarshan.

But, as they say, all good things must come to an end. And so did Rajat's association with Zee TV — he decided to quit, or was forced out, depending on whose version you choose to believe. But rather than roll over and play dead, Sharma proved that there's life in the old anchor yet. He made the switch-over to Star TV in record time, bringing with him the clone of the programme that he had made famous on Zee TV: *Aap Ki Adalat*.

Karan Thapar

His stint as head of programming at Home TV may have come to an untimely end, but all it proved was that Thapar works best when he is his own master. And now that he no longer has to sit through execrable pilots sent in by hopeful producers, he is excellin at what he is past maste of: quizzing the powerfu on TV. This time, thougl it's not a one on one. Instead, Thapar gets a group of politicians together to discuss the hot topics of the day. Bu as usual, it's hard to faul either his style or his substance.

Maneka Gandhi



Mahesh Bhupati



Maneka Gandhi

Even being dubbed the

Continued on Page 26

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Once again, plenty of movements this week, too. Journeys are possible for either business or pleasure, or both. You also have to deal mounting expenses and will-have a keen desire to expand your spheres of interest. You may let your strong desire for action get full sway and you will impress a lot of people.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



You concentrate on your work, especially the job and employment sector. Try not to display a negative attitude. You may consider working in fields like metaphysics, computer, space technology, social reforms and journalism--the higher plane, in short. You may try a combination of fields.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



You may find your creative abilities and financial status a little short but your faith and determination see you through. Romance, attachments, love affairs add a new flavour to life and you revel in it. For some, there may even be an official engagement leading to marriage. A week full of possibilities.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The doubts and questionings you were recently prey to melt away as your optimism and vision shine through like the sun from behind the clouds. This week gives you just the right combination that leads to outstanding success. You achieve this by displaying your mental capacity.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Your domestic setup or your relationship are revitalised providing new hope for the future and long-term stability. You may be making inner revisions to your personal foundations and position in life. You may even let go of old dependency and establish a home-away-from-home.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Your earlier motivation finds expression in your adopting a new attitude to generating income and spending it. You find a greater ability to see future trends and make ideal use of shared resources. However, a word of caution; avoid unnecessary showdowns or trying to force issues to a conclusion in your favour.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The week holds out concrete hopes of success in your endeavours. There is a chance for a major wish-fulfilment. Something or someone that is important and close to your heart like home, family or older people . This is the time to go for it. You are always an achiever and this trend will persist in the coming month.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



The key word would be reaching out, touching and vibrating, both to people and places. This would lead to many possibilities in human relationship. There will be bonds and partnerships, some contacts that may lead to contracts. You may have to attend social ceremonies including wedding celebrations.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Mercury finds you enjoying some fruits of your earlier endeavours and making fresh attempt, too, in terms of very hard work. You find it quite enjoyable as you reap the benefits. There are happy rewards, ranging from a sense of achievement to more tangible ones like promotions and career prospects.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



After having put your house in order, both literally and metaphorically, you now turn to thoughts of enjoyment, recreation and relaxation. It makes you fun loving, romantic, easy-going, attending parties and appreciating other good things of life. You entertain with flair and enjoy the ambience of society.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



In addition to the family and finances trend, this week will prove to be important for the intangibles that you gain from, in terms of satisfaction and joy, such as pets, creative pursuits and hobbies. Speculation will interest and excite you but be careful not to rely too heavily on others or pursue wrong objectives.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Once again, plenty of movement. Journeys are possible for either business or pleasure, or both. You also have to deal with mounting expenses and have a keen desire to expand your spheres of interest. You may let your strong desire for action get full sway and the force of your personality carries the day.

BIRTHDAYS

January 4 Moon sextile Neptune provides a good mix for artists, chemists, sailors, government employees, painters, poets and astrologers. Change of residence is quite possible.
January 5 Moon conjunction Saturn sextile Mars-Uranus means your self-confidence will swing the pace your way. Therefore be positive and enthusiastic.
January 6 Moon-trine Jupiter-Neptune provides a good luck ratio with you and you should take full advantage of it. Matters related to children, finance and family should prove rewarding.
January 7 Moon-trine Mars-Jupiter-Uranus provides exciting opportunities for you. Therefore practise restraint so you do not go overboard. Success and triumph.
January 8 Moon-trine Mercury-Uranus indicates that changes are possible. Keep your options open. Money and matters in buying-selling.
January 9 Moon-trine Venus spells wedding bells or an engagement is on the cards. If you are dealing in fancy items or involved in showbiz, go round the better.
January 10 Moon-sextile Saturn-trine Uranus says you will go places in every sense of that clichéd phrase. Your creativity will have others in recognising you.
January 11 Moon-trine Mars-Jupiter indicates that with improvement of your skills, you are sure to succeed. Changes in your work and home are favoured.



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The Dance of Discovery

Sarmila Biswas is intent on reviving the Devadasi tradition of dance, says **Anasuya Basu**

She created a ripple in dance circles by bringing in the last of the two living devadasis for her latest production *Sampoorna* — an Odissi recital depicting the life of a Mahari or Devadasi. Sarmila Biswas, believes in going right back to the roots in search of authentic and traditional dance forms. For the greater part of three years, she travelled through Orissa, researching the fundamentals of Odissi and collecting material for her production from the last living proponents of the dance form.

The classical dance of Orissa was much in vogue in the temples till the mid-19th century, particularly in the Jagannatha Temple of Puri, where accomplished dancers performed before the Lord every day and on all festive occasions. These accomplished dancers were none other than the devadasis trained from a tender age and married to the Lord himself. The dedication and spirituality of these women has enriched this classical dance form and now that the devadasi system is to die a natural death there is an attempt — both on the part of individual performers and institutions alike — to imbibe as much as possible in order to preserve this dance form.

The 30-plus, fair and lissome dancer from Bengal, whose interest in Odissi can only be explained in terms of the geographical proximity of the two states, has one factor in common with the devadasis — her complete devotion to the dance form. After a rudimentary training in Manipuri at the Children's Little Theatre, Sarmila started her initial training in Odissi from Murlidharan Majhi. "After I went to college I took a conscious decision to move to Cuttack and live in my guru, Kelucharan Mahapatra's, house,' she says.

The first seeds of Odissi *nritya* was sown in the couple of years she spent with her guruji. "It was just not guruji but the lifestyle, his philosophy and above all the influence of guruma Kalanidhi Narayan, who trained me on the *Satvik Abhinay* (facial and body expression), that formed the foundations of my dance," she says.

Thereafter, Sarmila started out on her-own, giving solo recitals and teaching Odissi at Padatik. But her independent spirit did not allow her to remain under the aegis of an organisation for long. She moved on to form her own institution called the Odissi Vision and Movement Centre. "Odissi dance which exists in the temples of Orissa is an expression of the aesthetic vision of society. My

institute aims to comprehend this vision and express it through its interpretation," explains Sarmila.

Her endeavour was to learn first hand from the devadasis about their lives, their art, their philosophy and their spirituality. Armed with a junior research fellowship from the Ministry of Human Resources and Development of the Government of India, Biswas travelled to Puri in search of the last of these living legends.

"I was very lucky to meet Kokilaprava and Dunguriappa — the two very accomplished devadasis of yesteryear," she says. In fact, Kolilaprava was one of the last *bhitaragayanis* (those few who are allowed to sing in the sanctum sanctorum of the Jagannath Tem-ple) who performed regularly at the nightly rituals when the Lord is put to sleep.



Sarmila Biswas:Trying to revive the ancient rituals of the temple dancers of Orissa

Called *barashringar*, it entailed singing of romantic songs composed of Sanskrit slokas. "Those were the days when devadasis were scholarly and versed in Sanskrit. Dunguriappa, too, was a renowned artist of her times and it was she who had the vision and insight to preserve the art form even after the devadasi system was extinguished. She started Jagannatha Matha — a school for dance and music where both devadasis and girls from the ordinary families could learn Odissi dance and music," says Sarmila, "but the school was ultimately closed because parents refused to send their daughters because of the social stigma that came to be attached with the devadasis."

No wonder then, that the dance form has remained less evolved and developed than its Southern classical counterparts.

It was to rediscover and introduce those long-forgotten *bols, tals* and *mudras* that Biswas undertook a research of the temple dancers. "But while performing in various parts of Orissa there was much criticism of the music accompanying the dances," says Biswas. The use of tabla and violins in traditional dances was unacceptable to the puritans. "I started using pakhawaj and mridanga as percussion instruments in my recitals," says Sarmila.

And her next project, in fact, her pet project for many years is to research the folk musical instruments of Orissa and introduce them in her productions. "I want to use instruments like uttark-handa, ranihati, sancharbandhya — all variations of mridanga. In fact, pakhwaj and mridanga are two very strong instruments that should be used in Odissi recitals," she says.

After *Sampoorna*, Sarmila now waits for another fellowship grant from the government to conduct her research on the rural musical instruments of Orissa. "And may be after a couple of years I would be able to present a new production." ■

EXTRACT

Beauty QUEEN

With rings on her fingers and bells on her toes,
she shall have money wherever she goes.

Extracts from ***Anuradha K Rajivan's*** A Business of her Own

An encounter with Shahnaz grips you like nothing else. It envelopes the senses — the fragrances that pervade the air, the vivid glitter of her trademark robes, her reddish waist-length tresses, the tinkle of rings, chains and bangles on her wrists, fingers, neck, nose, ankles, her *kajal* lined eyes, her purring voice, the chilled coloured drinks offered to visitors in tall glasses. even after you leave, the aroma of her place clings to you.

Superlatives are what Shahnaz Hussain is all about. This much-written-about entrepreneur manufactures and sells ayurvedic and herbal products and runs several beauty clinics as well. "We are not into cosmetics, we are into cures," is her motto. She is a delight for photographers and the press, who have given her many extravagant names — 'Herbal Legend', 'Mogul Princess', 'Beauty Ambassador', 'Modernday Enchantress', 'Asia's Helena Rubinstein', and even 'A Desi Madame Pompadour'. her larger than life image is carefully cultivated as a marketing technique. Unmistakably, there is a sharp commercial brain ticking inside her head.

At her Greater Kailash business premises-cum-home, a team of Japanese is waiting. They have come from Nagoya to negotiate business. Obviously, language is a problem. Conversation is flagging. There is a lit-

Shahnaz Hussain with her family: Small regrets



Extracted from A Business of her Own; 50 women in enterprise in India by Anuradha K Rajivan; Published by EastWest Books, Madras Private Limited Price: Rs 295

tle tension in the air. Shahnaz is closeted in a room inside. Just then Nasir Husain, Shahnaz's husband, announces, "Here is the princess!" and she makes her bejewelled entry. There is a hushed silence as everyone turns to savour the vision. Like it or not, the woman makes an impact. She has promised me some time. Yet her husband, in-charge of overseas operations, cannot carry on the negotiations without her presence. She turns to me with a request, "I don't want them to feel that we are not giving them full attention. Could you join in?" I am introduced as one who has come to interview the princess. It probably impresses them, but there is really no way to tell — neither understands the other's language. cards are exchanged. The Japanese team is taken to see Shahnaz's retail outlet at Race Course while she begins the story of her life.

Born in Hyderabad in a conservative family, on November 5, 1944, daughter of a chief justice, N.U. Beg, Shahnaz grew up in Allahabad. She was sent to school in a vehicle with *purdah* curtains as befitted a young Muslim girl. Engaged at 14, married at 15, she was barely allowed to complete her Senior Cambridge. Her daughter was born by the time she was 16, an age when many girls are still in pimples and exchanging beauty tips. At 39, she was grandmother. "Because I was so young when Nelofer was born, we are really like friends." her husband was a Chief General Manager of the public sector State Trading Corporation of India.



Barbara Cartland: A friend cum client

A background like this is far from conducive to any kind of achievement. Yet, Shahnaz turned out to be such a runaway success that Nasir opted for voluntary retirement to join her. Over the years she has groomed her daughter, now 37, to join the business — making Nelofer Currimbhoy a case of an inheritor daughter. "She should have no difficulty in stepping into my shoes....I have already begun to project her." Mother and daughter are probably the only ones who know about all the group's formulae. Shahnaz's 21-year-old son, Samir, though still in college, is also being exposed to his mother's business.

In 1970 when she first started by selling herbal remedies out of a first floor flat in Delhi with Rs. 35,000 borrowed from her father, it must have been hard to believe that this 26-year-old Muslim housewife would graduate in running an international business before long, with her husband joining her. Even though she lacked the trappings of business then, she had within her the most important ingredient — a restless and a strong desire to achieve. It was this entrepreneurial spirit that drove her. She used to advantage the exposure she got by accompanying her husband to the countries he was posted to and got herself trained at beauty care centres like Helena Rubinstein (London), Christine Valmy (New York) and Lancombe (Paris). Being brought up in a home where home remedies for hair and skin care were the norm and having learnt about the synthetic cosmetics business overseas, she struck upon a winning combination — commercially manufacturing herbal and ayurvedic remedies, using state of the art clinical methods, and packaging them well before marketing.

After 1970 she has never looked back. She soon started a school, Woman's World International (WWI), for theoretical and practical training. "Students graduating from my school can work anywhere in the world," she says. Today, all franchisees, for India and overseas, have to, under standard contract norms, undergo a professional diploma course and a postgraduate course in her institute apart from practical training in ayurvedic treatments at the Shahnaz Herbal Clinic. In order to encourage the spread of Shahnaz Ayurvedic centres abroad, no license fee or goodwill fee is charged. Her latest achievement is a tie up with the Hyakumata group of Japan for a Shahnaz Hussain Ayurvedic Resort in the tiny island of Saipan off the Pacific Coast. Planned as the world's largest ayurvedic treatment and stress management centre-cum-holiday resort , it will be located in the hotel owned by the Hyakumata group. The technical knowhow will be Shahnaz's and she will also have the exclusive

Princess Diana:Celebrity customer



rights to sell her products there.

Undoubtedly, there is a big 'I' in her style. With blow-ups for her face strategically placed in several places, fancy marble statues, marble pillars and flooring, a fountain, polished brass, her premises have an obvious Shahnaz stamp. There is even a ... hold your breath ... discotheque, fully equipped with music and strobe lights, which came in very handy after lunch to entertain the visiting Japanese, without having to make too much conservation.

Doesn't she feel uncomfortable, dressed in flowing robes, platform footwear, loads of jewellery? "People like it," she replies. "Now they expect me to be like this!" It is by marketing herself that she gets attention for her ever-increasing range of products, in sharp contrast to the more sober methods of competitors. Shahnaz's is a very personalised business style. The popularity of her products cannot be delinked from her personal charisma and it seems to work in the market. She makes it a point to be present at the opening of each new clinic. "Everyone likes to feel that they are dealing with the top person." Her big markets are in the Far East, West Asia, London, Paris, New York, and, of course, India. But it is a fact that it was only after she became well-known overseas, that her products gained greater acceptance at home. Shahnaz has over 400 franchised clinics in India and outside. Among her famous customers she lists Indira Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi, Barbara Cartland (who was also her friend), Elizabeth Taylor, Boney M, Princess Diana and many others.

In spite of her languid appearance, she is a disciplined worker, conducting business from her New Delhi office, monitoring all that goes on on a closed circuit TV, managing her laboratories and product lines, innovating, running her flagship beauty parlour, supervising trainees. During her travels she contacts the Press right away and gets much written-about, providing her with publicity that others have to pay for. Yet, for all her good relations with the media, she is not an easy subject for an interview. There is a tendency to gloss over details, especially on financial issues. Her turnover figures could not be confirmed. That is understandable, given that she retains her business as a private limited company. There were also some press reports in the past about excise problems due to a debate about whether herbal products are a medicine or a cosmetic, an issue applicable, of course, to all such companies. But she is more than forthcoming on all other matters, however, personal, and generous with printed and video-taped information about herself and her business.



Shahnaz Hussain at her laboratory



Sonia Gandhi:A Shahnaz fan

Her range of products is already wide and keeps growing. Apart from skincare lotions, face packs, rehydrant creams, shampoos, rinses for hair and facecare there are cosmetics like lipsticks, compacts, eye shadows, *kajal*, mascara, nail varnish. Her ingredients are fruits, like apple, mango and strawberry' flowers like rose, carnation, marigold, jasmine, Chinese hibiscus and pink lotus; vegetables like potato, cucumber and carrot; other ingredients include almond, honey, egg, *neem*, sandalwood, turmeric, milk, ..., the list is almost endless. There is a separate line for men called 'Shaman' in black-and-white packaging and another for pets called 'Shapets'. She has also managed to market a special moisturiser, 'Shaflight' for frequent fliers and cabin crew, whose skin tends to get dehydrated in flight. With a keen nose for the right publicity, Shahnaz has also sent products into outer space; the US National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) used her anti-stress product, 'Shaspace', for tests.

She has been smart enough to segment markets and cater differently to specific market segments. The colour of the skin is not important, she says. Rather, skin should be healthy and glowing. Instead of using cosmetics designed for white skins, she has a



range specially for darker skins. for black women she has a different range. In the Arab market, she markets products that are supposed to compensate for sudden changes in temperatures that hair and skin undergo as people move in and out of air-conditioning. hair loss is another desert problem because of the mica in the sand which, according to Shahnaz, acts as a blade when a regular shampoo is rubbed in to the hair. So she recommends the application of egg and milk before washing.

Being a Muslim herself, she has been sensitive to religious sentiments in West Asia and has successfully created a Halal range. "They remove their make-up five times a day because most products have either pig meat or alcohol. So I gave them Halal." It worked. An Abu Dhabi princess is supposed to have called her up to say, "God must have sent you to keep the Muslim world beautiful". No wonder as much as 60 per cent of her world income is from Arab countries.

With such a cornucopia of lotions and potions, how does an uninitiated potential customer decide what to pick? The mind-boggling variety itself may frighten away some. "But our stores are competent to give advice," she clarifies. Of course, a person must have the time to sit through the sales talk. But then, the beauty business is probably not for those in a hurry. Neither is it for the price-conscious consumer. her products are positioned as top-of-the-line, and carry top-of-the-line prices.

"That is because of extensive testing that goes on in the laboratories," she explains. In fact, Shahnaz has devoted considerable time and resources to research and development. Her technically trained staff, including a team of chemists, is kept busy developing and testing new formulations at NOIDA and in the farm where she grows the flowers and herbs used in her products.



Elizabeth Taylor

The awards that Shahnaz has received cover nearly four single-spaced pages of her CV; certainly they are too numerous to be listed here. She has been receiving them for the last 13 years, from government sources as well as from industry associations, domestic and foreign. Her latest was the 1996 "World's Greatest Woman Entrepreneur" award by the 105-year-old US magazine, *Success*. Definitely, one of the better-known Indians abroad, little wonder that she is considered an unofficial ambassador for India.

What about problem areas? Her voice cracks as she says, "It is impossible to be a career woman and a good wife and mother. those who say so are not telling the truth." And, she adds, "I've got everything. But there is so much money that I can't spend. And time, I'm always gasping for. Sometimes I feel I'll break up." Yet there is no way she wishes to arrange her life. "I cannot live any other way. My husband has no choice. Either my family comes with me or they do without me." Any regrets? "Yes, not being able to spend more time with my children. Once, a maid held back my little son when I was busy, even though he wanted to come to me. I felt bad. then there were times when I spoke to my mother on the intercom though she was in the nex room!"

But it has not all been money-making for Shahnaz. she also runs a free beauty school for the hearing impaired who cannot speak. "To shore up goodwill for my afterlife," she explains. Started in 1984, under Woman's World International, "it's called 'Shamute'." More than 10,000 have been trained over the years. "The girls that come out are really good and many come back to work for me," she says. In fact, you can see some of them around, taking care of assigned tasks on her premises. "Many get jobs outside and some have even set up their own beauty parlours. Once they acquire a capacity to earn, they also acquire a purpose to live. A man will marry a deaf mute if she is earning." She has a similar facility for men at Men's World International. This apart, she treats women with skin diseases, even when they cannot afford to pay, in her two free clinics "I tell them, if you can't pay. you can pray for me. It's my arrangement for the grave." This "do good" philosophy, she explains, she picked up from her father, the chief justice. "He asked me, what are you doing for your permanent life? It set me thinking."

Her future plans include selling a whole bold and beautiful lifestyle, not just specific purpose products. Aromatherapy, relaxation techniques, tonics for purifying blood, health drinks, other internal medicines. pastes for sparkling teeth, pot pourri, clothes hangars cushioned with fragrant flowers, scarves. What is the secret of her success? "I have always believed that it is not what you want in life that matters; it is how badly you want it." If you want it badly enough, you can do it, has been her philosophy. "My work is a crusade. But it has taken a tremendous toll of my personal life." she freely admits. Yet there is no other way she would have had it. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS: DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1130	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1200	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1400	1	IC-742	1620	1
IC 743	1300	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-744	1520	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0550	daily	IC 772	1135	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W 902	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	*IC-855	0755	2, 6
*IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1230	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1610	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0750	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1530	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-202	0715	2, 4, 5	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
IC 202	1405	6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
IC 202	1655	1, 3	IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
JODHPUR					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LEH					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0830	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 4, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 4, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
PUNE					
IC-725	1230	2, 4, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 4, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS: INTERNATIONAL

BANGKOK					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
KUALA LUMPUR					
KL-875	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
SINGAPORE					
KB-105	0855	2, 4	KB-106	0910	2, 7
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
			IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6			
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
THAILAND					
IC-749	1015	1	IC-750	1240	1
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG 092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC 723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC 724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC 723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG 093	1710	5
BG 096	2050	1 2, 3, 4 6 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI 108	0715	7
BI 109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3 5	IC-748	1255	1 2, 3, 5
IC 747	0945	6	IC 748	1310	6
RA 214	1525	2 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA-112	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
MOSCOW					
SU-538	2230	4	SU 537	1030	4
PARIS					
KB-106	0955	2, 7	KB-105	0810	2, 4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2 5
IC-755	1450	4	IC-756	0830	5
IC 727	1320	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC 727	1320	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BQ Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
305	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
303	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs & Sun Arr Tues, Wed. & Sat	16 15	2382
303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues, Fri & Sat. Arr Mon, Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon Tues, Thurs, Fri, & Sat Arr Mon, Wed Thurs Fri & Sun	10 45	2302
305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat	12-30	2306
307	23 30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
319	6 05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21 10	2020
373	23 00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat; Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11 35	3074
	22 00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues., Wed & Sat, Arr: Tues., Fri & Sat	06 00	3046
	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5060
	13 00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun, Mon, Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
	9 45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
	13 10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11 55	3020
	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
	15 25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
	17-11	Coalfield Express	10 30	3030
	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
	21 05	Danapur Express	6 30	3232
	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15 40	3016
	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue & Thurs., Arr: Mon., Thurs & Fri.	7 55	1160
	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep. Wed., Sat & Sun., Arr: Sun, Wed & Sat	7-55	9305
	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep. Fri.; Arr Tues	7-55	1182

Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
19-16	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBC Loop	12-30	3134
18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19 20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr. Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7 50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6 50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6 20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19 00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4 15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr. Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival. Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

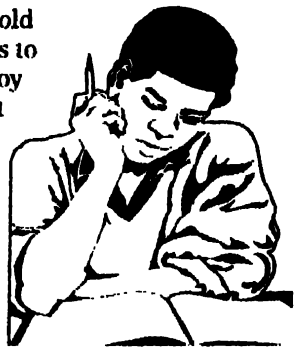
ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays) In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. I am a 24-year-old young man who wants to do a lot of things, enjoy life and be happy. But my father intervenes in whatever I try to do. He, along with my mother, are always against my friends and rebuke me without any cause. It annoys me a lot and sometimes I feel like kicking his dog. I also feel like committing suicide. But I know he loves me very much and I, too, feel the same way.



How can I lead a tension-free, peaceful life which would create an amicable atmosphere of mutual cooperation and tenderness?

Ranjit Chetry, Assam

A. Many parents are simply unable to comprehend that the small little children they nurtured and brought up have grown up and become distinct individuals with their own tastes, likes and dislikes. The clash between the generations is a perennial one. It is always difficult for a young man to come into his own in the shadow of a strong parent.

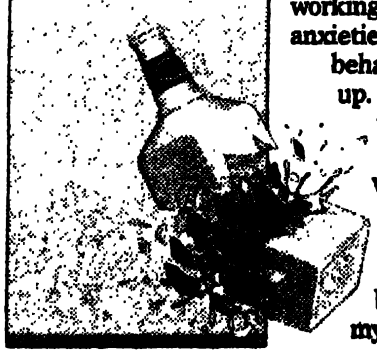
Perhaps it may be a good idea for you to seek a study or work option outside your hometown. Putting some physical space between yourself and your parents is one way of carving some mental space for yourself. In case this is not a practical option, the other way out is to control your anger and irritation and assert your own point of view in a mature way.

It's difficult to argue with cold logic and when your parents find you reacting in a grown up way they will themselves come to realise that you have finally grown up. Of course, there is no magical formula for this, but the process of time will surely bring this about unless you yourself persist in staging childish revolts which will only reinforce parental reactions.

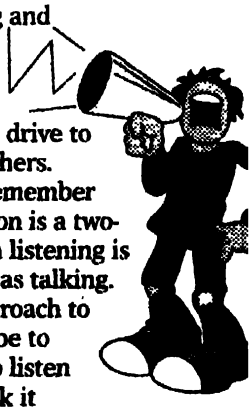
Q. I am a 19-year-old undergraduate student. My problem is that everyone thinks that I talk too much. I feel very restless when I try to concentrate on my studies. My family members do not pay heed to any advice or suggestions that I may offer them and ask r not to speak so much. I am trying to control garrulous habit but at the same time feel th if a person is not allowed to express his or h feelings in words, how will he survive?

L. Goswami, Pu

Interfering father? Perhaps it may be a good idea for you to seek a study or work option outside your hometown. Put some physical space between yourself and your parents



A. You are young and brimming with energy. You obviously have a very strong need and drive to communicate with others. However, you must remember that all communication is a two-way process, in which listening is at least as important as talking. One constructive approach to your problem would be to consciously resolve to listen more. When you speak it helps you articulate your thoughts. When yo listen you set the benefit of a range of diffe opinions and experiences. My second suggestion is to start keeping a journal or a diary. If you take the trouble to write out th jumbled pattern of your thoughts, you will b disciplining both your mind and your communication skills. Your concentration wi immediately register improvement, and you will find yourself thinking and acting more coherently.



Q. I am a 13-year-old girl. My mother is a very simple and quiet person. It is my father working in a school, who is the cause of my anxieties. I am very worried about his behaviour and the way his career is shap up. He drinks and makes a lot of noise when he returns home. He earns a monthly salary of over Rs 8,000 an we don't know where he spends it. H an educated person but that does n stop him from behaving in this manner. I have lost all hope in life a blame my misfortunes. I have passe my matriculation and want to study

her. But I cannot do so because of my ıer. What should I do?

Sivagami, Manipur

A. My heart goes out to you. You are ɛed going through a difficult and disturbing ɛ. Every child needs emotional and social ırity from its parents. When it is denied the d, too, can grow up into a damaged human ıg.

When I read your letter I got the ression that, unlike your mother, who you iously love very much, you are a strong and ɛrmined person. Your position is difficult ı because you are still so young. In a few ɛs you will be able to stand on your feet and ɛ after both yourself and your mother. In meanwhile, what you could do is as follows. tly, try to reach out to your father and ımunicate to him your deep distress at his aviour. If there is any elder person in your ily whom he respects, you could involve in this exercise. Convince your mother not e so passive, and to assert her rights as well xercise her duties. Persuade her to insist on ng some housekeeping money every month, e of which she can put aside for your cation.

Apply to distance education universities the Indira Gandhi Open University so that education process continues. At the first ortunity, leave the house and test yourself ıe against the outside world. Growing up in sfunctional family can be a trauma which rob you of your self-confidence. The most ortant thing in your situation is to ember that you have your own life ahead of full of joy and happiness.

You must become strong and assume onsibility for yourself, and not let your ɛr's problems mar your life-script. I have belief that each of us have to shoulder a in burden in some stage or the other of ives. The fact that you have had to lder your burden so early will only make stronger and more capable person later you can manage to your attitude ive. Remember, is always light at nd of the tunnel.

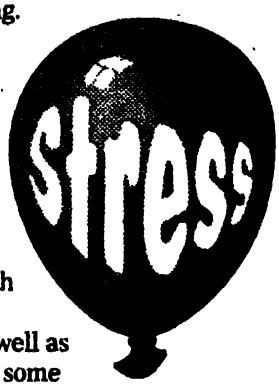


Q. I am 19 years nd in love with for about ear. At nt we are good ds. I do not understand whether he has similar feelings for me. Sometimes he seems very concerned about me and at other times quite indifferent. I am aware that he was engaged in the past but was not too happy with the situation. But I don't know what exactly is the status of his relationship. Should I wait and watch to see what happens? I do not want to lose his friendship at any cost.

Tripta Ganguly, Gariahat

A. Most young people are in love with the idea of love. I think the friendship you describe is an adolescent crush which you will probably outgrow, rather than something which will develop into a mature relationship. You are a young girl, and your whole life lies before you. It is entirely possible that this friendship, too, could blossom into love. In any case, you will meet many other men, and some day you will know with certainty when your feelings are reciprocated. A word of caution: times have changed, and in the modern world it is important to think of one's own independent life and career rather than just dream about Mr Right coming along.

Unable to cope with stress? There is an ancient and primordial method of meditation which is inbuilt in human nature which all of us know as children and forget as we grow up — and that is laughter. Give it a try!



Q. My job entails that I take a lot of pressure, stress and tension in my life. This forces me to behave in an irritable manner which results in a lot of problems at home as well as outside. I believe that some forms of meditation give a lot of relief in such cases. I would be very obliged if you would offer your valuable suggestions and give me the names or addresses of such institutions or personalities who offer them.

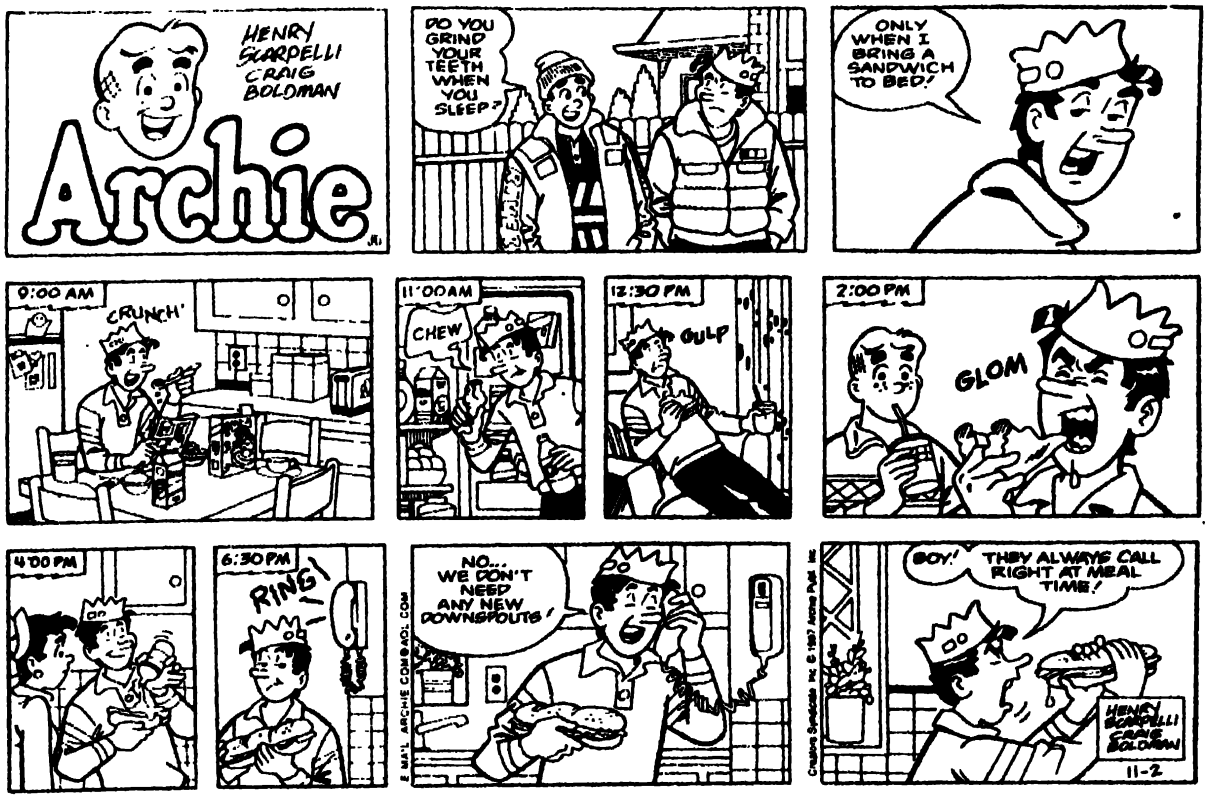
B. Santra, Calcutta

A. Meditation is an invaluable aid for getting focus and perspective on life. There are many easy techniques of meditation such as Transcendental Meditation developed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and Sahaja Yoga which is taught by Nirmala Devi. All these methods are designed to alleviate the stress and strain of modern urban life.

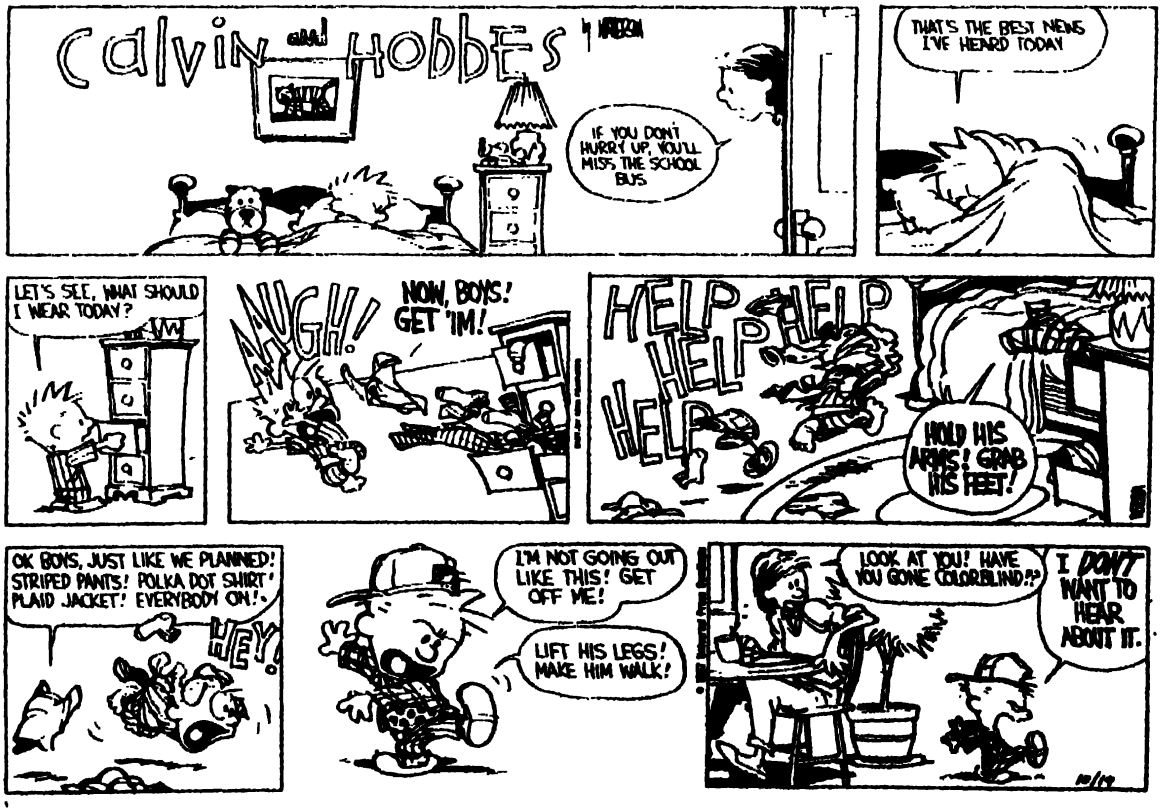
There is, however, another ancient and primordial method of meditation which is inbuilt in human nature which all of us know as children and forget as we grow up — and that is laughter. Give it a try! ■

COMICS

ARCHIE



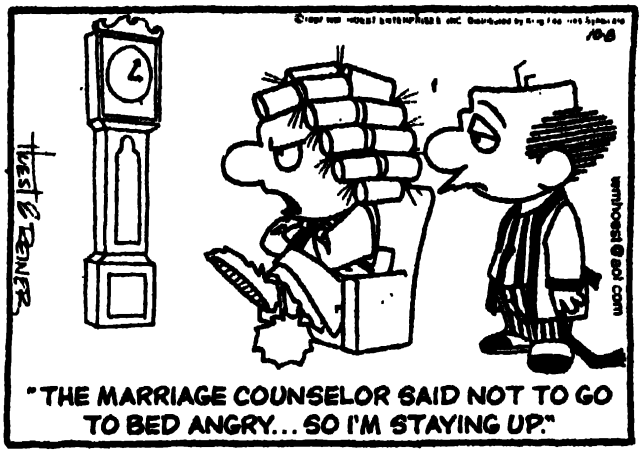
CALVIN AND HOBBES — WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

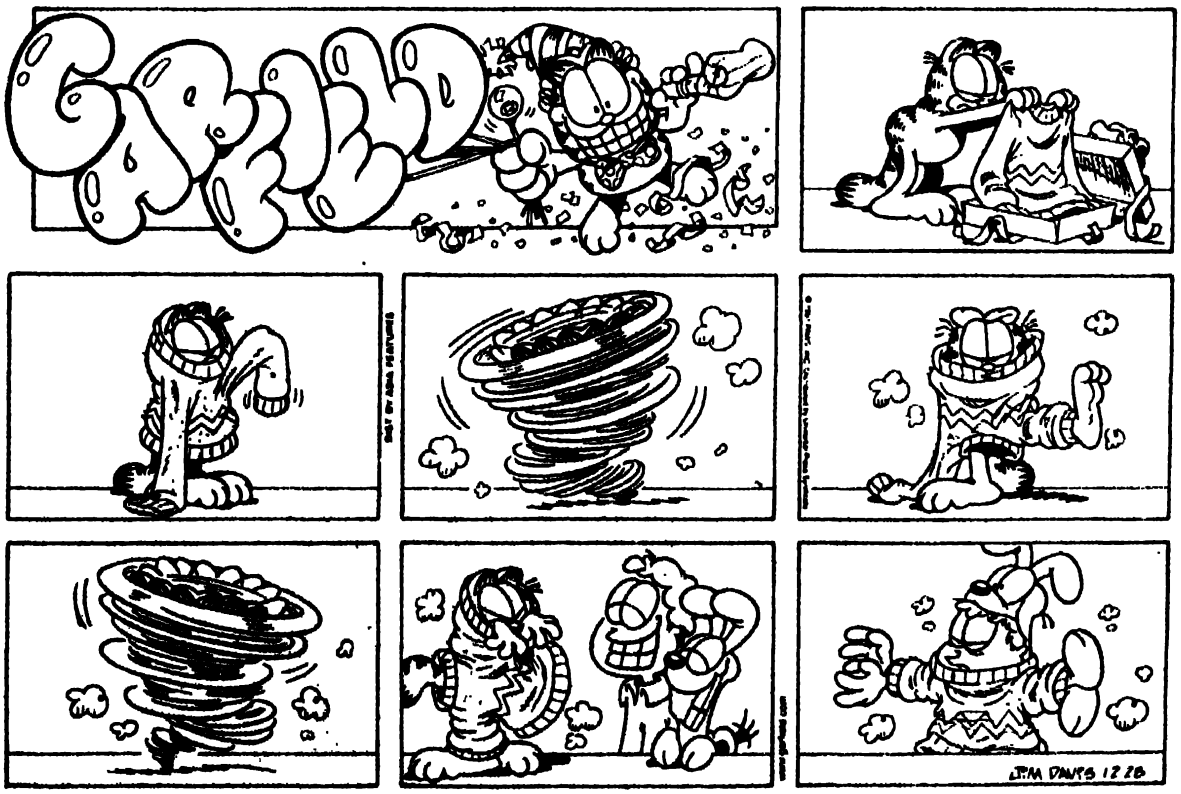








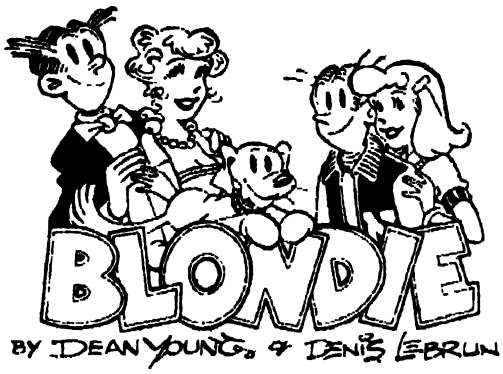
GARFIELD by JIM DAVIS

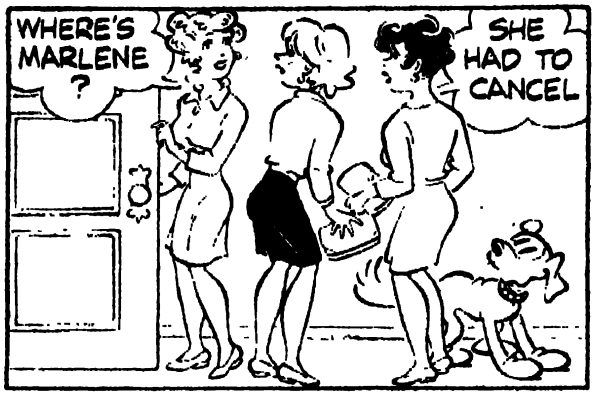


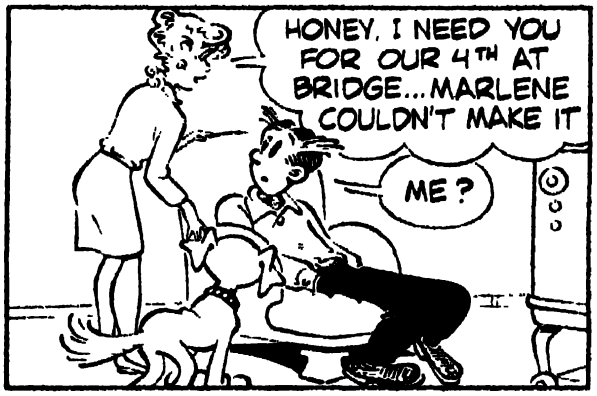
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

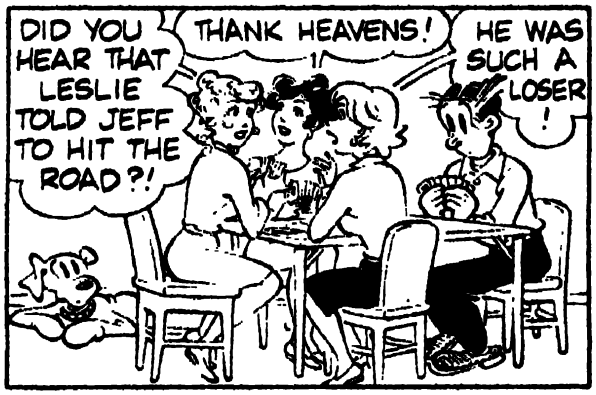


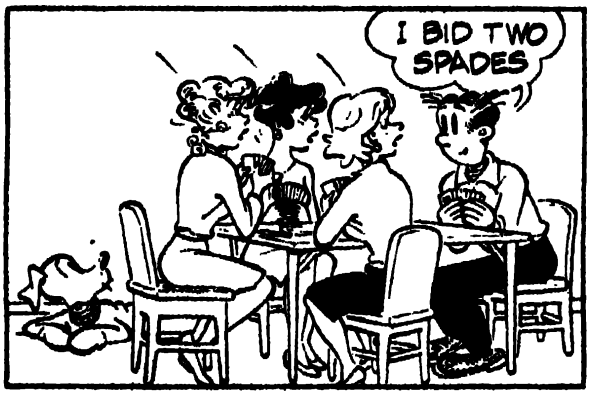
BLONDIE by DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

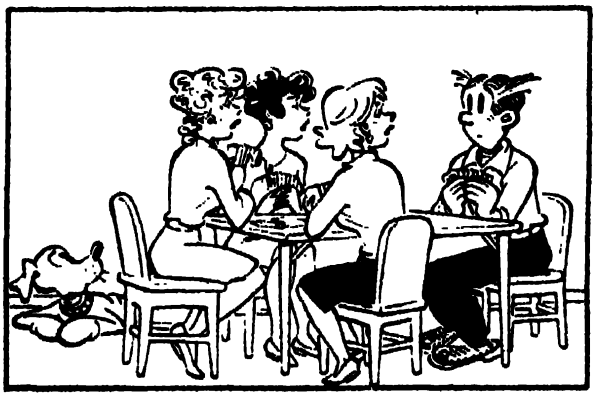




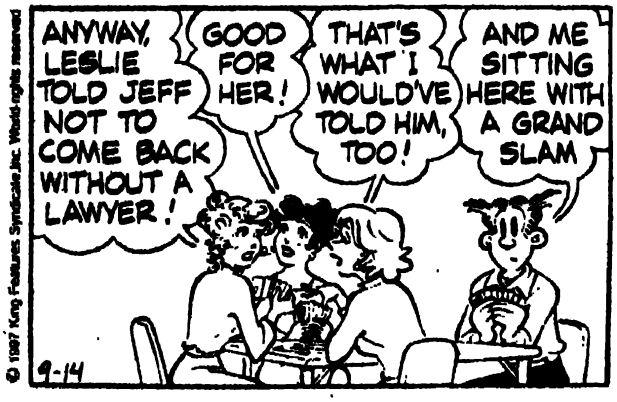












BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q ***I am 18 years old and have no problems other than facial hair. Someone suggested that I should use a good quality scrubber on my face because my facial hair might lead to blackheads or whiteheads. Should I do this?***
Debashree Paul, Barrackpore

A I would suggest that you tell that somebody to stop doling out free advice that is baseless and incorrect. If he or she is wanting you to buy a specific brand or product, why not suggest a correct one that suits your skin. How can facial hair lead to blackheads and white heads? After all, these are due to improper cleansing of the skin and excessive oiliness. I would suggest that you do not experiment with your skin and leave it alone.

If you want to treat facial hair you will have to apply a thick pack of gramflour, turmeric, lemon juice and sandalwood powder. Let it dry on your face and then scrub off in a rotating manner until all the flakes have fallen off. This should be done daily for at least two months for results.

Q ***I am 20 years old and have a medium complexion and combination skin. I want to apply foundation but how do I choose the right shade? I am also not sure how to apply it. Please advise.***
Mitu Roy, Assam

A Use a sheer foundation; there are quite a few good brands available in the market. It is important that you buy a shade which is one shade lighter than your skin colour. The best way to use foundation is to apply it all over your face including the ears and neck area and then blend in with a sponge. I have seen so many women look like absolute disasters when they fail to blend it on the neck area and leave ugly patches of make-up on their skin.

Q ***I am a regular reader of your column and have seen that you often suggest the use of a loofah for cleaning elbows and knees. Can you clarify what is meant by a loofah.***
Sarita Sen, Dhakuria, Calcutta

A A *loofah* is a natural body cleanser and is made out of the remnants of the turnip family. It is extremely effective in exfoliating dead skin and making the skin glow naturally. A *loofah* is even more effective when used with cleansing granules or soap. It is available in general stores or stores that keep herbs and spices.

Q ***I have a combination skin. My problem is that I am not sure how I should take care of my skin. Please suggest a beauty care routine.***
Preeti Singh, Kanpur

A You are among the hundreds and thousands of women who have combination skin and are quite confused about choosing the right skin care programme. Be very gentle and careful with such a skin type specially when following a particular skin care routine. The best way to cleanse would be to wipe clean with rose water and follow up with a honey massage. This will enable you to have a glowing skin and make it supple and soft. Use a blackhead remover around the nose and chin areas as these being oily will be prone to whiteheads and blackheads. Make a scrub of the following for a deep cleansing programme that you can do twice a week — rice powder, fullers earth, one egg and fresh cold milk. Apply all over face and neck and leave on till dry. Scrub off in rotating movements and then splash with cold water.



Pabitra Das



The best way to apply foundation:

■

Put it all over the face, including the ears and neck areas, and blend in with a sponge

Use a light moisturiser for your skin. It is important to understand that internal health is vitally important and that you should be extremely careful about your diet.

Q *I am 26 years old with a dusky complexion. I have small pores and small red eruptions which resemble mosquito bites on my cheeks. I also have whiteheads on my nose and chin. Can you suggest a daily cleansing routine to make me look fairer and improve my skin?*
Madhuri Bhatt, Jamshedpur

A First, get rid of any mosquitoes that you have at your place. Secondly, please get rid of this fair fixation. Did you know that some of the most beautiful people in the world are dusky skinned beauties? You basically require a daily cleansing programme with grains to avoid the whiteheads. Scrub with a mix of rose water, *besan* and breadcrumbs. Follow with a face pack of ground cloves, lemon juice and fullers earth.
Believe me, healthy skin is beautiful skin and every fair woman is not a beautiful woman. I have seen some of the fairest women with plain features and bad skin. So you can consider yourself lucky if you have a clear and glowing skin. So pay less attention to the colour of your skin and ensure you have a flawless one.

Q *I have short hair but persistently face the problem of split ends. I oil my hair once or twice a week before washing. Please suggest a remedy.*
Jayanti Das, Calcutta

A Firstly, go for a split ends cut from a professional salon. I would also suggest that you continue to oil your hair with warm coconut oil followed with turban therapy. Also use the following hair pack on your hair once a week—shikakai, amla, reetha, fenugreek mixed with two eggs and applied all over the scalp.

Leave on for about an hour and shampoo off. You also have to be careful with your diet and take in lots of fresh vegetables and fruits as well as dairy products like cheese, curd and milk.

Introducing

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Giving you soft and beautiful hair, naturally
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To know more about natural conditioning without harmful chemicals write to Vatika Shampoo (Telegraph), P.O. Box No. 4059, New Delhi 19

We haven't quite won the Wimbledon, let alone achieved the Grand Slam, but thanks to the Leander Paes-Mahesh Bhupati duo, we have some decent wins

Continued from Page 8

kutte-billi wali minister couldn't detract from her love of animals. In fact, it's now on display on a television screen near you, on a show called *Maneka Gandhi's Ark*.

No, the end of the world in not nigh. It's just that Maneka feels that it may well be all over for animals unless us right-thinking people get our acts together.

Unfortunately for Maneka, her act went down like a bomb on Star Plus, and was cancelled after a short run. But the lady is nothing if not resilient. She immediately went and acquired a slot on Doordarshan, and is currently billing and cooing on that channel. Happy viewing!

SPORTS

Prakash Padukone

He may look — and sound — the most mild-mannered of chaps, but in 1997 Prakash Padukone proved beyond doubt that he's not one to back off from a good fight. He took on the Badminton Association by forming a parallel body, won the support of most of the players and forced the establishment to back off (in due course, of course, a compromise was worked out). For someone who couldn't say boo to a goose, that's not bad going.



Leander Paes

Manoj Prabhakar

It can't be easy to face the wrath of the entire cricket establishment — not to mention your former colleagues and friends — by accusing some unnamed players of rigging matches in return for large sums of money. But that's exactly what Manoj Prabhakar did, knowing full well that this would make him a pariah in the cricketing fraternity. Unfortunately, though, the spirit of freedom didn't quite pervade Manoj's entire being. Or else why would he have stopped short of naming the man/men who had been paid off to lose crucial games for India?

A.R. Rahman



Leander Paes-Mahesh Bhupati

So, finally Indian tennis is free of the chains of under-achievement. No, we haven't quite won the Wimbledon, let alone achieved the Grand Slam, but thanks to the Leander Paes-Mahesh Bhupati duo, we have some decent wins — albiet in the doubles section — to

our credit.

Will they be able to replicate this success singly? Given their past records, it seems unlikely, but then, one can always hope.

Or can't one?

MUSIC

A.R. Rahman

His album — among the many released to commemorate the 50th year of India's independence — was the one that best encapsulated the spirit of modern India: alive, vibrant, young and yet respectful of its traditions and mindful of its past. Rahman himself also embodies the spirit of free and modern India in his willingness to experiment with different music traditions, secure in the knowledge that this will not compromise his identity as an India. And in the fact that though his tunes may sound Western, he brings a very Indian sensibility to bear on them.



Daler Mehndi

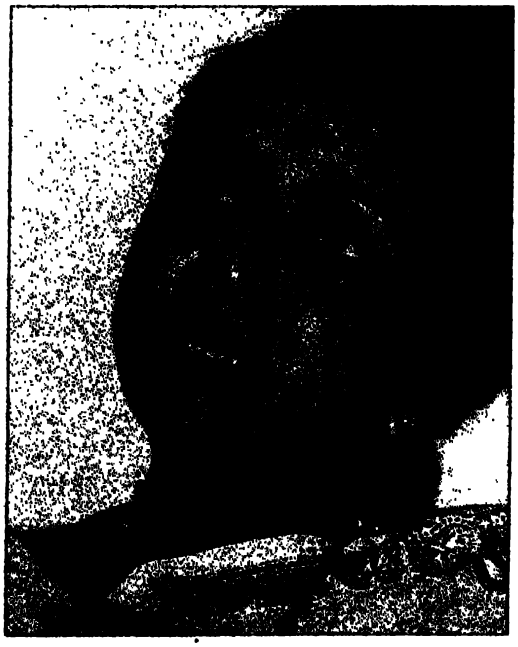
Daler Mehndi

In an age when people think less of you if you can't speak English, this *Punjab da munda* takes particular pride in holding forth — and, of course, singing — in his mother tongue. Not for him, any apologies for the fact that he is most comfortable in a *pyjama-kurta* (with a voluminous cape thrown casually over it), though he can look resplendent in a pink trouser suit when the mood strikes him.

But most of all, Daler is to be admired for the fact that he sings his own brand of music (Punjabi folk) without making any allowances for the taste of the modern Indian youth.

And to his credit is the fact that he has succeeded in modulating it for the better.

Asha Bhonsle



Asha Bhonsle

She may be over 60, a grandmother several times over, and always demurely clad in a *sari*, with the *pallu* wrapped protectively around her shoulders.

But despite all that, there's nothing more appropriate than Asha Bhonsle's voice when it comes to grooving the night away.

In an age dominated by Oasis and the Spice Girls, it was Asha who won the maximum number of Channel V awards. In an era when rap and reggae is the beat of the moment, her re-mix of *Piya tu ab to aaja* climbed rapidly to the top of the charts.

And at a time, when every female singer feels obliged to wear a mini-skirt to keep the audiences' attention, Asha manages to enthrall them in a simple *sari*.

And in these less-is-more times, that takes some doing. ■

In an age when people think less of you if you can't speak English, this *Punjab da munda* (Daler Mehndi) takes particular pride in holding forth — and, of course, singing — in his mother tongue

The Greening of Television

That's what Niret and Nikhil Alva excel at, says **Samita Bhatia**

The siblings have discovered secret animal paths at Corbet National Park; have tested their stamina on arduous Himalayan terrain, spent time with the Indian Peace Keeping Force under the constant threat of gun-fire from the jungles of Jaffna and left the country after savouring the touristy flavour of Colombo.

The brothers, Niret and Nikhil Alva, have braved the turbulent white water rapids of the Ganga, rafting from Rudraprayag to Rishikesh, have travelled through the rhino lands of Chitwan, flown by helicopter to get a bird's-eye view of some of the most spectacular mountains of the world and wandered through Kathmandu and lesser-known Indian locales. All of this on *The Great Escape* on Star Plus.

However, the show they are best known for is *Living on the Edge*, India's longest-running prime time environment series. From the challenge of wildlife conservation to problems of development, from eco-friendly practices of ethnic communities to features on unique eco-systems, *Living on the Edge* covers it all. The programme, which ran prime time for 80 weeks on Doordarshan's (DD) National Network was also dubbed into Hindi, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and Malayalam for the regional networks. "That was rewarding," say the brothers.

It was gratifying too when environmental lawyer M.C Mehta used tapes of the programme as evidence against the tanneries in Agra, and when voluntary agencies used their films as the basis for beginning their water harvesting plans in remote parts of the country. But say the brothers, modestly, "This is not enough. Environment must become a people's movement."



Nikhil and Niret Alva: Focussing on environment

The siblings came together in 1993 from diverse areas of interest — Niret, a law graduate and Nikhil, a music composer — to form Miditech. Niret, "the older and greater boss" brought with him his experience with the electronic media harking to his days at PTI TV and *Eyewitness*, a show anchored by Karan Thapar. Nikhil, the younger, for his part, came armed with a management degree. The third link in the chain being their youngest sister Manira who is now settled in Bangalore and "pitches in only occasionally."

Nihkil says in hindsight, "I don't know what brought us together. Essentially, we wanted to do more than we had been doing till then." Today, Nikhil, insists that he is "lumped with all the boring work that comes with running a software production house."

And they arrived on the scene sans parental hard-sell. They have been asked often enough if being Margaret Alva's sons "helps" their outfit to iron out problems. Says Niret candidly, "Well no one is completely on their own. Our parents have been encouraging, are our best critics and always make it a point to watch our programmes. But that's where it ends."

They feel that well-connected parents can at best introduce their children to the powers that be. "But beyond that it's their work which is the decider. At best you can win three or four episodes with connections, but how do you sustain the show thereafter? Unless you are good no one is likely to humour you beyond a point," agrees Nikhil.

Since its inception Miditech has grown from a strength of three to 35 and, quite the dark horse, has raked in awards and nominations for the handful of shows that it produces. If *Living on the Edge* won the Onida Pinnacle Award for the Best Information Series of 1995-96, it won international accolades when it bagged the highest award any environmental film or series can receive — the Panda Award or the Green Oscar at Wildscreen '96 in Bristol. *Living on the Edge* has also been India's entry at a host of international environment and

wildlife film festivals.

Several nominations for the Pinnacle Awards 1996-97 have come their way more recently. While *Off the Beaten Track* has won the nomination for best director, information and programme and best informative programme in the lifestyle category, *Against All Odds* has been nominated for best informative programme. No mean achievement this, considering there were 1,200 entries across 56 categories and seven languages. The awards are to be announced in January.

But why has Miditech focussed on environment, the great outdoors and social issues? Says Niret, "Somehow we never thought of doing soaps and serials. Like most young people when we started out we were idealistic and hope that we have retained our idealism."

Their motivation shows through in *Living on the Edge*. India's first comprehensive green series it seeks to provide an interesting and informative insight into the state of India's environment. In a magazine format each episode has four to five stories culled from the remotest corners of the country highlighting critical environmental issues that concern us all.

Explains Nikhil, "To begin with DD gave us 13 episodes of *Living on the Edge*. But the feedback was so good that DD was happy to give us an extension of 13 episodes each time. It is dry and boring stuff that will not change even in the next six months. However, we do try and make each episode timeless."

Ironically, despite the Green Oscar, the programme was pulled off DD as advertising was conspicuously missing. This is a sore point with the brothers.

Explains Niret dryly, "DD commissions programmes that must pay for themselves." Naturally, an environment programme can't be compared to or pitted against commercially viable shows like film based or current affair programmes. He adds, "It can be quite difficult for an environment show like ours to be completely viable, I guess."

There are many companies that are looking for a green image. However, says Nikhil, "Since they are pollutants themselves, for them environment is a non-issue and they'd rather do without a programme on environment."

Now on Star Plus, the reach of the show has obviously narrowed. TRP (television rate points) of *Living on the Edge* have dropped and currently stand at .7 TRP. "But then Star does have a niche viewership and does not relate to the mass audience," says Nikhil.

Another subject close to their hearts is travel which has been explored in *The Great Escape* on Star Plus, and *Off the Beaten Path* that was aired on DD 3. The programmes are special, insist the brothers, as they are travel series with a difference. While the first encompasses two different journeys in each episode alongwith an escape guide, the latter, as the title suggests, merges off-beat journeys and destinations in the country.



Great Escape: Two different journeys in each episode

Twin teams criss-cross the sub continent and beyond, sampling different cultures, savouring cuisines, taking on picturesque country-sides thus opening up a whole new world of holiday destinations. "We target the urban English speaking audience aged between 15 and 50," says Nikhil.

The idea of the programmes was not to showcase glamorous places or to glamorise lesser-known destinations. "We wanted to look at the destination through the eyes of the presenter who was not the stereotypical time-tested anchor," emphasises Nikhil.

However, a Miditech production that is their personal favourite is *Against All Odds* telecast on TVI. The series was a finalist in the 'Best Documentary' category at the Asian Television Awards last year. Says Niret, "It is perhaps amongst our best work but unfortunately it hasn't got the viewership that we would have liked. This despite the fact each episode has been repeated on the channel at least 15 times," he says dryly.

Against All Odds is a series that seeks not only to analyse and portray everyday problems of the urban Indian woman but to provide her with a platform to express her fears, her confusions and aspirations. Covering issues as diverse as fear of rape to single parenting, the programme also gives both men and women a chance to exchange and relate their views on social issues specific to women. Any major problems that come attendant with the job? "Too many openings and too few people to fill them. The talent thus far is too raw, too fresh," fills in Niret.

While he finds little difference in the technical expertise available in the country to what's happening in the electronic media globally, budgets are a major constraint at Miditech. "We find ourselves compromising all the time," say the brothers. Critics expect Miditech to produce shows of international quality, like the programmes on Discovery Channel. "We tell them that the budget for a 40-50 minute programme on Discovery can range between £ 6,00,000 to £ 7,00,000 which is about Rs 4 crore. Now compare this to our very modest $6,000-8,000 per programme!" Niret says with exasperation.

For the future the Alva brothers would like to do what the Bedi brothers are doing in the arena of wildlife. Big budgets and yes, even fiction, playing with different variations of travel, women's issues and environment. But then again — all of it executed "very differently from the run-of-the-mill stuff" they say firmly. ■

My Personal Style



Leisure, for actress Soni Razdan, means reading, sleeping and being with the children

Just Lazing



HOOKED ON BOOKS:

I've been reading a lot of Latin American authors lately — Marquez, Allende among others. Bestsellers, frankly, don't quite appeal to me. Recently, I read Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and it has moved me a lot

Leisure, for me, means the luxury of lazing in bed for the 15-20 minutes in the morning after my two daughters have left for school.

Other than for that, spare time is at a premium for the rest of the week. On one hand, I have my shootings, rehearsals for the plays and also act as a secretary to husband Mahesh (Bhatt). On the other, I have to look after the house and everything that goes with it —cooking, shopping (which includes even the grocery) and organising parties. Not to forget helping the children with their studies.

Thus if I do get some time at the end of the day, I try to catch up on my reading. I've been reading a lot of Latin American authors lately — Marquez, Allende among others. Bestsellers, frankly, don't quite appeal to me. Recently, I read Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and it has moved me a lot.

As for movies, Hindi films, though I should not be saying this, are an absolute no-no with me. As an actress, I need to see films which would stimulate and inspire me and I derive this satisfaction only from good English movies.

Food is a major obsession with me — both cooking and eating — and all kinds of food at that. And time permitting, I take long walks in the evenings, alone.

I prefer to spend my weekends with my children. We go out for shopping or lunch. All three of us love swimming and hardly a weekend passes by without us plunging into the pool.

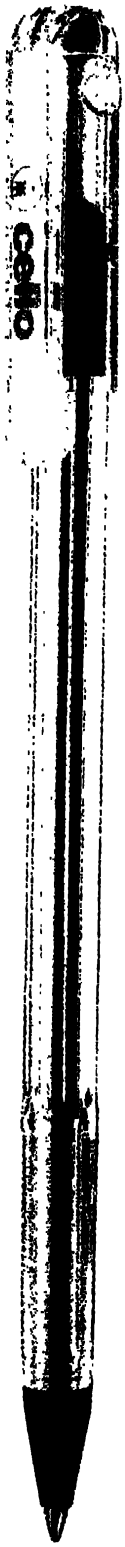
I'm a social person and though we have no set social life as such, friends are an integral part of my inner circle. Mind you, I consider the *filmi* parties as being merely a part of my professional life. I can really let my hair down and be myself when I am with my close group of friends.

Vacations are, I believe, absolutely essential for people with hectic schedules and we try and get away far from the madding crowd even if it is only for three-four days. We try to do it as often as we can. We definitely return rejuvenated and each time Mahesh is grateful to me for having forced him away.

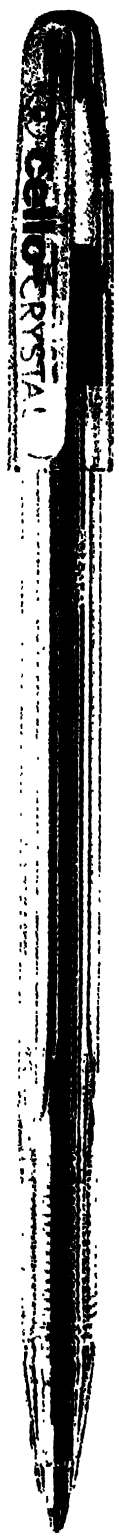
Goa is my favourite getaway where I basically luxuriate in doing nothing. Nothing, that is, other than for lazing, eating, sleeping, reading and just being with the kids.

All said and done, I believe if you wish to do something, you have to make the time for it, no matter how busy you might be. This way, we can get much more out of life.

As told to Madhumita Ganguly



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BISCUITS

POST MORTEM

Clothes for the Queen

It must have been a moment of great triumph for Kavita Bhartia, leading as she was a team of fashion designers to dress the contestants of the Miss Personality round at the recently concluded Miss World pageant in Seychelles ('Boutique Fashion', November 23). And with India's Diana Hayden winning the coveted crown, it was once again proved that Indian beauty and fashion had reached international standards.

Sutapa Dutta, Calcutta



There are two designers who could give our models a run for their money. One is the very attractive Ritu Beri and the other the charismatic Kavita Bhartia. Both have lovely tresses framing their visages and powerful facial expressions.

Hemant Sharma, Calcutta

Kavita Bhartia was lucky in the sense that her "husband actively encouraged her to do something on her own". Most Indian males would not like a separate identity for their wives. Married as she was into a business family, Kavita had the infrastructural support that she needed to set up an enterprise. Had the emotional support and encouragement not come from her husband she would not have been able to do justice to her role as a businesswoman.

T. Majumdar, Calcutta

Fashion has become such a common thing now that almost every *mohalla* can boast a designer. Established names have been able to make a place for themselves in this competitive sector but what about the new entrants in the field?

Kavita has done a wonderful job in this regard by promoting new designers who would have never been known in the fashion circuit otherwise.

Satarupa Roy, Howrah

There are very few fashion designers who actually dress and groom themselves in a manner befitting their profession. But Kavita, despite marriage, motherhood and the demands of her trade, looks stunningly young and pretty.

Somnath Chowdhruy, Howrah

Day of the Gypsy

Livleen Sharma struck me as a very strange person ('Gypsy Queen' November 23). She wallows in luxury herself while her people — the *banjarans*— lead a troubled existence. As a gypsy herself, she should do something palpable for her people rather than attend seminars and lecture sessions.

T.C. Majumdar, Calcutta

Englishman and Hindu

The extract on Nirad C. Chaudhuri, 'The Last Bengali Babu' was timely (November 23). Hats off to this grand old man of fire who has had the guts to speak his mind on a foreign soil. His writings may have been controversial but eminently quotable and providing enough fodder for discussion.

Ranajit Sen Sharma, Calcutta

The Telegraph

11 JANUARY 1998



PAGE 4

A Land of Promise

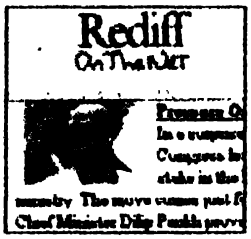
Israel is a remarkable country. Surrounded by hostile neighbours, born in traumatic circumstances, combatant in six wars, located in a harsh terrain and yet among the top two dozen in the world economically, technologically and militarily.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 26

WWW.Indiagate.Com



The Web community in India is growing larger every day. One can log on to the net and get a window view of everything that makes India—history,geography, economy, technology and culture.

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

From her saris to jewellery, Usha Uthup loves the ethnic look.

Cover:(Clockwise) An entrance to old Jerusalem; Jews praying at the Western Wall; and a woman soldier

COVER STORY

A Land of PROMISE

Israel combines the best of the ancient and modern, and of Asia and Europe, reports **Sumir Lal**

I am sitting in a restaurant called Kohinoor and have just bitten into a luscious chicken *reshmi kebab*, when my host, a dignified gentleman and a diplomat at that, suddenly bursts into song.

"*Ichak daana, bichak daana, daane oopar daana*," he chants with an accompanying jig.

I have to remind myself that I am not in India, but in the heart of Jerusalem on a hot, autumn afternoon and that, barring my wife, everyone at the table is Israeli.

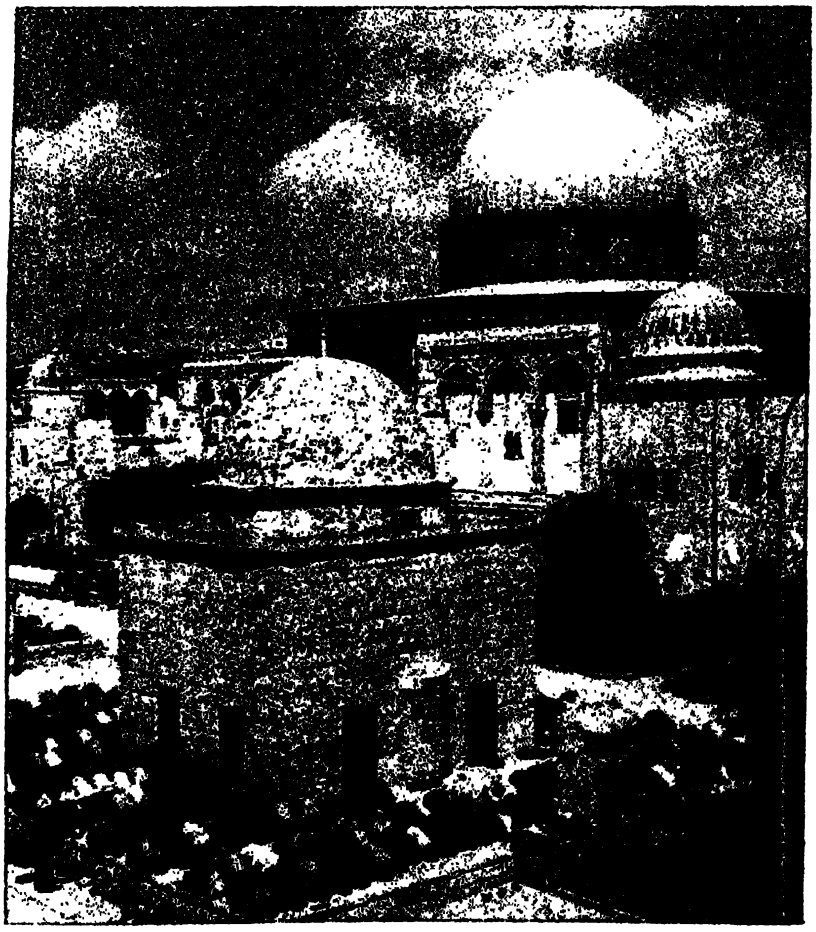
Even the divine *kebab* melting in my mouth is *kosher*—it has been marinated in soya instead of yoghurt as Jewish tradition forbids the marriage of milk products and meat.

The reason I am feeling so much at home is that I have just come in from a very pleasant holiday in Europe, but can sense the difference between the warmth that greets me here simply because I am Indian, and the plastic smiles that pushy salespeople gave me there because I was a tourist.

Israelis have a strange love affair with us. Even before diplomatic relations were established in 1992, Israel provided the largest number of young, backpacking tourists to India. Not hippies, mind you, but ordinary, decent kids on limited budgets who delved deep into the countryside and smaller towns.

Explains my singing diplomat-host: "Most youngsters make the journey after completing their military service (which is compulsory for both sexes) and before they join university. They look for a place that is different, interesting, relaxed, and where they can be themselves.

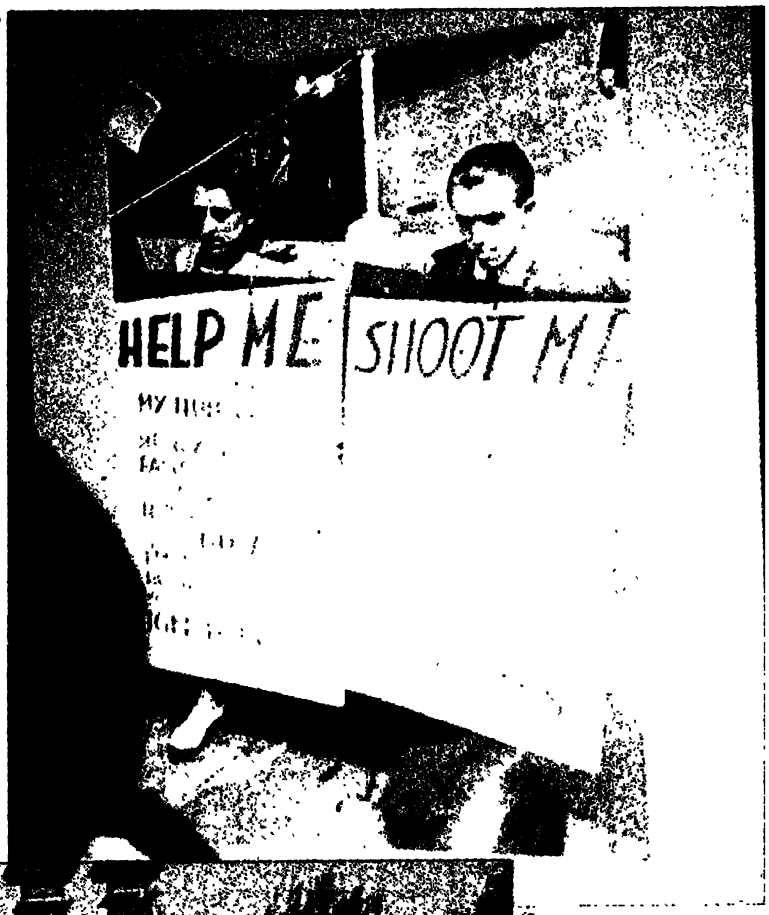
The Dome of the Rock dominates old Jerusalem ; school children under Israel's national emblem,







Sumir Lal



The tree planted by Oskar Schindler at the Holocaust Memorial, and (right) a moving exhibit

India is ideal."

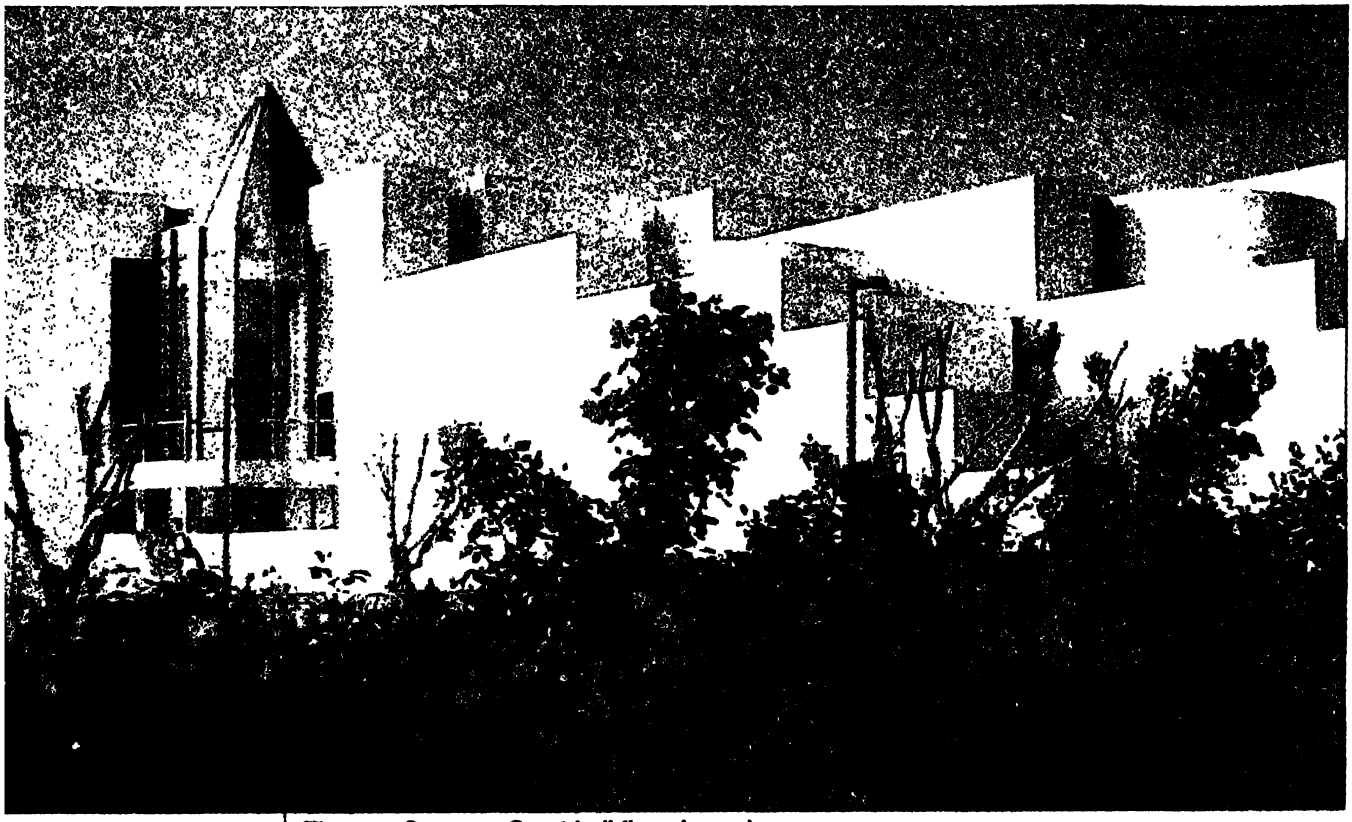
My host's son has been, and can now study only while listening to Indian classical music. "So has my daughter," says the mayor of Jerusalem, Ehud Olmert, whose job is said to be the most high profile and complex in Israel

the *menorah*, outside the Knesset (Parliament)



Sumir Lal

Today, 25,000 young Israelis [illegible] will be [illegible] year. Those many visitors annually from a country of just five million [illegible] that [illegible] every family has a member who has visited India or knows somebody who has



The new Supreme Court building, Jerusalem

after the Prime Minister's.

Eze Gahtan, a banker, says his daughter met her German husband while holidaying in India. And two Israeli officers I know in the embassy in Delhi, Meir Shlomo and Gil Haskel, came here as backpackers in their younger days.

Today, 20,000 young Israelis wend their way to India each year. Those many visitors annually from a country of just five million means that almost every family has a member who has visited India or knows somebody who has. Hence, the deep well of goodwill.

Says my host, a Raj Kapoor fan: "Indo-Israeli relations are like a dam that has opened. There is a huge audience for cultural exchanges."

Israel is indeed a remarkable country....It straddles the cradle of one of the world's oldest civilisations, is home to the holiest sites of three major religions, and is a treasure trove of significant archaeological finds

Israel took the initiative in November with a month-long festival in India's major cities titled "Shalom India". Commemorating 50 years of Indian independence and five years of diplomatic relations, it was a very special gesture for Israel has never done anything similar for anyone else.

"Ours is a natural alliance," exults a senior member of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's staff. "We share a great kinship as the only two democracies between the Mediterranean and the Pacific."

Israelis, both on the street and in official positions, show great understanding of the compulsions that prevented India from establishing diplomatic relations earlier. Even now, India's ties with the Arab world are not viewed as "a problem."

Instead, it is India's sympathy for Iran that evokes concern. "We cannot understand," says more than one official, "why India should appease a regime that poses danger to India itself."

A bomb shelter in north Israel



The fear is that Iran will possess nuclear missiles within a few years and, being fanatical and unpredictable, will threaten everyone in the neighbourhood.

Such talk reminds me of my first encounter with the very real, daily fear this little country — it can





The Cardo, a restored Roman-Byzantine complex; the Muslim Quarter of Old Jerusalem

be crossed by car at its widest point in 90 minutes — confronts.

We were touring the new Supreme Court building, airy and modern yet blending wonderfully with the stony glow of old Jerusalem, when we chanced upon its auditorium. Nothing special about that except that it doubled as a bomb shelter.

"Every public and private building has a bomb shelter," informed our guide. As if to press the point, a posse of soldiers passed by. They were armed and in uniform, but very young and mostly girls. They were informal and chattering, clearly on a sightseeing tour too. "On leave," said the guide.

In practical terms, all able-bodied young Israeli citizens are soldiers on leave, given their compulsory military service.

Israel is indeed a remarkable country. Tiny, surrounded by hostile neighbours, born in traumatic circumstances less than 50 years ago, combatant in six wars, located in harsh terrain — and yet, among the top two dozen in the world economically, technologically and militarily.

It straddles the cradle of one of the world's oldest civilisations, is home to the holiest sites of three major religions, and is a treasure trove of significant archaeological finds. Yet it is a very modern nation and both physically and culturally the meeting point of Asia and Europe. To understand the steely resolve and fierce patriotism of the Israeli people, one has only to visit the Yad Vashem Sanctuary, which is a chilling, haunting, blood-curdling and moving memorial to the six million Jews, including 1.5 million children, who were systematically butchered by

Women play an equal role in the Army



'Every public and private building has a bomb shelter,' informed our guide. As if to press the point, a posse of soldiers passed by. They were armed and in uniform, but very young and mostly girls

Most families bring their children to Yad Vashem and every soldier visits as a matter of course. 'You cannot understand who you are as a Jew and an Israeli without knowing the Holocaust,' says Cailingold who has taken us around the memorial

Hitler's Nazis.

The photographs, documents, extracts from diaries (Anne Frank's is the most famous but there are many others equally affecting) and other relics serve as a reminder more horrific and terrible than anything movies like *Schindler's List* can portray.(The real Oskar Schindler, by the way, has planted a tree at Yad Vashem which is flourishing.)

"The most disturbing aspect of the Holocaust," says Asher Cailingold, who has taken us around the memorial, "is not the details of the torture and humiliation, but its utter mindlessness. We commemorate it to honour those who died and to remind ourselves that it must never be allowed to happen again."



The stone on which Jesus' body was laid

Too Long a Wait...

Like the rest of the world, Israelis have been very keen to do business with India ever since the economy was opened up. Their enthusiasm was perhaps the greatest, given their special affection for this country.

But six years on, they are standing by with a bewilderment that borders on exasperation. Here are some responses from Israeli business and government sources:

☞ "Numerous obstacles to business in India."

☞ "Too many stamps required on too many pieces of paper."

☞ "The same effort yields better results elsewhere."

Explains a bureaucrat: "Most Israeli companies are modest in size, and can neither understand nor fight such difficulties, especially as they do not occur elsewhere."

He points out that while Israeli companies have technology to offer, they do not have the financial muscle to tide over unnecessary delays. There have been some successful partnerships, of course, such as that between RAD Data Communications, a world leader in providing connections between networks, and MRO-Tek of Bangalore.

RAD finds the Bangalore company's technical expertise worldclass, but is nevertheless a bit unhappy at having been forced by the Indian government to set up a manufacturing unit here (the only country where it has had to do this.)

Says a RAD source: "The saving on labour costs is marginal, but shipping in our materials is expensive. There are other costs plus we miss out on Israeli government subsidies."

Nevertheless, RAD intends to further build its presence in India, where it has already hogged 97 per cent of the market in its product category.

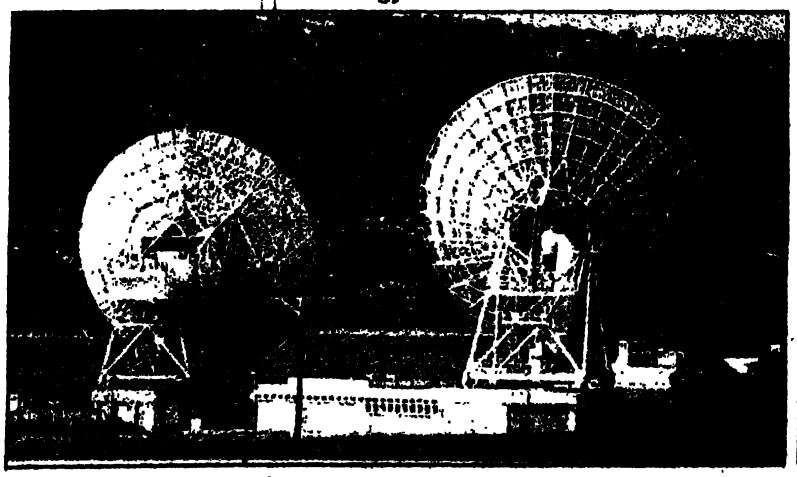
Trade between the two countries has increased vastly since diplomatic ties were established, but again have not reached full potential. Israel's strengths are fertilisers, telecommunication and information technology, and agricultural components.

From India it expects textiles, garments, software and maybe even cars. It is also willing to offer itself as a manufacturing location for Indian companies trying to access the European market.

"You have a big economy, we have a strong one," says a trade official. "We get along well and you are poised for a boom."

What he adds *sotto voce* is that the world's been waiting for the Indian boom for a bit too long.

Israel is a world leader in communications technology



Most families bring their children to Yad Vashem and every soldier visits as a matter of course. "You cannot understand who you are as a Jew and an Israeli without knowing the Holocaust," says Cailingold.

The Holocaust, of course, was the culmination of over 2,000 years of persecution of the Jews, who were exiled from their ancestral homeland in ancient times.

Thus, another powerful symbol in the Jewish psyche is the mud fortress of Masada on the shores of the Dead Sea. In 73 BC, the last surviving group of about 1,000 Jews barricaded themselves here and withstood a Roman siege for over three years. When the walls were finally breached, they preferred to commit suicide rather than surrender. Today every military recruit is taken to the fortress, where he swears: "Masada will never fall again."

If the Holocaust propelled Jews to reclaim their ancient land earlier this century (others too have a legitimate claim to it, but that is another story), Masada symbolises their determination to stay free in it.

The creation of the modern Israeli state in 1948 led, of course, to waves of immigration from Jews dispersed all over the globe. Israeli society today is thus ethnically and culturally diverse.

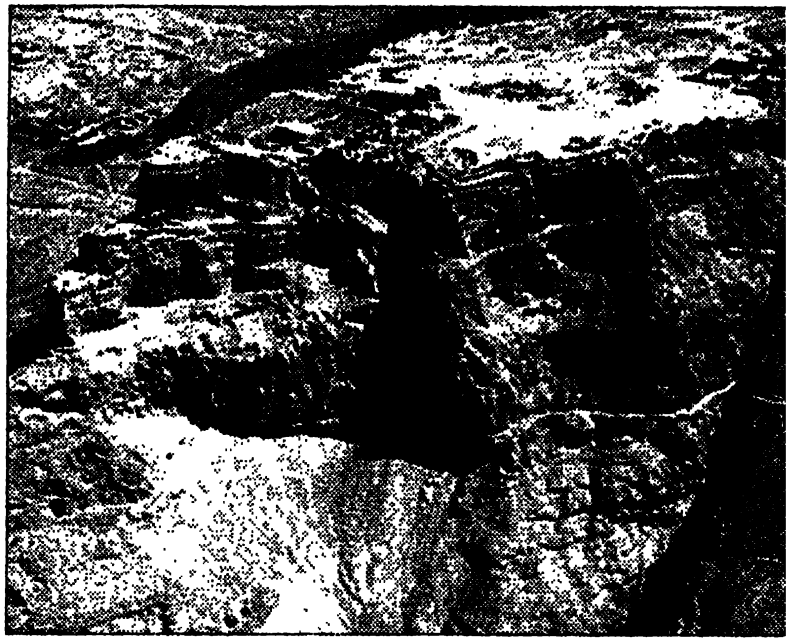
The majority comprises European settlers who began flowing in before World War II and Holocaust survivors. Then there is a sizeable minority of north African and west Asian Jews, plus those from countries like India. Of late, there has been an influx from the erstwhile Soviet Union.

What holds them all together is their common religion, shared historical memory and the presence of hostile neighbours. One must not forget the other minority sections — the non-Jewish, long-time residents of the land, comprising Muslim and Christian Palestinian Arabs, plus Druze, Bedouin and others. These people dwell mainly in villages and small towns.

The diversity is all too apparent on the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Our driver, for example, is a brown-skinned Moroccan Jew with an Arabic accent while our escort is a blond Canadian with an unmistakable north American twang.

They drive us to a typical eatery where we lunch on *kubeh* (fried meatballs), Moroccan "cigars" (fluffy crisp rolls stuffed with meat), *hummous* (spiced chickpea paste), skewered lamb fat and goose, and a range of salads.

They converse with each other in Hebrew — and this is the other great cement which binds the Israeli nation. An ancient tongue which ceased to be spoken after the Jewish dispersal 2,000 years ago, Hebrew was confined to liturgy, religious literature and philosophy until the last century.



The mud fortress of Masada: A symbol of freedom

In an amazing, conscious revival since then, it became first a cultural medium for the Jewish diaspora and was then actively propagated as the official language of the new state. It is mandatory for every Israeli citizen to know it, and its vocabulary has grown from 8,000 words in Biblical times to over 120,000 today. It is now very much the everyday language in the streets and homes of Israel.

But like India, diversity is Israel's strength as well as bugbear. The Christian community is divided into numerous, often bickering sects, while the Muslims contain every shade of political opinion. But this is even more true of the Jews. Some 20 per cent are orthodox (even their levels of orthodoxy vary), and are prominent on the streets in their black overcoats, top hats and long earlocks. Another 20 per cent, in contrast, are non-practising.

Booms Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert (he is a large, Popeye-like character given to puffing cigars and thumping his desk, and is tipped as a future Prime Minister): "My biggest problem is not Jews versus Arabs, but Jews versus Jews."

Some orthodox groups do not want traffic on the roads on the Sabbath (Saturday). And some "ultra, ultra" types do not even recognise the state of Israel as they believe it can only be divinely created. The impact such rigid views can have politically, and especially on the larger problem of peace in the region, can be readily imagined.

"What is required," sighs Olmert, "is patience."

If that is the medicine for Israel's social and political problems, its hugely successful

What holds them all together is their common religion, shared historical memory and the presence of hostile neighbours

City of God, Gold, Joy and Old

Jerusalem is all this, and more

Day has just broken, and we catch our first glimpse as the highway rounds a hill. It is hard to tell whether the mellow, honeyed glow is from the early morning sun or the golden stone of the city, but Jerusalem is breathtaking.

Spread over several hills and valleys, the city gleams in an ethereal way. Every building, ancient or modern, is built of the local stone, which interacts most extraordinarily with light — glowing softly at dawn, shining brightly at midday, reflecting starkly the electric bulbs in the evening, gleaming luminously in moonlight.

This most fascinating of cities is no less than 3,000 years old and contains, within an area of a few hundred square feet, the most important sacred sites of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Yet, today it is also a fast expanding metropolis.

Ever since its reunification after Israel's victory in the 1967 war, the city has experienced a construction and population boom so that there are now two Jerusalems: the ancient walled city of legend, and the modern capital of Israel.(Mumbai-like Tel Aviv is the commercial headquarters and, for diplomatic reasons, home to many embassies.)

No amount of reading or foreknowledge, however, can prepare one for the old city. It is a completely sensory experience. We enter through the majestic Jaffa Gate, and are immediately assailed by a fragrance of wood, coffee and *felafel* (a fried chick-pea pastry.)

Initially, one feels like one is in an Indian bazaar, for the lanes are narrow, long and winding, there are rows upon rows of shops overflowing with artefacts, mementoes, spices, dry fruit and general provisions, and the shopkeepers aggressively call out for custom.

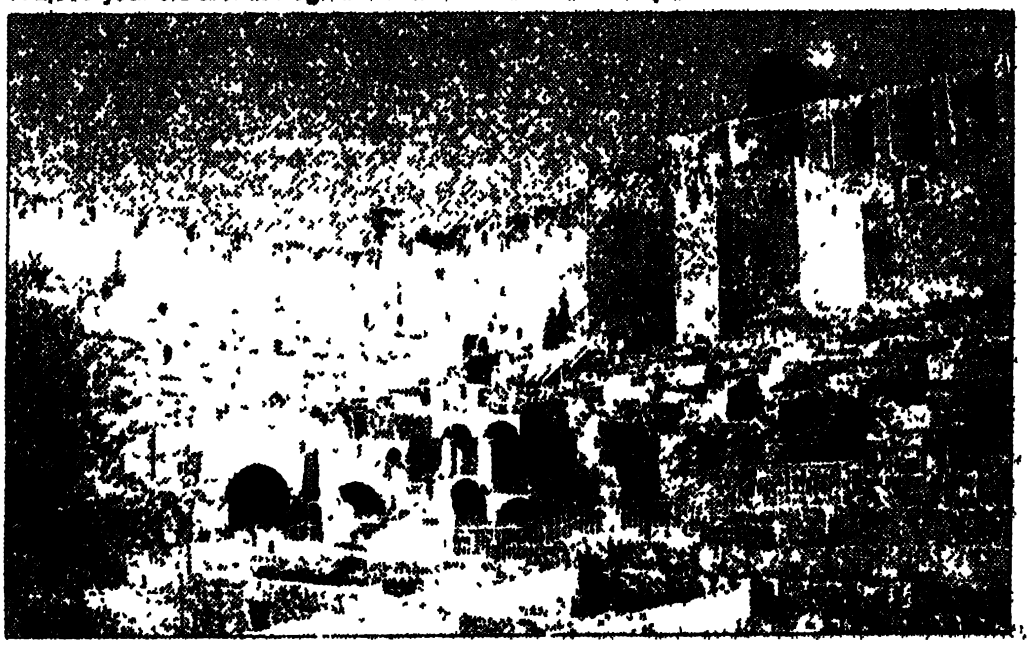
But then one sees. The city is divided into Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Armenian quarters. The holy sites lie cheek by jowl, and the air is thick, all at once, with religion and identity, commerce and politics in an unspoken yet tangible way.

The Dome of the Rock (the rock contains Mohammed's footprint and is said to be the starting point of his ascent to heaven) is a beautiful monument in blue and gold and marble. It dominates a wide square known as the Temple Mount, on the other side of which is the al-Aqsa mosque. At the foot of this square is the Wailing Wall, the holiest site of the Jews and which is all that remains of the original Temple of Solomon.

And, just a short distance away is the Via Dolorosa — the path Jesus took during his crucifixion — with the 14 Stations of the Cross (the places where he rested) marked on the flagstones, and which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the tomb in which he was laid.

They ... and ... nation. In an amazing, conscious revival, it ... is now the everyday language in Israel's streets and homes

A 2,500-year-old archaeological site at a corner of the Temple Mount



* Even as the faithful worship at the Temple Mount, hundreds of black-coated Jews sway rhythmically in prayer at the Wall, while Christians of various persuasions — Catholic and Protestant, Orthodox and Copt — enter the gloomy splendour of the Holy Sepulchre basilica, following their own priests and praying at separate altars and chapels.

It is fascinating, tense and beautiful, as if one has got a snapshot of humanity at its most varied, worshipful and vulnerable.

And yet we have not exhausted Jerusalem. It is home to numerous archaeological finds (a bane for developers, for wherever they dig, they stumble across something of historical value) and some wonderful museums.

We are intensely captivated, and find ourselves drawn, magnet-like, to the old city each day of our stay.

Eventually, Fatih, who sells souvenirs in the Muslim quarter, brings us down to earth.

A devout practitioner of his faith (he straps his cash to his leg rather than keep it in a bank, where it would attract interest), he questions us with child-like wonder on the tenets of Hinduism.

He is hospitable enough to guide us to a good, cheap restaurant and slips in a free memento with the others we have purchased.

Only then does he whisper to my wife: "Sixty per cent of my souvenirs are made in India."

Jerusalem, of course, is not the only place of tourist interest in Israel. There is that natural marvel, the Dead Sea, in which you cannot sink, the Mediterranean coast, Biblical sites like Nazareth and Bethlehem, Galilee, and archaeological sites too numerous to mention.

The country is so small that all locations can be accessed in a day from Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. (So much history, so little geography!)

The Israeli shekel exchanges at roughly 3.5 to the US dollar.

The most convenient way to get there from Calicut is by Royal Jordanian (change at Amman, roughly Rs 44,000 return but check for a discount.)

Air India charges about the same with a change at Mumbai or Delhi.

El Al flies from Mumbai and Delhi at about Rs 32,000 return. (Tip: El Al have very wonderful deals for Europe if your break at Tel Aviv is less than 72 hours.)



An Arab citizen votes: Arabs form one-fifth of the population

formula on the economic front has been discipline, efficiency and resourcefulness

Israel's four basic economic challenges have been to maintain national security, absorb large numbers of immigrants, set up a modern infrastructure, and provide a high level of public services

It has done miraculously well on all fronts given the odds No doubt, this has been in very large measure due to generous aid from the West, especially the US, but there is no denying the role of the people's own resolve

A friendly, gutsy country then, starkly picturesque and culturally fascinating, with numerous lessons for gentle, blundering India

As my wife and I land in the chaos of Mumbai, our first task is to help a group of confused young Israeli backpackers who were on the same flight find taxis and buses that can take them to the domestic terminal and railway station

The international airport of our premier city lacks even the basic service of helping passengers make their onward connections.

Dynamic little Israel is already a memory ■

Boams Jerusalem mayor Ehud Olmert (he is a large, Popeye like character .. and is tipped as a future Prime Minister). 'My biggest problem is not Jews versus Arabs, but Jews versus Jews'

EXTRACT

River of LIFE

Though God cannot alter the past, historians can.

Samuel Butler

Extracts from ***Mukur K. Khisha****'s novel,* All That Glisters

Jorge Luis Borges, the famous Argentine writer, said that the true metaphor of life is the river because the river of life flows ceaselessly. Mihir Das, the professor of English in Delhi University, prefers to think that life is a ride and the journey begins as soon as one is born. He is a slim man of average height but he has more than average grace. When Anup went to see him with a letter of introduction from his father, Professor Das received him warmly saying: "Like your dad, I am a confirmed Mohuan. A leopard can change its spots but not a Mohuan his convictions."

Anup saw a copy of the book *In Your Blossoming Flower-Garden* by Ketaki Kushari Dyson on the coffee table.

Mihir Das said, "It is an excellent book, very well-written, dealing with the sweet relationship between Rabindranath Tagore and Victoria

Victoria Ocampo with Rabindranath Tagore: Sweet relationship



Extracted from *All That Glisters* ***by Mukur K. Khisha; Published by Vikas Publishing House Private Limited Price: Rs 185***



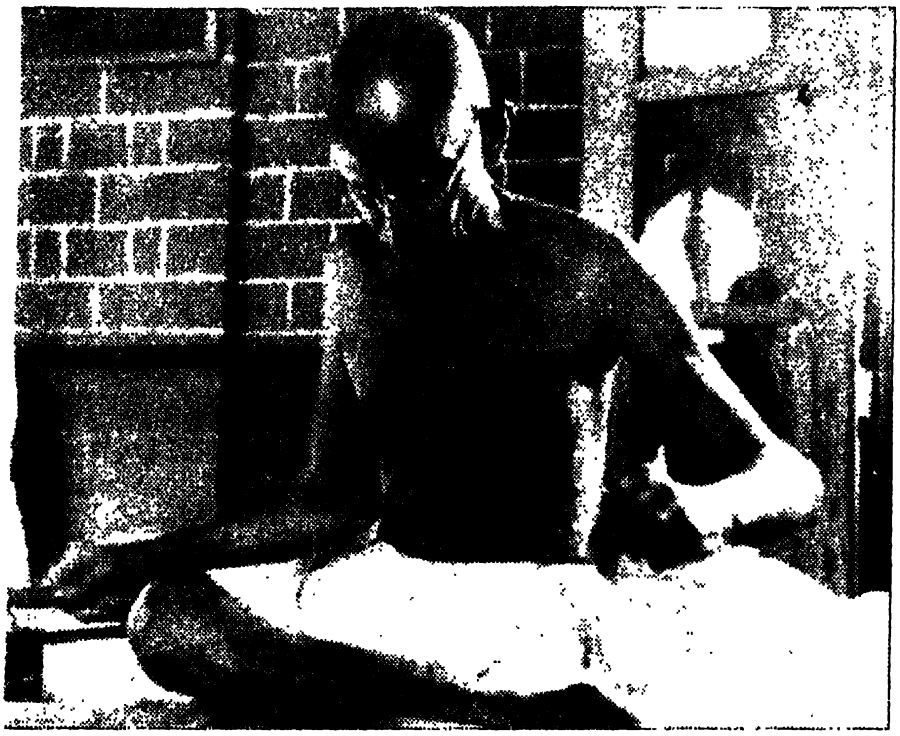
Presidency College:Long and glorious tradition

Ocampo. In November, 1924 Tagore was invited by the President of Peru to attend the centenary celebrations of the battle of Ayacucho. On his way to Lima he reached Buenos Aires where he fell sick and the doctors advised him complete rest. Victoria Ocampo extended her hospitality to the ailing poet and looked after him with all her love and dedication. Ketaki has done a commendable job. I know her well as she was three years junior to me in the English Honours class of the Presidency College in Calcutta. During my visit to Buenos Aires in 1965 Victoria Ocampo was gracious enough to receive me in her house, Villa Ocampo. My only credential was that I was a Bengali, speaking the same language of her beloved Gurudev. It was a signal honour for me to be able to pay my respects to that grand old dame whom Tagore affectionately called Bijoya. As soon as I extended my hand, she said: 'I still remembers the Bengali word *Bhalobasa* that Gurudev taught me.' I told her that in Bengali it does not have the same restrictive meaning as its English synonym of love. For us the meaning of *Bhalobasa* is much more comprehensive as it blends love, affection, sympathy and understanding. She showed me some memorabilia of Tagore and also gave me one copy of her book *Tagore En Las Barrancas De San Isidro* which I treasure with so much pride."

Mihir Das loves to relive that memorable afternoon when he felt ecstatic about being able to chat with Victoria Ocampo on the sprawling lawns of the ancestral home of the Ocampo family. She told him that amongst all the people she admired most were three Indians — Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. She was so pained by the controversy between Tagore and Gandhi. In fact this was a revelation to Mihir Das. He did not know that there was such a serious disagreement between these two great Indians. Nothing much is known about it in India. Long after his return, he delved into records to see what actually happened.

Rabindranath Tagore was a true patriot and he did not use patriotism as the last refuge of a scoundrel. After the massacre of Jalianwalla Bagh in April, 1919 when troops of general Dyer fired 1600 rounds at the unarmed people who had no way to escape, Tagore renounced his Knighthood. In his letter to the Viceroy, Tagore condemned the action expressing his pain and anguish. "The enormity of the measure taken by the Government in the Punjab in quelling some local disturbances caused a rude shock, revealing to our minds the helplessness of our position as British subjects in India." He therefore felt that "The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruousness of humiliation and I, for my part, wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance, are liable to suffer degradations not fit for human beings." Tagore sent his good friend C.F. Andrews as his emissary to Gandhi. In his message Tagore requested that Gandhi join him in entering the Punjab to express sympathy and solidarity for the victims against the ban imposed by the Government. It was a shock to Tagore when Gandhi reacted with cool indifference and sent his reply through Andrews: "I have no intention to create any difficulty for the Government at this time." This only showed Gandhi's patriotism in a poor light.

Tagore was a visionary with a modern and universal outlook. His



Mahatma Gandhi spinning the Charka

aspiration was to unite all humanity in sympathy and understanding. He founded Vishwa-Bharati, a world university at Santiniketan. He was disappointed to see Gandhi being transformed into a one-command man of "spin and weave". He pointed out that if large machines posed a danger to the West, no machines would constitute even a greater danger for India To oppose industrialisation was to shut the door to progress and development. When Gandhi launched his non-co-operation movement and asked students to boycott classes, Tagore did not hesitate to express his concern. To his way of thinking, non-co-operation was an alien concept and he argued that boycotting of schools and colleges by students would only result in non-education. He was against the spirit of exclusion. In an article in *The Modern Review*, the famous Calcutta monthly, in its issue of November, 1921, (published in October) Tagore wrote: "For India unity is truth and division evil. No nation can find its salvation by breaking away from others. We must all be saved or we must all perish together."

Gandhi was furious and reacted angrily. In his article in the *Young India* of October 13, 1921 Gandhi wrote: "Trace the source of every coin that finds its way to your pocket and you will realise the truth of what I write. Everyone must spin. Let Tagore spin like others. Let him burn his foreign clothes. That is the duty. God will take care of the morrow." This only shows the abject pettiness of Gandhi. On his part Tagore was far above such meanness and he had no intention of entering into dirty squabbles. His intelligence was serene, broad and free-born, nourished by the cultures of the whole world. He was content to say: "All humanity's greatest is mine." He believed that "The infinite personality of man, as the Upanishads say, can only come from the magnificent harmony of all human races." It was Tagore who had given the name of Mahatma or Great Soul to Gandhi. But Gandhi showed no gratitude and behaved like a person who does not hesitate to bite the hand that feeds him.

Mihir Das became somewhat emotional and said to Anup, "Like your dad, I was a refugee from East Pakistan. I was born in Chittagong which was then in British India. After the partition in 1947 it became part of East Pakistan. Then came the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. In my lifetime my native place has changed its status three times. What an irony of fate! I am only hoping to see one more change to make it again a part of India. My only dream is to undo the partition of India. Nothing is impossible in this world. Who amongst us could ever predict the reunification of Germany or the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the manner these events took place? Way back in 1960, I met a young diplomat from the Federal Republic of Germany. His name was Karl Munch. He used to tell me about their dream of a united Germany. When I sounded somewhat sceptical, he reproached me: 'Look here, you must have faith. In 1885 when the Indian National Congress was founded, did the leaders foresee that India would win freedom on 15th of August, 1947? They started their struggle with hope and faith. So is our case. We do not know how long it will take. It may take 20, 30 or 50 years. But one day our dream will be fulfilled.' Karl, wherever you may be today, I share your joy for the reunification of Germany. Like Martin Luther King Jr, we all have a dream. My dream is the reunification of India."

Anup did not what to say. He though of uttering some words of sympathy or consolation. But Mihir Das continued.

"I still feel nostalgic about Calcutta. In our days it was a matter of pride and privilege to study in the Presidency College which has such a long and glorious tradition. It had so many distinguished professors in every department. I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been a student of such an eminent professor as Tarak Nath Sen. With his encyclopaedic knowledge, he had no peers. His method of teaching was unique. I can never forget his classes on Shakespeare, and especially *Macbeth*, and the way he explained the significance of Shakespeare's short lines. It was wrong to consider the short lines a defect of metre or a fault in the structure of the composition. They were to be completed by a physical movement of the actor. Shakespeare was a supremely gifted playwright and he wrote his plays to be acted. Professor Sen would read aloud, modulating his voice, and as soon as he came to short line, he would complete it with a marvellous gesticulation. We were transported to an enchanted world where the characters of Shakespeare came romping before us." ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



You will be doing a fair amount of re organising, shifting around chopping and changing at home This will not only be in the house itself but in your own life, too, in reallocating priorities and trying to make life more easy for yourself You will certainly be quite successful in romantic pursuits

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



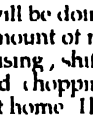
Change and movement will definitely be the order of the day There is likely to be a fair bit of travelling or certainly travel plans There will have to be an equally heavy involvement with finance—cash dealing, liquidation of assets and liquidity of cash flow The world of spiritualism will occupy you

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Quietude of the mind withdrawal from unnecessary involvements are what you experience Equal measures of introversion and extroversion, of looking forward as well as backward are likely this week Journeys to distant places are likely A very happening as well as hectic week ahead

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The theme of movement is still strong and it will be of all kinds physical mental, emotional and even financial The last named will be particularly good and you will find that all kinds of money matters and dealings pose no problems You will have a certain pride in yourself and your assets

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Your work will change tremendously in nature and scope Pending assignments will come to successful completion New projects, ventures deals will really be off to a flying start and what's more you will maintain this lead A change of profession or job hop may happen You will be lucky

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



This week spells fun frolic and some real hard work too It is time to pick up the loose threads and begin anew New year brings in a lot of new responsibilities duties as well as some pleasant surprises It is upto you to put up a good show But do not neglect your health as it might affect your work

Libra
September 23 — October 22



You scintillate and shine this week courtesy your personality and physique Your past performance holds you up in favourable light and you will have some reasons to celebrate Kudos and plaudits automatically come your way and you bask in it The tendency to be complacent and over confident should be curbed

Scorpio
October 23 - November 22



You open the throttles fully where work is concerned Several interesting and promising offers and opportunities will come your way now and you must try and make the best possible use of them It will be difficult for you to cope with all that you have to do without proper rest and relaxation Don't neglect your health

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



You realise the need to rest It's time to swing relax a bit or 'chill out' as young sters say today You have fun, host a party laugh and be happy Love also comes bliss and solitude and you reach out to grab all the fun and really enjoy life Invite friends over and be their guests, too A great week ahead

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



You will focus on money matters, finances, family affairs transactions for business and high adventure as well The main trend will be of making deals, resolving tangled domestic matters and sorting out family problems Much diplomacy and tact will be required of you and you will do well

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Having done so much to make others happy, it's only fair that you get the same treatment yourself Do unto others is a fine idea, for it brings someone into your life (provided there isn't someone already) who warms the cockles of your heart There will much amusement and entertainment this week

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



The theme of useful connections and contacts prevails on the work front However much to be grateful about says Ganesha This week you will be truly enjoying life journeys ceremonies publicity and conferences Romance and marriage too So let the good things roll while you bask in glory

BIRTHDAYS

January 11: Venus conjunction Neptune signifies excellent year for artists, government employees, travellers, entrepreneurs, politicians and actors. Fun and profit in an ideal mix.

January 12: Full moon ensures that despite a few pressures and worries, you do make it. Friends, contacts, alliances, widening social circle a trip with a stop-over is on the cards

January 13: Moon opposition Venus-Neptune predicts the possibility of misunderstandings if you are not tactful and understanding. There is a change in existing relationships.

January 14: Moon trine Saturn spells success for government employees, those in armed services, lovers, artists, poets and actors. Think big and plan realistically and work hard—that's the astro way to succeed in 1998

January 15: Moon opposition Mars asks you to be careful if driving a car long distance, or piloting a plane frequently. This is a year of personal evolution.

January 16: Sun conjunction Venus is excellent for progress and prosperity, no matter what the station in life. By your communication skills and sheer brain power, you will triumph.

January 17: Moon trine Venus means a great year for the artists, craftsmen, artisans, film directors, actors and also engineers. Comfort and love will be yours!



May it be a Dream-come-true New Year

P. C. CHANDRA
JEWELLERS

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TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1130	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1200	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1430	1	IC-742	1620	1
IC-743	1300	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC 744	1520	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
IC-745	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-257	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 258	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1315	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1600	daily	IC 756	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 767	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W 902	0835	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	*IC-855	0755	2, 6
*IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 911	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1230	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1610	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0750	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1530	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC-702	0715	2, 4, 6	9W 612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
IC-202	1405	6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
IC-202	1655	1, 3	IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1615	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 5
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 4, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 4, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1230	2, 4, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 4, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	0855	2, 4	KB-106	0910	2, 7
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
			IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6			
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
DHAKA					
IC-749	1015	1	IC-750	1240	1
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0650	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC 724	1700	6
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG 093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG 094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG 095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI 106	0715	7
BI 109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC 747	0945	6	IC 748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA 213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
MOSCOW					
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
PARIS					
KB 106	0955	2, 7	KB-105	0810	2, 4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ 415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC-755	1450	4	IC-756	0840	5
IC-727	1320	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC 727	1320	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	**Delhi-Kalka Mail**	6 45	2312
3005	19 20	**Amritsar Mail**	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	**Mumbai Mail** via Allahabad	13 15	3004
2381	9 15	**Poorva (New Delhi) Express** via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9 15	**Poorva (New Delhi) Express** via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	**Rajdhani Express** via Gaya Dep Mon Tues Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	**Rajdhani Express** via Patna Dep Wed & Sun., Arr Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23-30	**Jodhpur Express**	4-40	2308
2019	6 05	**Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express** Dep. & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	**Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express** Tri Wkly Dep Tues Fri & Sat Arr Tues., Wed & Sat.	11 35	3074
3045	22-00	**Guwahati Saraighat Express** Dep Tues., Wed & Sat, Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	06 00	3046
5049	23-00	**Gorakhpur Express** Dep & Arr Thursday	11 35	5050
5047	13-00	**Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express** Dep & Arr Sun., Mon Wed & Fri	4 15	5048
3009	20-15	**Doon Express** via Grand Chord	7 00	3010
3007	9 45	**Udyan Abha Toofan Express** via Main Line	18 10	3008
3039	21-00	**Delhi Janata Express**	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	**Amritsar Express**	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	**Kathgodam Express**	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	**Mithila (Rasaul) Express**	5-00	3022
5659	15 25	**Kamrup (Guwahati) Express**	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	**Black Diamond Express**	21 25	3318
3029	17-11	**Coalfield Express**	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	**Asansol Express**	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	**Danapur Express**	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	**Jamalpur Express**	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	**Santiniketan Express**	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	**Rampurhat Express**	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	**Chambal (Gwalior) Express** Dep: Mon., Tue & Thurs.; Arr. Mon., Thurs & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	**Shipra (Indore) Express** Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun., Wed & Sat	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	**Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express**	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	**Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express** Dep Fri; Arr Tues	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	**Tinsia-Torsa Express**	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	**Darjeeling Mail**	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	**Lal Quila Express** via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	**Kanchenjunga** (New Jalpaigun) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	**Gour Express**	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	**Kishan Express**	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	**Jammu-Tawi Express**	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	**Mughal Sarai Express** via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	**Magadh (Lalgola) Express**	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	**Ganga Sagar (Gonakpur) Express** Dep. & Arr. Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	**Madras Mail**	6-55	6004
8002	19 20	**Mumbai Mail** via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	**Gitanjali (Bombay) Express**	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	**Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express** Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	**Ahmedabad Express**	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	**Kurla Express** via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14 00	**Coromandal (Chennai) Express** via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7-50	**Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express**	19 40	2704
8013	17 30	**Tata Steel Express**	10-20	8014
8011	6 50	**Ispat (Sambalpur) Express**	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	**Sambalpur-Rayagada Express**	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	**Ranchi Hatia Express**	6 20	8016
8007	22 00	**Puri Express** via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19 00	**Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express**	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	**Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express**	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	**East Coast (Hyderabad) Express**	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	**Purulia Express** Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	**Tirupati Express**	4-15	8080
1030	15 45	**Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express** Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	**Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express** (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	**New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express** (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	**Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express** Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	**Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express** Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14-10	**Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express** (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03-50	**Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express** (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03 30	5624
6324	22-35	**Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express** Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	**Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express** (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03 30	5626
5625	14-10	**Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express** (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22 35	**Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express** Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2208535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3509535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a 23-year-old post graduate student. I was never very ambitious nor aimed for the stars. My loved ones have high hopes about me. But I have an abysmally low self-confidence. I would like to become successful but there are too many career options before me leaving me undecided about my future. I was advised by someone not to pursue higher studies as I did not possess the personality to go with such a career. But I decided to continue with my studies only to end up thinking whether I really possessed "those" qualities. I know I appear to lack the will power to single-mindedly pursue the object of my desire. My fickle-mindedness and these negative qualities are proving detrimental to my progress. I have a strong feeling that I'll end up getting nowhere. What should I do?*



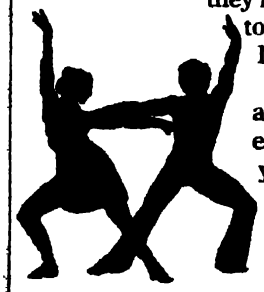
Prakash Mehra, Calcutta

A. Unfortunately, "success" in today's world is associated only with ambition and competitiveness. In my view success lies in integration with one's environment and circumstances, and the ability to retain one's individuality inspite of them. Success is the courage to be second-best, to acknowledge your own priorities rather than blindly following the norms set by other people. You have made the mistake of listening to too much advice from too many people. Listen to your own head and heart and your inner voice will surely tell you what it is that you really need to do. Once you decide on your internal goals, follow them with determination and dedication. Negative thoughts are like a mire into which we sink deeper and deeper once we start encouraging them. Take a positive view of your situation, all you lack is the courage to take that first, decisive step!

Q. *I am an employee in a government organisation and planning to get married. Recently, I met a girl who is a post graduate student and a classical dancer. She is supposed to go abroad with her dance troupe. We would like to get married but my parents are against the idea of a having a stage performer as a model housewife who should be engaged in cooking, knitting, and other such chores. I belong to a lower middle-class family and at present, quite confused about my post-marital life. Should I ask her to quit dancing? But I would be killing an artiste in the process. How should I go about it?*

Arun Ansu, Calcutta

A. I think you are quite right in that it would be cruel and inconsiderate to ask your future wife to quit dancing. To think that dancing is an immoral occupation is ridiculous in this day and age. I hope you have expressed your family's reservations to your fiancee for they may come as a rude shock to her after marriage.



Dance is an expression of the creative force and you are extremely lucky to be engaged to such a talented young lady. It is prejudiced and ignorant to react so blindly to such an innocent activity. If you do decide to get married, I hope you will firmly abandon such antiquated ideas and discourage your parents from harbouring them either. The "model housewife" who engaged only in cooking, knitting and household chores did so only because her environment discouraged her from more rewarding activity, but the times they are a' changing!

Q. *I am a 16-year-old student and have been ditched by my boyfriend a few months ago. After the incident I have turned weak and helpless. I find no interest in studies or in any other matter. I know that reality is always a con and a let-down, I am too young to comprehend the truth of it and yet consolations are not working. Please help me.*



Malini Mathur, Calcutta

Ditched? Learn to be a little detached about this silly business (of love), indulge yourself with it whenever necessary but remember in the long run duty and common sense are better companions than the transient dream we call love

A. Heartbreak is a part and parcel of growing up. Some people even think that this adolescent condition is an essential ingredient of healthy growth. Before you know it, you will be in love all over again! Just don't invest too much emotion into the process — love is a biological urge with a romantic overlay. Many young women I know make too much of falling in and out of love and forget their total personality development. The poet Tennyson said, "It's better to have loved and lost/than never to have loved at all".But keep in mind what Lord Byron wrote, "Love is of man's life a thing apart/it is a woman's whole existence". Learn to be a little detached about this silly business, indulge yourself with it whenever necessary but remember in the long run duty and common sense are better companions than the transient dream we call love.

Q. *I am a 28-year-old married woman with a one-year-old child. I have been married for three years. Ours was a love marriage and I knew my husband and his family for 10 years. But after we got married, my mother-in-law started behaving in a strange manner. She decided to propagate a very negative image of myself to my father-in-law, brother-in-law, neighbours, relatives and even the maidservants and salespersons visiting our house! She criticises me to all who would care to listen. My husband is aware of my predicament but cannot intervene in fear of being thrown out of the house. I am suffering tremendous mental anguish. I am the constant object of contempt by all and also accused of making my mother-in-law unhappy. The constant criticism is paralysing my self-confidence. I am a post graduate as well as a B.Ed but I don't have the ability to carry on in life. I cannot find the cause of her behaviour and do not know how to cope with this problem. Please reply.*

Mou Chakraborty, Calcutta

A. When we are feeling hurt and vulnerable we always seem to forget that no-one in the world can hurt us unless we expose ourselves to that pain. As your conscience is clear that you have dutifully discharged your family duties, you should now train yourself not to care what the rest of your family thinks. Of course, that sounds easier said than done, but with exception of your husband and child none of these persons is really of any relevance to you. Distance yourself from your family and steel your heart to their slanders. Joint families can be quite insensitive to the pain of their womenfolk. However, everybody in the world recognises and respects strength, however reluctantly. You are very fortunate in that you have your post-graduate and B.Ed degrees to fall back upon.

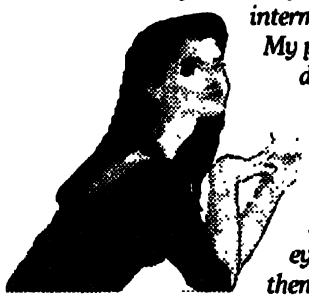


Harassed by in-laws? With the exception of your husband and child none of these persons is really of any relevance to you. Distance yourself from your family and steel your heart to their slanders

Seek out a job as soon as possible, ignoring any guilt that your family may direct upon you for ignoring your child. When you are in a position of relative economic strength, and when your husband has realised that you are no longer disposed to remain a helpless victim, confront him with the choice of standing up for you or losing you.

Once you enter the phase of positive activity, I guarantee that you will be able to look back at your problems and wonder how you could let them faze you.

Q. *I am a 16-year-old boy studying intermediate in college. My problem is that I don't know how and where to look at people when I am talking to them. My eyes keep shifting from one eye to the other and then down to one's chest, especially if the person concerned is a woman. I do not want this to happen and I would like your advice as to how to talk to someone face to face. Recently, I desperately wanted to be friendly with a classmate who is very reserved. How can I break the ice with her without creating an awkward situation.*



H.M., Calcutta

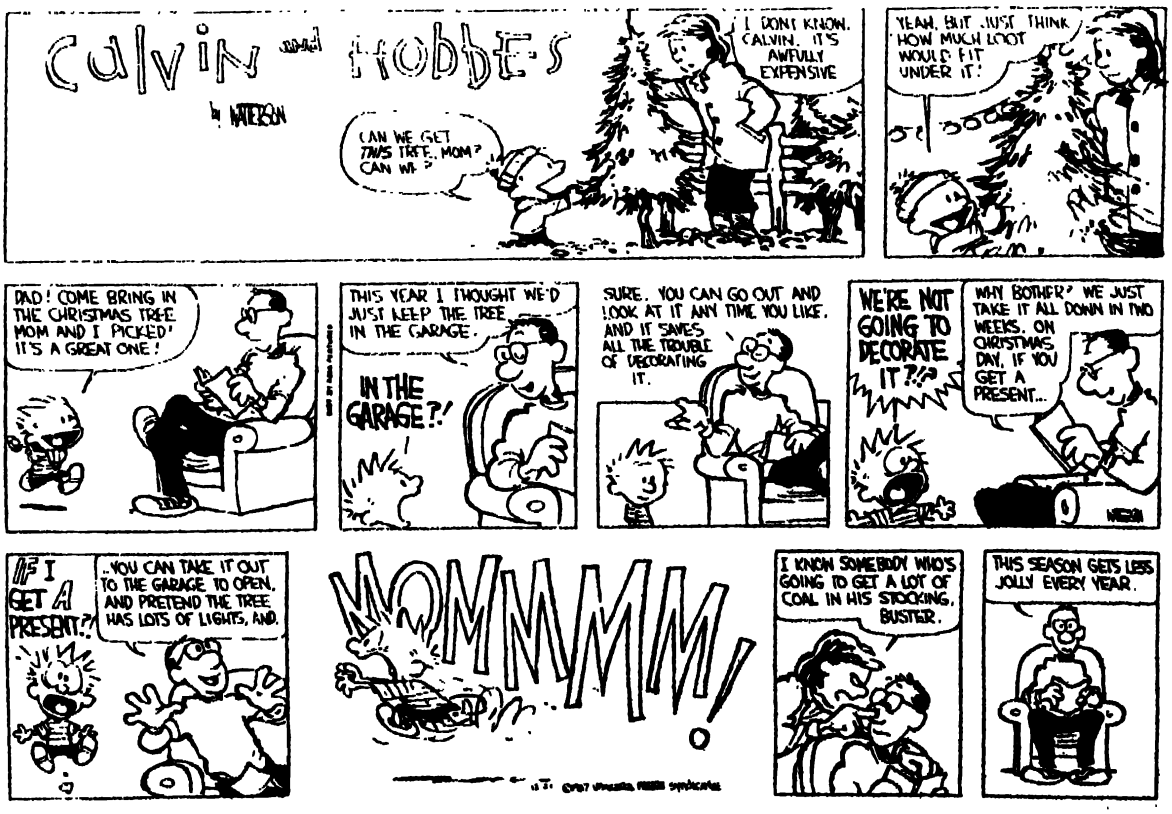
A. Everybody in the world goes through the "awkward age". It is quite normal to be shy and unsure of yourself while you are learning to cope with the world. If you dwell on it too much you will only succeed in reinforcing your social fears. Train yourself to look your friends and companions in the eye. Maintaining eye-contact is an excellent way to initiate communication and to begin friendship. Sincerity and decency are qualities which always speak up for themselves. Moreover, your shyness and awkwardness is much more apparent to you than to the people around you. Everybody I know enjoys talking about themselves — it's really a universal trait. Encourage your classmate who you want to be friendly with to talk about herself — her views, her hopes, her fears. It never fails! ■

COMICS

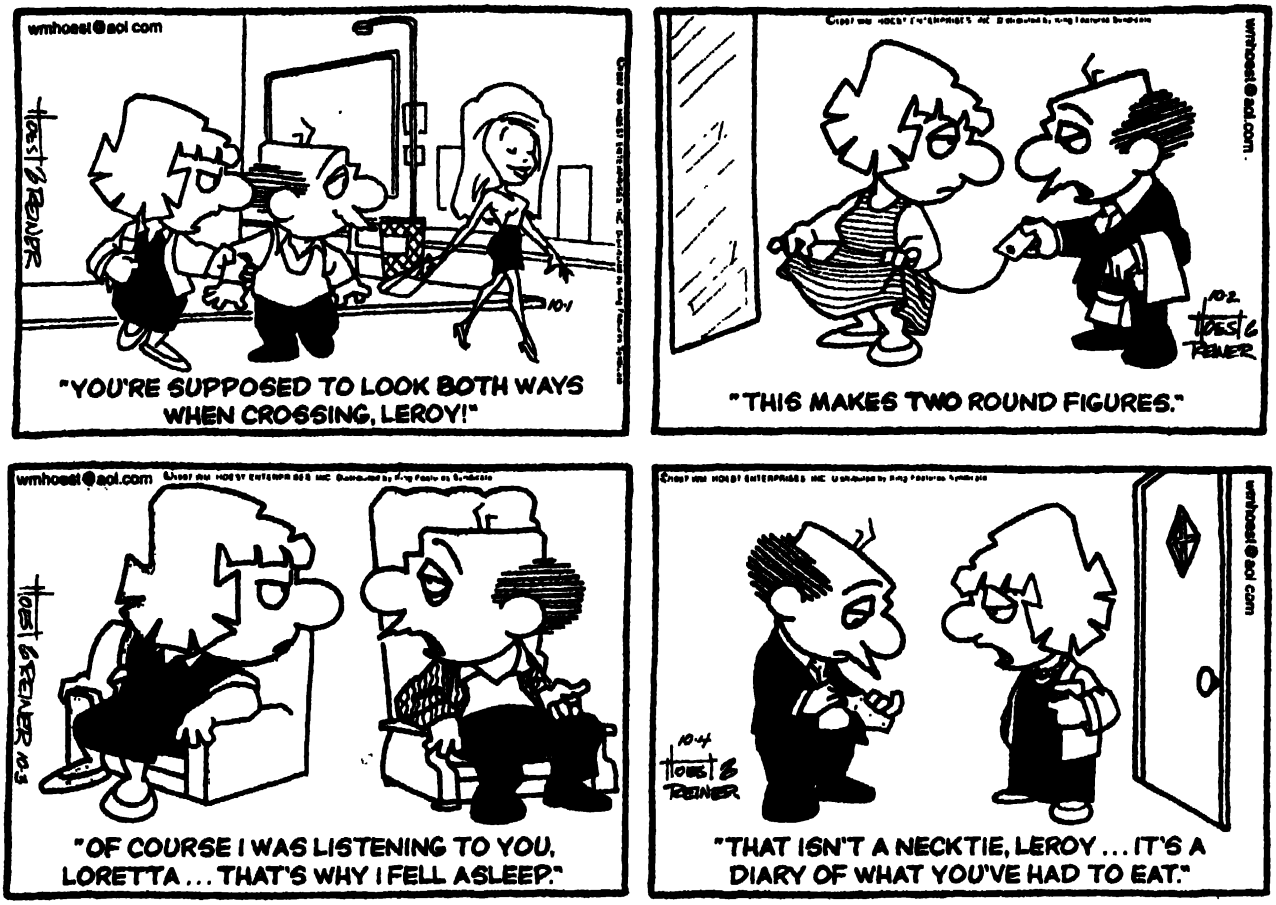
ARCHIE



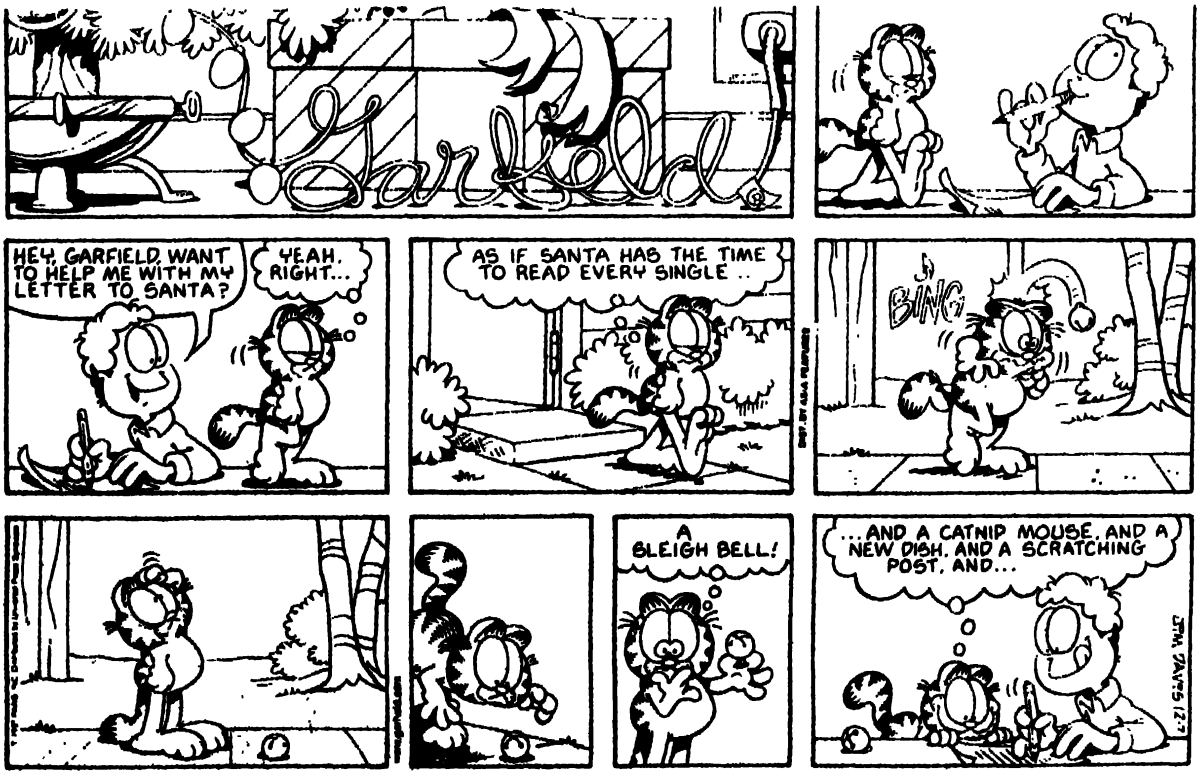
CALVIN AND HOBBES · WATTERSON



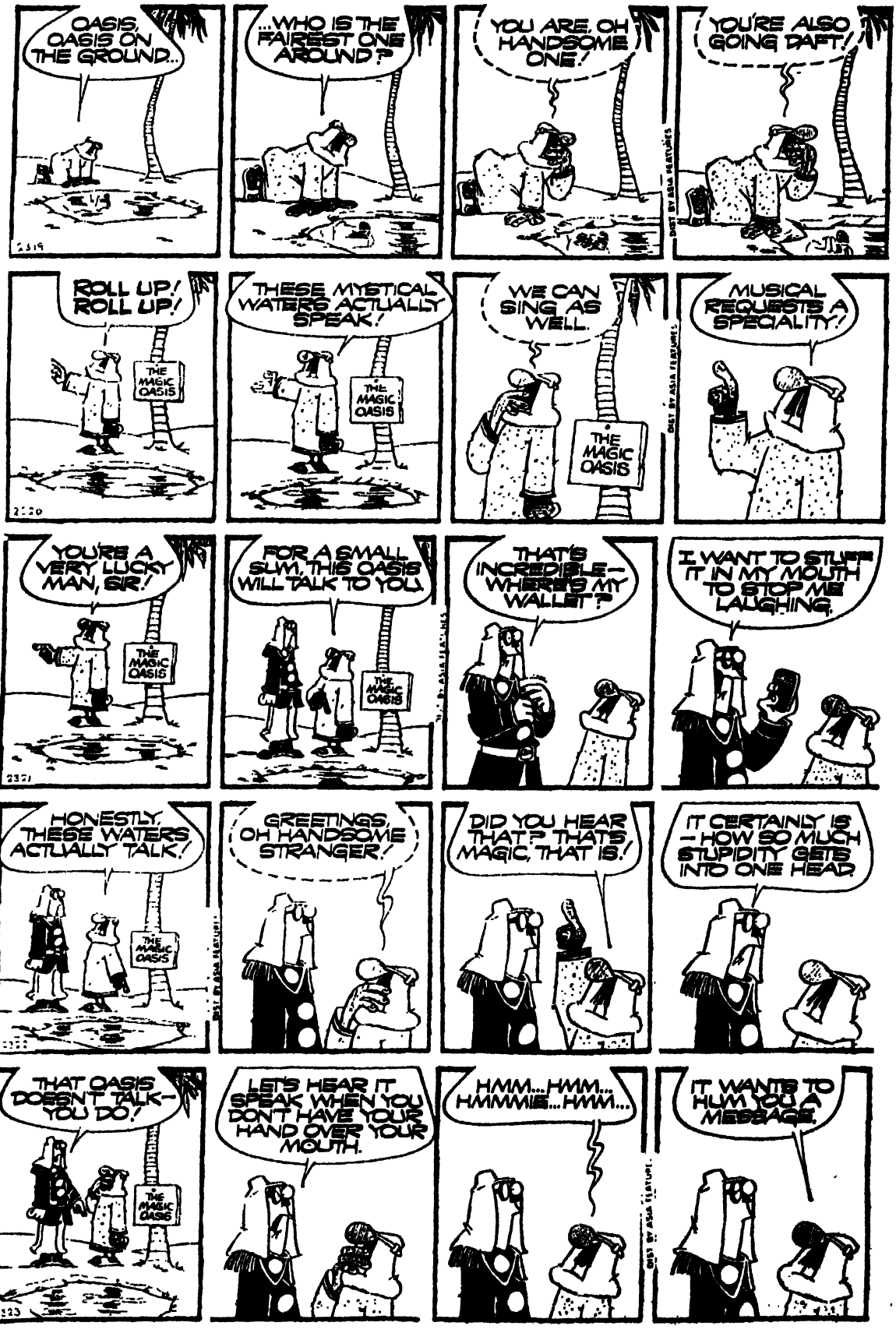
THE LOCKHORNS



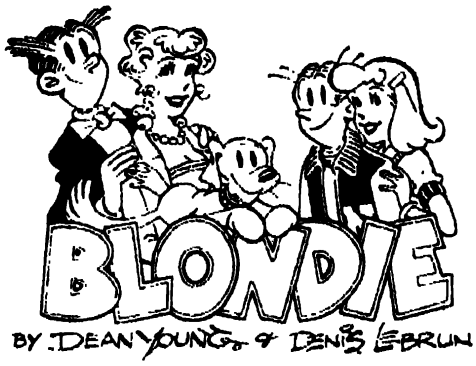
GARFIELD · JIM DAVIS

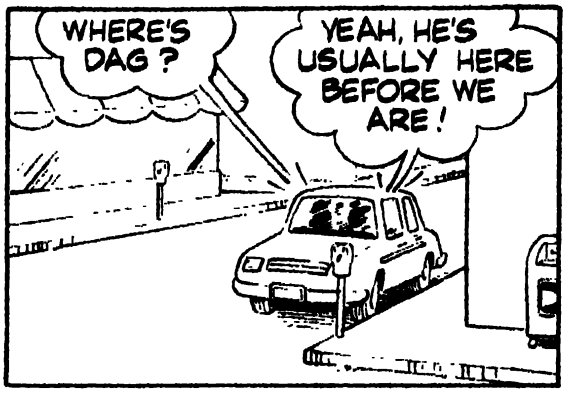


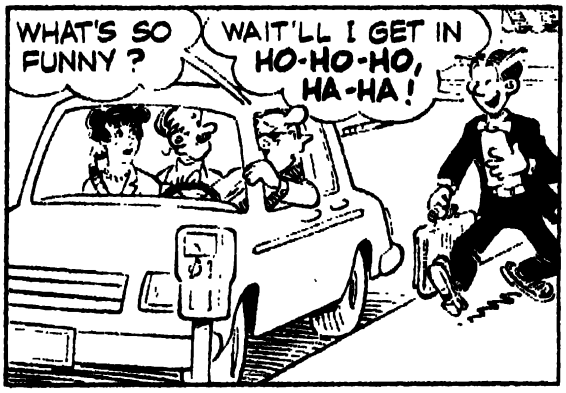
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE by DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



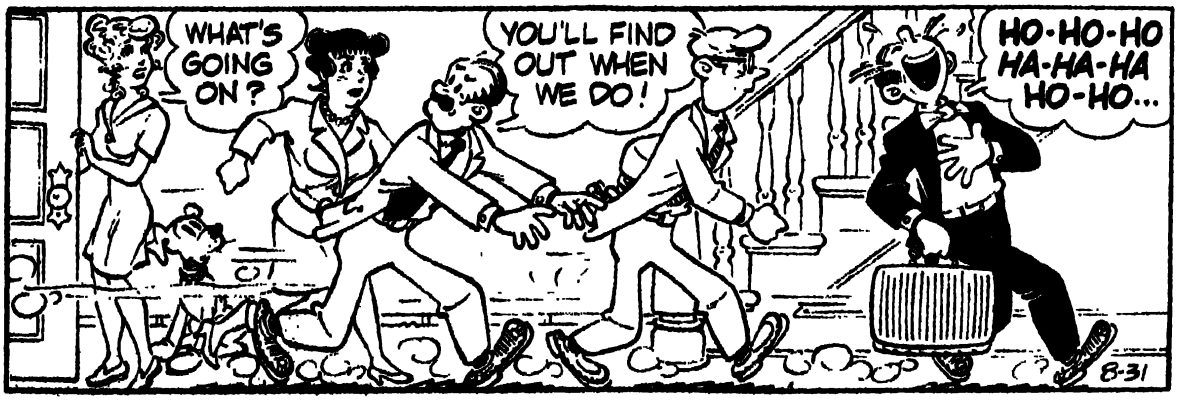












BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am 18 years old and my skin used to be smooth in the past.But recently my face is becoming very spotty and rough. I have an oily complexion and apply foundation when going out.*
Angana Mitra, Calcutta

A Well, how long will you keep covering the flaws? Isn't it better to opt for a healthier skin than to hide it all under make-up? Believe me, that won't camouflage your flaws for too long either. Massage your face with two drops of olive oil mixed with the juice of half a lemon. Apply the following face pack: gramflour, lemon juice, potato juice, grated apple and one egg. Apply a thick layer all over face. When it is dry, dab your face with cold milk and scrub off. Now see how soft and smooth your face looks. If done twice a week regularly, you will see a difference in your skin. At 18, you should be having a glowing complexion that breathes life and not one that has to be covered with artificial colour and make-up! So get your spirits together and work towards a glowing, healthy complexion.

Q *I am 19 years old and my lips are black because of smoking. Please advise.*
Naseem Akhtar, Kidderpore, Calcutta

A If you know what is causing the problem, why not quit? I have seen many youngsters who, if they really try hard, can just about get over it. If you don't do it now, the problem will not only aggravate but also lead to a lot of other problems later on. Start to massage your lips with a solution of glycerine and almond oil daily, preferably at night so that it stays on much longer. This should be done at least twice a day for about a month for results.

Q *I am 20 years old and having a severe pimple problem. I have tried just about every lotion and potion available in the market but nothing seems to help. Please advise.*
Samita Satpathy, Cuttack

A Did you know that a lot of skin problems are related to what you take within your body right from what you eat or what you drink; whether you have a clean stomach or taking enough of water etc. I would suggest that you think about it yourself. Are you taking lots of green vegetables, salads and fruits? Are you avoiding all those sweet temptations, fried foods and heavy gravies? Are you saying a firm 'NO' to colas and ice-creams when they are offered to you? It is important that you go for that morning jog you have been thinking about for a very long time. Keeping one's skin clean is very important and one really has to start internally with at least 10 glasses of water daily to flush out the toxins. Wipe your face with rose water several times a day and be sure to keep it oil-free. You can make the following face pack and use it four times a week: fullers earth, ten ground cloves, mint paste and a pinch of camphor. Let it dry and wash off with ice cold water. Rest assured that you will have a glowing pimple-free complexion within a month.

For a glowing, pimple-free complexion:

■

Apply a pack of fullers earth, ground cloves, mint paste and a pinch of camphor



Pankaj Das

Q *I am a lawyer and having a severe dandruff problem. In fact, it becomes almost*



For a healthy, smooth skin:

■

Avoid artificial colour and make-up which will only hide and not remove blemishes

embarrassing to see the condition of my jacket when I remove it all covered with powdery dandruff everyday. Please help.
A. Madaan, Darjeeling

A Dandruff is a dangerous disease which is not only embarrassing but also extremely harmful. It can lead to hair loss and scalp irritation and if not dealt with carefully, it can also be extremely stubborn. There is no specific cause for this but it can arise due to bad eating habits, stress, lack of sleep, tension, depression and lack of proper exercise. Just as one has to keep one's body clean, one also has to be conscientious about one's scalp. I firmly believe that a clean scalp is a healthy scalp and it is a pure myth that too much shampooing can ruin the hair. Shampooing with a mild shampoo cannot be harmful. I would advise you to start hennaing your hair regularly as this dissuades dandruff and also promotes hair growth. Alongwith this, I would also suggest that you oil your hair once a week and follow by applying the juice of one lemon to your scalp. Leave on for about half an hour and then shampoo off normally.

Q ***I am 17 years old and a regular reader of your column. I have found some of your tips very useful. Please advise me as to how I should have a glowing complexion. I have a dry skin.***
Sonia Thapa, Manipur

A I am glad to know that you are worried about your skin. Most youngsters are conscious about their looks but do not want to do anything about it. It is wiser to start a skin care programme young so that by the time you are 50, you will still have a stunning complexion. Be sure to remember three important things in skin care—cleansing, moisturising and toning. Wipe your face clean by massaging in a few drops of almond oil and wiping with a cotton dipped in rose water. You can then massage the face with a mixture of powdered almonds, honey, fresh cream and lemon juice.

Do this daily for about five to ten minutes and wash face clean. Wipe with another cotton dipped in rose water. You will have no dry patches nor any dull looking skin. Instead, you will acquire a glowing complexion that feels silky soft.

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INTERNET

WWW.Indiagate.Com

Want to know about India? Just log on to the net, says **Samita Bhatia**

India is a big presence on the Web these days. For starters, there's india.com, indiabazar.com, indiadirectory.com, indiaconnect.com, and even indiaworld.com. You think of it and it's there.

While most site developers appear to be fumbling for the perfect content, surfers are not complaining as India related sites have registered as many as 8,000 (for a new-bee) to 80,000 (for older ones) hits already. **The Telegraph Magazine** conducted a survey and came up with the pick of the lot.

DIRECTORY LISTINGS

www.india.domain.com

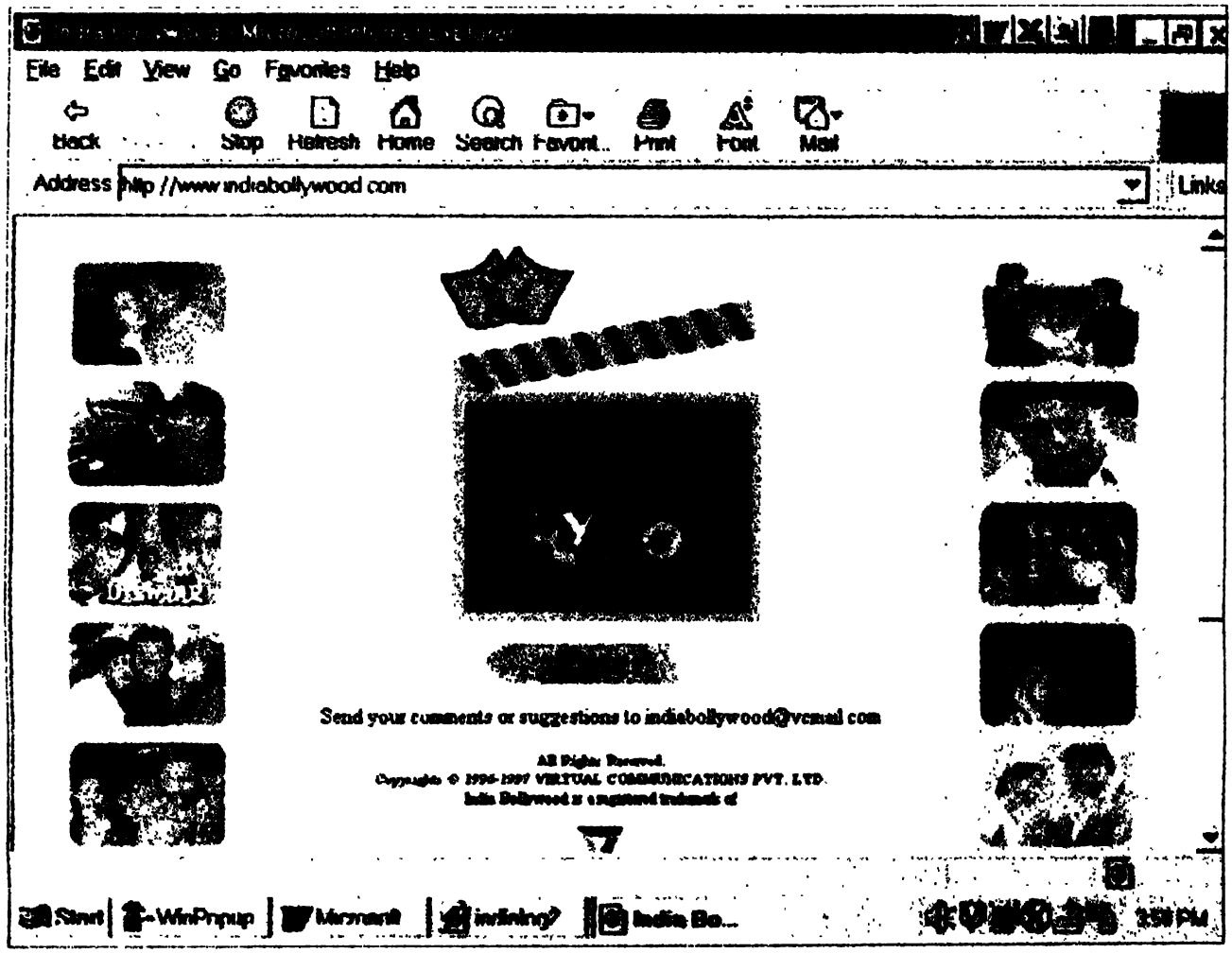
Let's begin with this one. A fair gauge of how the Web community in India is growing even as you read this. If you're looking askance check out this site. It gives you a complete list of all the sites on the net with the word 'India' in it. A great way to begin if you are looking for India on the Web.

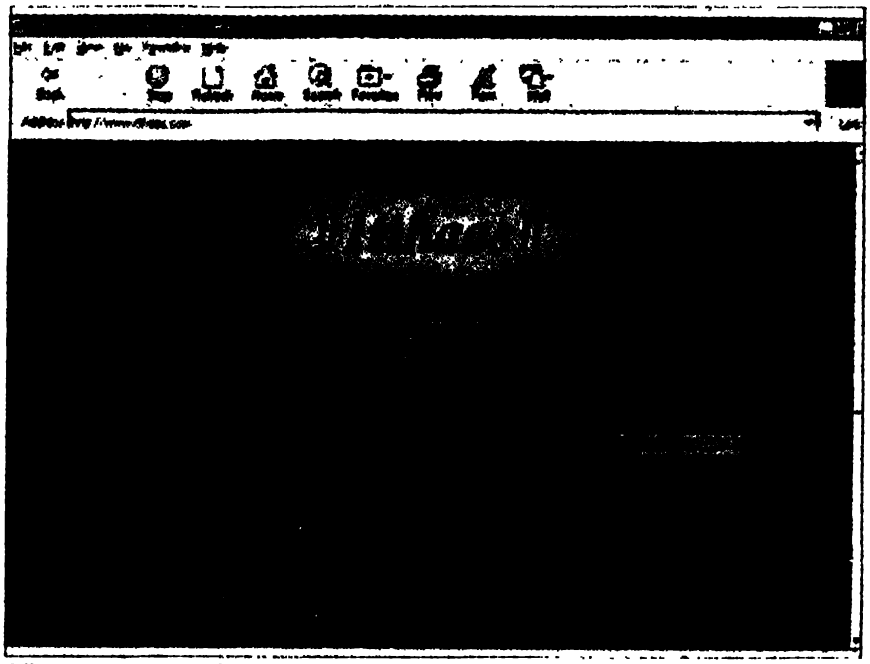
www.indiamart.com

Or the global gateway to the Indian marketplace, the site claims that you can actually conduct on-line business with 60,000 companies. It comprises lists of thousands of Indian business houses—manufacturers, exporters, importers, service providers, buyers etc. Besides, there is also a catalogue of foreign establishments doing business with India. A trade and finance catalogue enlists information on embassies, consulates and high commissions in India; Indian and foreign banks as well as finance consultants.

In the travel update section there is plenty on places of interest, hotels

Indiabollywood site offers the latest gossip from the Mumbai film industry





Itihas connects surfers to ancient, medieval, modern and independent India

and restaurants, travel agents and tour operators. If you represent a travel organisation then the site allows you to add details of your outfit free of cost.

www.2india.com

Classified advertisements from Asians and Indians are available here at no charge whatsoever. The classified are arranged in alphabetical order within the categories. In the section on the arts you can take your pick of paintings, antiques, sculptures and other collectibles.

On the other hand is the 'Wanted' list where you can find a buyer for your wares in the sections. Buy yourself an aircraft if you will, rent it or charter it for there are many available in the Aviation section. On sale there are antique cars, trucks and buses, motorcycles and sports cars in the Automotive section while boats can be bought and sold in the Marine section.

In the yellow pages you can learn about the availability of objects as diverse as *agarbattis*, jute products and acrylic bangles. You can also add information about your site free of cost in the yellow pages.

www.indialog.com

Founded by a group of technocrats, scientists, engineers and business professionals this site claims to be the "largest Indian business directory." The site contains innumerable links to hundreds of product web sites on automotives, engineering, products, furniture, personal care, cosmetic and gifts. A search button here helps you locate what you are looking for easily. The products are arranged alphabetically within categories. This site doesn't allow free listing of your Web site.

Www.india-travel.com, www.indiatours.com

This site happily flaunts the fact that is recognised by the Government of India. "Leaders in tourism we enjoy the best rates with most hotels. Our 24-hour/7 days a week service coupled with our own transport and multi-lingual staff (English, Spanish, French etc) ensures quality service": a succinct introduction. It says further "we are members of IATA & AFTA and specialise in tailor-made packages to suit all budgets. Enjoy the site..."

Hotel lists, tariffs and addresses are all there, so too different tours that you can take within the country at that time. Distances between destinations, travelling time, fairs and festivals to enjoy, weather, rail and airline schedules and tourist trains. Graphically indifferent, info-heavy, the site would appear inviting to any avid traveller.



Indiabollywood site provides picture galleries of Amitabh Bachchan and others

www.indiafashion.com

The site is the contribution of India's top designers to the net — J. J Valaya, Rohit Bal and Ritu Beri. Besides designer threads that you can drool over the site gives a retrospective on the trio, listing their past and current collections selectively. You can even order these designer garments through cyberspace as each outfit comes with a price tag

Www.rajasthanweb.com

The most visited site in the country —emblazoned in colour and embellished with its craft, with plenty to see and do—is now on the net. A microscopic look at the destination there's everything you wanted to know about the state, on-line. There's much on handicrafts — that's metalware, blue pottery, puppetry, carpets, *durries* and block printing — festivals, places of interest, jewellery, painting, and carving that the state is famous for.

The jewellery section gives a detailed account of minakari, semi-precious stones, emeralds, and kundan (the state's forte). Tips on how to buy your kundan are interesting. A site highly recommended for a look-see and travel plans.



Ritu Beri: India fashion site gives a selective list of her collections

ALL-IN-ONE SITES

www.allindia.com

Or India on the Internet and all-you-wanted-to-know-about-India-and-didn't-know-who-to-ask. News updates and some itsy-bitsy notes on the destination with plenty of user friendly information. Zoom into pages on wildlife sanctuaries and national parks and bric-a-brac about metro cities; update yourself on the beliefs of the Brahmins to prevailing customs and ceremonies in the country. Interesting to see 'vessel' positions from the Mumbai Port Trust. Diversity at its best on this site. Great for would-be foreign tourists into India.

The news is updated on a daily basis with new pages being added every week. Notable are the pages on Indian metro cities. A search option helps you scout for whatever it is you are looking for.

Welcomtoindia.com

Another one-in-all site that includes exhaustive information on basic facts, culture, travel and leisure options in India along with a chef's corner and even an extensive trade and export section. Your guide to cuisines is mouth watering at best what with an array of preparations from Mughlai, Punjabi, Bengali, Gujarati, Maharastrian, Kashmiri, Rajasthani, Goan and south Indian kitchens.

For tourists there's plenty. From warnings of Delhi belly to cautions against giving *bakshish*; from national parks, beaches and hill stations to heritage sites. Hard facts for the inveterate tourist is available by way of info on tourist offices through the country, embassies and high commissions, and formalities they need to comply with.

www.indiaexpress.com

From news to free e-greeting cards, a chat room and tips on wining and dining in Delhi and Mumbai and some more on entertainment in major cities. There's also a selection of news from various publications that has been updated on a daily basis. '*Apun ka* Choice' brings you reviews of Hindi films and a list of the top ten Hindi film songs (the countdown syndrome again!)

Laden with pictures, but not lethargic in loading, this site covers festivals of India and then takes you on a gastronomic journey with recipes of popular Indian sweets. An astrological magazine and even an appointments listings. The yellow pages allow you to put information about your Web site for free.

www.rediff.com

A site that you can subscribe to for free news updates via e-mail. On Rediff there are sections on cricket, movies travel and infotech. News coverage encompasses exclusive reports and business specials for Rediff. Columns by eminent personalities can also be browsed through. The site offers very easy navigation with few and simple graphics. Most sections on the site are updated regularly.

www.indiaconnect.com

A site all about movies, news, features, business and music. Ajay Bhambhi's section on astrology and a regular column by Arun Shourie too; a pen pals club, top ten Hindi song hits (yet again) and a top of the pops in the Indian and western category complete the list.

You can also add information about your web site or home pages on free.

FOR NEWS

www.samachar.com

Looking from news from top-of-the-line leading Indian publications? India World's samachar.com brings you exactly this. The developers claim that the site is updated every half hour and we found this to be quite true. The home pages include headlines from *The Times of India, The Hindustan Times, The Indian Express, The Hindu, The Deccan Herald, The Deccan Chronicle* with links to these sites as well. Business and sports news sections too are prominent and through the business section *The Economic Times* and *The Financial*

Express can be accessed. Regional publications too have not been left out.

A very simple but well designed site without any graphics but with amazing array of content and links.

ON-LINE NEWSPAPERS:

On-line editions of *The Indian Express* (www.expressindia.com), *The Times of India* (www.timesofindia.com), *The Hindustan Times* (www.hindustantimes.com), *The Hindu* (www.hinduonline.com), *The Economic Times* (www.economictimes.com), *The Telegraph* (www.telegraphindia.com) can be easily waded through. The supplement of most papers are also on-line.

The Times site appears to be the only one that is updated at night for the next day. The site also contains links to sister publications of the newspapers.

FOOD

www.bawarchi.com

Try a new recipe for a *daal*, chutney and *khichri*. For learners there are tips on rolling a *chapati*. There are recipes for sauces, ice creams and eggless cakes. All recipes are foodies Saroj Kering's creations. Further links possible to related sites.

A tip of the day could well be: 'do nor use soap when cleaning a mirror because it streaks the glass. All you need to do is to wipe it with a cloth moistened with water in which vinegar or ammonia has been added and then wipe it dry.' This while the week's specials could be bachelor dishes like wholesome *pulao*, vegetarian hotpot, *upma, poori bhaji* and *masala* corn with rice. And there's more: Dhara's recipes like *dab chingri malai curry*, reader's contribution 'egg *khesh*' by Dipti Gupta and another contribution: stuffed green tomatoes by Preeti.

www.indiafood.com

Want to know what jackfruit is called in Hindi or want to make paneer, coconut milk and sambar powder in your kitchen? Just log in. There are recipes galore for veggies and carnivores. Tips on cooking and a glossary of English to Hindi terms, conversion tables (as in milligrams to grams to kilograms) and some delectable rice cooker recipes.

ENTERTAINMENT

www.aiir.com

This, All India Internet Radio site is perhaps the most popular one in the India section. An entertainment and news programmes site that includes news, music programmes and shows such as *Geetanjali* and *Hungama*. So you can tune in to songs of the 80s and 90s, the oldies and even *bhajans*. You can hear the news broadcast in Hindi and English though there is no text version of this.

www.indiabollywood.com

Update yourself with all the juicy gossip from the Mumbai film industry and see some pictures if you will of your favourite stars. There are picture galleries of Amitabh Bachchan, Sunil Shetty, Sridevi, Kajol, Aamir Khan, Akshay Kumar and when you are done there are some more.

What's more you can read some interesting music and film reviews of Indian and international releases.

Cine and music buffs can't afford to miss this one.

www.itihaas.com

Another India World presentation, Itihaas contains information about ancient, medieval, modern and independent India. You can click on innumerable sub-sections under the broad topics. New pages are added to the site practically every day and visitors are invited to contribute as well. ■

Also click on...

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www.airkode.net
www.indiagov.com



The *bawarchi* site includes lip smacking Indian recipes

My Personal Style

From her *saris* to jewellery, Usha Uthup loves the ethnic look



Earthy and Traditional



SILVER BELLE

As for the accessories, I like completing my ensemble with junk jewellery — heavy and traditional— and temple jewellery from the south. I frequent Chamba Lamba and Heera Mansion I love silver more than gold. And I have an exquisite collection of silver trinkets built up over the years purchased from Delhi. Pune and Hyderabad

When I am dressing up what I look for is comfort. And the *sari*, to me, is the most dignified and graceful attire in the world. On the lighter side, you could say it covers up many flaws of the body — like excess fat. I like dressing up in a traditional fashion. *Tant saris*, *bindis*, bangles and *gajras*. Being traditional gives me an identity. In the daytime I prefer to drape myself in Bengal cottons. But when I am dressing up for my shows, I opt for heavy silk Kanjeevarams in vivid, earthy colours of black, maroon, blue, green and all other dark shades. I also have a fascination for off-white.

My wardrobe also has a good collection of Oriya *saris*. But I feel most happy if I can stock about three-four really good Bengal cottons. I only wear *saris* with borders and the *saris* really have to be long and broad (the full *baro hath)* because I have a good height (five feet seven inches) and I need a long drape. That's why I go for Bengal *tant*. They also wash fantastically.

I remember wearing a lot of Khatau voile *saris* when I was young. And also heavy synthetics like georgettes, chiffons with matching borders stitched on them and printed crepes from Ritu's. But somewhere down the line I outgrew all that.

I still go to Ritu's. Radha Silk and Nalli's are two of my favourite stores. Then there is Kundahar, Balram Saha and Kanishka. With these shops I place my orders of *saris* which have the borders I like to wear — that is, narrow on top and broad below. Since I pleat my *pallu*, the broad border on top gets concealed. So, I order for narrow borders on top.

Recently, I designed some *saris* for Nandita Raja (of Kanishka) which have words like *Aha tuni sundari koto Kolkata* and Don't worry *Kolkata, amra tomari Kolkata* written on them for the launch of my new video. I have noticed that when people return from their trips abroad they wear T-shirts saying I love London or whatever. I thought, why can't we say we love Calcutta?

As for the accessories, I like completing my ensemble with junk jewellery — heavy and traditional — and temple jewellery from the south. I frequent Chamba Lamba and Heera Mansion. I love silver more than gold. And I have an exquisite collection of silver trinkets built up over the years purchased from Delhi, Pune and Hyderabad. For gold I go to B.C. Sen. I possess about seven to eight thousand glass bangles which you will find littered all over the house! I wear about 38 to 46 bangles at a time and end up breaking them on stage while clapping. I buy them from Mehndi Bazaar, the shops opposite Nizam's and Delhi's Hanuman Mandir. As for my beautiful white *gajras*, it's Ela Chowdhury who makes them for me out of cloth. For my large *bindis* I shop in Gariahat.

■ As told to Sunnita Banerjee

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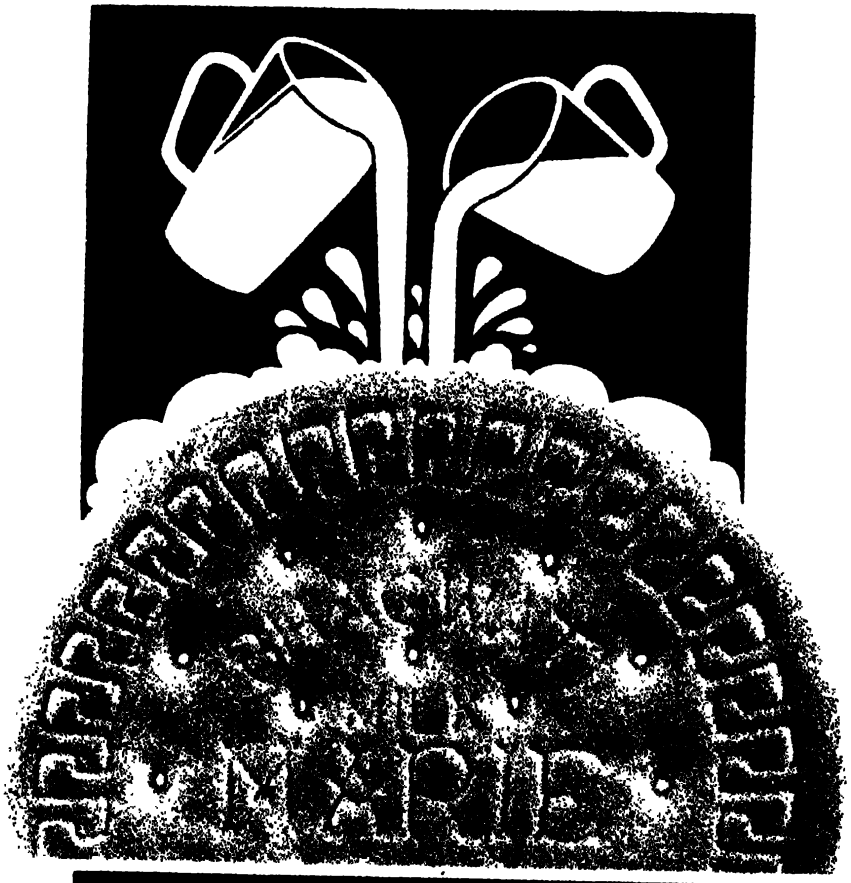


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BISCUITS

The Telegraph

25 JANUARY 1998

Man with the Golden Touch

It is nothing unusual that a 1,000-acre Film City has come up in Hyderabad ('Media Moghul', December 7). The southern states of India have a bustling film industry the profits of which run into crores of rupees. In fact, it is this region which can give Mumbai's film industry a run for its money. Above everything else, it's their professional approach to business which has made them so successful. Couldn't our ailing Tollywood take a lesson from this?

Debanjan Saha, Calcutta



It's Ramoji Rao's leadership qualities which have helped him build up that huge empire. He may have the golden touch but it's also hard work which goes a long way in making one a winner. An enterprise also needs the personal supervision of the owner.

S. Mitra, Patna

It is amazing how this septuagenarian, Ramoji Rao, could have amassed so much wealth and built a Rs 1,000-crore empire. Finance, publication, hospitality, entertainment, foods, Rao's empire is really large. Obviously, it is one man's vision which has given shape to this sprawling empire.

Suleicha Sen, Calcutta

Working Couples

In today's life, both husband and wife must work in order to meet the family's economic needs ('Yours, mine and ours', December 7). My wife and I share the family expenditure equally and we also have a joint bank account. I remember when my daughter was in school she would get teased that she need never worry about expenditure since she had working parents. Double income is very important to maintain a good lifestyle and to run the family in a smooth way.

Nirmalendu Chakraborty, Cooch Behar

It is important that both spouses work because once they are on an equal footing they can have a better understanding on the domestic front. A working wife means a fifty-fifty sharing economically as well as emotionally. A housewife may not be able to share her husband's professional problems or give him support in times of crisis in his work place or business. But here she is a pillar support to him.

Bipasha Mukherjee, Calcutta

Timeless Simi

Simi Garewal's timeless beauty is something that everyone talks about ('Read My Lips' October 26). For a person who has moved into middle age, she manages to retain her ethereal beauty quite well keeping people guessing all the time as to how many candles she could be lighting on her birthdays. She is gorgeous, she is intelligent and she looks forever pristinely pure in her unending collection of whites. Please give us a cover story on Simi Garewal where we will get to read on her youth, education, likes and dislikes.

Surajit Chowdhury, Calcutta



PAGE 4

Looking Ahead

Like people, years too have a certain character to them. While some bring good cheer and happiness, others usher in an atmosphere of gloom and doom. While some have an upbeat, optimistic air to them, others seem weighed down with bad vibrations. Will 1998 be a distinct improvement on the year that has just gone by? And what will be the trends that characterise 1998?

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

Love for Music



Why is it that Indian musicians strive to gain acceptance abroad? Is it for international recognition, awards or in search of a more appreciative audience?

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Rohan Gavaskar likes dressing according to the occasion.

COVER STORY

LOOKING AHEAD

Seema Goswami forecasts the trends that will mark 1998

Like people, years too have a certain character to them. While some bring good cheer and happiness, others usher in an atmosphere of gloom and doom. While some have an upbeat, optimistic air to them, others seem weighed down with bad vibrations.

Last year, for instance, had very little to recommend it. Governments tumbled like nine-pins, disasters struck with unremitting regularity, crime increased manifold, films bombed at the box-office, and even our cricket team performed abysmally. Will 1998 bring us more of the same? Or will it be a distinct improvement on the year that has just gone by? And what will be the trends that characterise 1998?



A.B. Vajpayee : Next PM?



Karisma Kapoor : The day of the heroine

POLITICS

This will be the year that personalities make a comeback in politics. After years of being ruled (or not ruled) by the Grey Men (Narasimha Rao, H.D. Deve Gowda, Inder Gujral), India will finally have some charismatic leaders dominating both the media and public life.

Sonia Gandhi may or may not change the fortunes of the Congress, but there can be no denying that she is the face that will draw the electorate out to the rallies, even if she can't persuade them to stamp on the hand symbol. And if — as the pundits are predicting — the BJP does come to power, in Atal Behari Vajpayee we will at last have a

Prime Minister whose speeches won't put us to sleep in a couple of minutes.

ECONOMY

The Voluntary Disclosure of Income (VDIS) Scheme may have been the success story of 1997, but its repercussions will be felt all through 1998. It took only a week or so for the money that had been laundered (turned from black to white) through finance minister P. Chidambaram's dream detergent to make an appearance in the economy, with dealers



P. Chidambaram : Basking in the success of VDIS



Sonia Gandhi: Can she change the fortunes of the Congress?

in such luxury items as cars (Mercedes, not Marutis) reporting a huge increase in sales.

But the newly-legitimate rich will not just restrict themselves to conspicuous consumption.

They will in time invest in property, the stock market, and even business ventures. And if there is — with luck — a stable government in place, the economy may just go into second gear.

MEDIA

The lessons learnt from the Princess of Wales' death will be given a quiet burial in 1998. Already the paparazzi, which had sworn to protect and respect the privacy of public figures, have done a Diana on Bill Clinton and his wife Hillary, as they holidayed on the Virgin Islands. The First Couple of America — Bill in a pair of briefs and Hillary resplendent in a one-piece swimsuit — were photographed as they held each other and danced on the beach.

The President, of course, put a brave face on it, declaring that he loved the pictures. But as the year goes on, and tele-photo lenses are brought into use more and more often, other celebrities will become the target of such photo-opportunism. And not everyone will be quite as relaxed about it as Bill Clinton.

ENVIRONMENT

This will be the year when environmental consciousness will percolate down from the speciality stores (which stock anything from organically grown vegetables, whole grains, to recycled paper) to the man on the street. A beginning has already been made by involving school children in such projects as afforestation and pollution control.

And if the government gets its act together and becomes more vigilant about such matters as industrial emission levels and river pollution, it will have the ordinary citizens' complete cooperation in the endeavour to clean up our environment.

There can be no denying that Sonia is the face that will draw the electorate out to the rallies, even if she can't persuade them to stamp on the hand



Vivan Sundaram : Installation art will take off in a big way

The status symbols of 1998: an Internet connection, designer clothes; foreign holidays; French wines; *haute* cuisine and a personal trainer

INTERIORS

With living spaces getting more and more cramped as flats get smaller and smaller, the trend in interior design will be that of space conservation. The basic rules will be: light pastel shades on the walls, which would make rooms look more spacious; lightweight furniture, preferably that which has more than one use (sofas that turn into beds, beds which have in-built storage space, etc.); woodwork flush into the walls; and floors which are either of marble, or light-coloured tiles, with the occasional rug to add a dash of colour.

INTERNET

Last year there were 6,000 Indian sites on the net, and around one lakh users. This year will see those numbers double at the very least, as Indians become more Internet-friendly. Services on this sector are also likely to improve if the proposal to provide private Internet Service Providers comes through. Until now only Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) has been allowed to provide these services, but if privatisation does occur (and 50-60 applications have already come in from the private sector) net users may get cheaper rates along with better services.



Interiors : Light pastel shades on the walls

ART

Paintings will become passe, as installation art takes off in a big way. Already such artists as Vivan Sundaram are experimenting with it in a big way, and more and more people will clamber on to this particular bandwagon as the year goes on.

Installation art involves putting up three-dimensional pieces — some of which could be as large as a room — with found objects, everyday objects and the occasional whimsical touch, to either exemplify a theme or make a symbolic point. Yoko Ono did her bit for this art form in the Sixties, but it took another three decades for it to invade India in a big way.

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION

With disposable incomes increasing manifold — especially in double-income households — the consumer boom will take hold in 1998. Mobile phones will go from being a status symbol to a must-have, while gold will lose out to diamonds and other precious stones in the glitz stakes.

The status symbols of 1998 will be: an Internet connection, complete with e-mail facilities; designer clothes (Armani rather than Durazi, Miyake rather than Bal, as India



which make the rooms look bigger and lightweight furniture



Mobile phones : A must-have in 1998

becomes a fully paid-up member of the global village); foreign holidays (think St Moritz rather than Phuket); French wines; *haute* cuisine, cooked by your own chef; and a personal trainer who will help hide all those signs of good living.

RESTAURANTS

Eating out will take off in 1998, as Indians get more adventurous about the kind of food they eat. Rather than stick to the mandatory tandoori chicken, black dal and biryani combination — the kind of Punjabi fare that has dominated restaurant fare in India until now — they will try different cuisines, ranging all the way from French *nouvelle* to Mexican and Thai.

Of these, Thai will prove to be the most popular with the more discerning customer, but the general public will stick to Mexican, preferring its similarity to Indian cuisine to the more exotic flavours of tom yam and masaman curry.

HOTELS

The hospitality sector had a rather bad time of it in 1997, as business collapsed in the beginning of the tourist season. It did pick up a little in a couple of months, but that was too little too late. In 1998, hotels will be hoping to make up the loss in profit they suffered last year, both in terms of room yield and food and beverage revenues.

And how do they hope to do that? By providing value-added services like special club floors, complimentary airport transfers, busi-

Eating out : Thai food will prove most popular



Eating out will take off in 1998, as Indians get more adventurous about the kind of food they eat. Rather than stick to the mandatory tandoori chicken, black dal and biryani... they will try different cuisines, ranging all the way from French to Mexican and Thai



Travel: Those with big budgets will plump for exotic beach destinations

ness centres, and packages for the entire family during the off season.

The Maruti Esteem may be the largest seller on the market today, but such prestige models as the Cielo, the Opel Astra and the Ford Escort will find their demand increasing as well

After Diana is Bill Clinton the paparazzi target?



TRAVEL

Until now, it's the Bengali who has proved to be the Inveterate Traveller of India. No matter how small his income or how large his family, he has always managed to take off during the summer or Pooja break, whether it is to nearby Darjeeling or faraway Kanya Kumari.

This year, however, will see Indians from every state embark on a Bharat *darshan*. The most popular destination promises to be Kerala, though those with bigger budgets will probably plump for such beach destinations as the Maldives and Mauritius. The islands of the Seychelles will also attract a substantial number of Indians after the publicity surrounding the Miss World pageant.

CARS

The roads of India's cities may be clogged with traffic, but the number of cars will only increase with every passing month. What's more, with the public transport system in a complete shambles, all of these new vehicles will be on the road constantly, adding to traffic jams, pollution and the energy crisis. The Maruti Esteem may be the largest seller on the market today, but such prestige models as the Cielo, the Opel Astra and the Ford Escort will find their demand increasing as well.

FITNESS

Walking may be the best aerobic exercise of all. And jogging may be the most cost-effective

Continued on Page 26

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The creative streak which began last week continues to fire your imagination. Make the most of available resources as you will be working day-in and day out. A week of spills, thrills and excitement. Ideal week for buying, selling, shopping, renovation, decoration and even investments.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Time to take a break and concentrate on other aspects of life—spiritual, metaphysical and religious. Invite friends over, have a party, go for a picnic or simply, take a day off from the daily grind. A week of hard work ahead. So make the most of your leisure.Time also to introspect and assess one's own worth.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Time to be wild and merry. Try to fuse work with pleasure.You may toy with new job offers and creative pursuits. You put up a brave front for all to see and emulate. If you expect cooperation from your colleagues and superiors, the key word would be honesty. Your sincerity will see you through.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



A short phase of tension and complexities and then all will be crystal clear and petal smooth.You will cake walk your way to success and popularity. Do think ahead and be one up on your adversaries and opponents. Try to make use of the general feeling of warmth and bonhomie towards you.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



You have many reasons to celebrate—you have already taken a few quick and positive decisions, you have worked out a strategy to further them, and all that needs to be done is to successfully implement them. Ganesha says that it is the right time to ask for favours or undertake a journey

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



You have already broken free and now is the time to fly, soar and speed ahead for that elusive holy grail. Try to mend fences, make friends and build bridges on the way. Take time off for your family, friends and well wishers and Ganesha assures you that you won't be disappointed.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



This is the time for old wounds to heal, new grounds to cover and begin afresh. Remember, what you see in front of you stretches beyond your vision and to know further, you must slog ahead. Try to avoid unnecessary conflicts or misunderstandings. Now is the time to be ramrod straight and steady.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Hamlet had never been your best pal but do pay heed to his words. Foolish that it may sound, to be here or there would be the key question ringing in your mind. Talk to your heart, consult your brain and then open the door. Time also to begin business negotiations and travel plans. Take care of your health.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The happy and sunny phase which had begun last week sees you through this week, too. Time to ring out the old and ring in the new with aplomb. Also, a great time to party, socialise and entertain friends and colleagues. Why not let serious matters rest for a while and have fun.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



A week to complete pending assignments and believe me, there will be many.Take one job at a time, pay full attention to it, round it off before moving on to another. However, this is easier said than done because Ganesha says you will moving back and forth into several work spheres.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Time to get started all over again, says Ganesha. You had your fill of fun and frolic and now it's back to the grind of daily routine. If you are planning a new script, devising fresh starts, giving birth to new ideas , this is the right time. But do take time off to meet old friends, parents or in-laws.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Fair is foul and foul is fair, predicts Ganesha. Try to read between the lines, see beyond the mask and separate reality from imagination. Both will merge and try to confuse you. Try to keep a cool head and observe situations and people from an objective plane. Time to be meditative and spiritual.

BIRTHDAYS

January 29: Moon sextile Mars,Jupiter,claims Ganesha, victory and joy for you. That means marriage, engagements promotion, perks and a year of plenty.

January 30: Moon-Mercury conjunction bodes good news, especially on the level of communication and negotiations, trade and industry, and augmentation of personal income.

January 31: Moon conjunct Venus,Jupiter makes it a great year for artists, lovers, musicians and those in publicity and modelling. Great happenings in store.

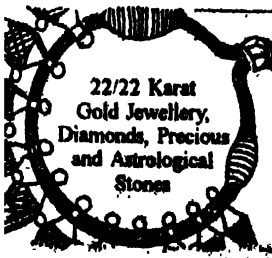
February 28: Sun conjunct Uranus, Pluto, good news for government employees. Boost in employment and jobs.

corporations, electronics and computers, and heavy industry. A minor wish fulfilment will be yours.

January 29: Moon conjunction Jupiter predicts excellent prospects for youngsters just starting out on life's highway. Your decisions will be the right one.

January 30: Heavy reckless and headstrong and everything else will be added into it. This is a fine conjunction for sporting and pursuits.

January 31: A year of mixed success, a few disappointments and some sudden victories. Try to take all of them in your stride and that's what 1996 is all about.



May it be a Dream-come-true New Year

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SKETCHES

Potted History

What the chattering classes are talking about

This Week: The Son also Rises



Sonia Gandhi and her children, Priyanka and Rahul: Back to dynastic politics?

The talking point: Is Naresh Gujral, the businessman son of current Prime Minister, Inder Kumar Gujral. He is a constant presence around the Prime Minister's House — even though he lives in Maharani Bagh — and even accompanies him on some of his official tours.

Not surprisingly, rumours of Naresh being something of an extra-constitutional authority have begun to surface. But the Gujrals can take comfort from the fact that they will only have to cope with this for another couple of months — after that, there will be a new occupant in Race Course Road, and he can deal with his own bad publicity.

Is Naresh Gujral guilty?: It doesn't look that way. Certainly, he has become more high profile since his father became Prime Minister. But all those who accuse him of becoming more prosperous as well should remember that he was already running a very successful garment export business when his father was eking out his retirement in the precincts of the India International Centre (IIC). So, his money hasn't been acquired by nefarious means.

So, why all this talk?: It's only to be expected, given the nature of Indian politics. No sooner does a politician assume a position of power, than his entire family muscles in on the power and glory that is a by-product of his job.

It all began with: Indira Gandhi — well okay, so she was a daughter, but the general point is valid. She became the official hostess of her Prime Minister father Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and was a constant fixture at his house. Her marriage to Feroze Gandhi was on the rocks, so it suited her to live with her father; and hostessing gave her a plausible reason to be there.

But there was no suggestion that Nehru was grooming her for the top job in the country. But somewhat inevitably, the *gungi gudiya* — as she was dubbed by the Congress syndicate — became Prime Minister in the absence of another suitable compromise candidate.

History repeated itself: When Sanjay Gandhi grew up to become his mother's right hand man. His star shone brightest during the Emergency

— though, unfortunately, the same could not be said about the country. But before he could progress beyond being an extra-constitutional authority to becoming a legitimate power in his own right, he was killed in an air accident.

The age of the son: Did not draw to a natural close with that, though. Indira Gandhi, who was shattered by the loss of her favourite child, turned to her elder son, Rajiv, for support. Rajiv, who until then was enjoying life in the slow lane, flying Avros and hitting the social scene with his Italian wife, Sonia, was loath to join politics initially. And his wife was even more inimical to the idea.

But, in the end, blood proved thicker than water, and Rajiv joined the party to help shore up his mother's position.



P.V. Narasimha Rao's sons: Active players



Inder Kumar Gujral's son, Naresh Gujral: Getting high profile

That's where matters would have stood: For several years, with Rajiv slowly progressing up the ranks of the party leadership, as his mother groomed him to take over from her eventually. But that process was accelerated when Indira Gandhi was gunned down by her own security guards in 1984. Rajiv was catapulted to the leadership of the Congress Party and the prime ministership even as anti-Sikh riots tore the country apart.

The dynastic process: Was in limbo for a couple of years after Rajiv's death, as his widow Sonia and children Priyanka and Rahul, refused to get involved in electoral politics. But the man who took over the reins of the Congress, Narasimha Rao, brought his own dynasty with him, with his sons arriving in Delhi and becoming active players in the political arena.
So much so, that in this election, Narasimha Rao has been ignored in the first list of Congress candidates while his son, Rajeshwar Rao, has been given a ticket.

Lest you think this sort of thing is peculiar to the Congress: Let us hurriedly disabuse you of the notion. Chaudhary Charan Singh's son, Ajit Singh, became heir to his father's Jat legacy in Western Uttar Pradesh.
In Andhra Pradesh, N.T. Rama Rao's son-in-law, Chandrababu Naidu, elbowed his step mother-in-law, Laxmi Parvathi aside, to become the new chief minister of the state. And Devi Lal's sons and grandsons have made politics a byword in Haryana — remember the aptly-named Mehem?

But the family in the limelight these days: Is, once again, the Gandhi clan. Sonia has made a belated by high profile entry into politics, making stirring, emotion-charged addresses at such places as Sriperembudur and Bangalore, and there is talk that both she and daughter Priyanka will stand for election (from Amethi and Rae Bareli, respectively).
If that does happen then dynastic politics will be back in a big way in India — though, that's not to say that it was ever out.

That's not as bad as it gets, though: It could get a lot worse in the next 20 years or so, when Laloo and Rabri's proud progeny — all nine of them — decide to make an entry in the big, bad world of politics. So, it would be a good idea to count our blessings when we can. ■

EXTRACT

Shell of a MAN

Extracts from ***Malayatoor Ramakrishnan's*** *novel,* Five Cents of Land

The doctor went through his motions quickly. After his examination was done, he pointed to the prone figure on the cot and asked Ramettan, in a voice full of reproach.

"What the hell have you been doing all these days?"

"He has never vomited blood before. He was in good health till now." Ramettan tried to explain.

The doctor frowned. He hissed, "Nonsense! This man is dying! Do you have any idea what the problem is? Cirrhosis! His liver is totally gone!"

"Cirrhosis?" Ramettan mumbled mechanically.

"Yes, it has corroded his insides. What you see here is not the man, it is only his outer shell!"

"Surely something can be done," pleaded Ramettan.

"I am not very hopeful," the doctor was brutally frank.

"Will he come to, I mean regain consciousness?"

"Perhaps."

"Is there any danger...?"

"Pray for a miracle.Rush him to a hospital. If he recovers, let me warn you - he shall not touch a drop of liquor ever again!"

Ramettan felt queasy. The doctor was being too clinical. For him, Madhavan Pillai was just another statistic, one more hopeless liver case! Maybe he did not know the identity of the man who lay unconscious on the cot.

The doctor gathered his things and prepared to leave. "I'll meet you at your dispensary later," Ramettan told him. He had no money to pay the doctor's fees and was trying to buy time.

The doctor was visibly annoyed. "Man don't waste time. Take him at once to some good hospital, do you heart? My dispensary won't do!"

When the doctor left without mentioning his fees, Ramettan sighed in relief.

Remettan did not know what to do next. He stood staring at the slime-covered walls for some time. With an effort, he shook himself back to reality. Pillai needed a hospital at once. He must call a taxi, but there was no money. Could he telephone Balu? Balu would be difficult to contact at this time, and there was no time to go to his office. Also, how could he leave the



Extracted from *Five Cents of Land:* ***by Malayatoor Ramkrishnan, Published by Penguin Books, Price: Rs 200***

unconscious Pillai alone?

Ramettan's eyes fell on the Parker pen resting on the desk. It was the only thing of any value which he owned. Perhaps he could pawn the pen and raise some cash. There was a dealer in second hand goods in the nearby market, but going there would mean leaving Pillai alone.

He picked up the pen. It had been his companion for so many years now. He had drafted so many political pamphlets and circulars with it. This pen had written almost the entire contents of the short-lived journal which he had once founded. The occasional tenners from Jannanadam were the gift of this pen. Parting with it would be painful...but then, he needed a taxi. Ramettan wondered, why pawn the pen, why not sell it? The pen had not written anything worthwhile anyway, he thought in dejection. It did not write Madhavan Pillai"s story. Selling it would be a sort of atonement. Ramettan decided that he would not pawn the pen - rather he would sell it.

As he stepped out, he saw Shangu ambling along on the rutted road. Ramettan was relieved to see him. Shangu would not mind helping. Ramettan hailed him.

Shangu ran in, asking, "What's the matter?" Then he peeped into the room, saw Pillai and added, "Passed out, eh?"

"He is not too well and fell unconscious. Vomited blood. The doctor says he must be taken to a good hospital at once."

"Then why waste time?"

"I have no money for a taxi."

Shangu asked. "Is that so. "Tell me, can I help?"

"Can you stay with him for a while? I have to go and raise some money. I am going to sell my pen."

Shangu reached out and took the pen. He examined it closely and asked. "Does it write well? It looks as old as your master."

"It"s a Parker!"

"How much is it worth?"

"I don't know, I need at least enough for taxi fare."

"Give this to me. Only, I don't have any money.

"Then what's the use?"

"Wait, I'll fetch a taxi, I know a taxi-driver nearby. I'll settle with him later. We all live on credit ... and the goodness of other people. You wait here, I"ll come with a taxi."

When Shangu went out, Ramettan wondered if he had been cheated. True, it was an old pen, but it was still worth at least thirty rupees. The taxi fare to the City Hospital would not be more than eight. Shangu had driven a profitable bargain!

Ramettan heaved a sigh and consoled himself: the pen had not done him much good anyway. He had never been able to write anything meaningful. This Parker was an eternal reminder of his inability, his utter lack of talent. Why should the parting then be sad?

He returned to the room. Pillai was now bathed in sweat. He was still unconscious. The breath was coming in short,strained gasps, the chest heaving with the effort. Ramettan undid the buttons on Pillai's shirt to ease the breathing. The exposed chest was hollow, totally wasted. There was hardly any flesh covering the bones. It was like a temple drum, tight skin stretched the rib cage. Ramettan had not realised the enormity of the physical damage. He blamed himself—did I neglect Pillai?

He heard a car drawing up. It was Shangu. Between the two of them,Shangu and Ramettan lifted Pillai out of the cot to deposit him on the rear seat of the car. Ramettan held the head, Shangu the feet. The driver held the door open. Ramettan got in with Pillai's head on his lap, then slid in, drawing the rest of the body into the car. The legs would not fit in. The driver and Shangu had to bend them before slamming the door.

"Looks big alright, but as light as a feather." Shangu remarked.

The hospital had no vacant bed, even in the general wards. Pillai had to be stretched out on a sheet on the floor in the corner of a large room.

"Can't we get a bed?" Ramettan asked one of the duty doctors.

"There is a kidney case in bed number thirty-eight.Won't last another day. We'll see then."

The day passed, quietly.

Suddenly the silence of the ward was shattered by a loud shout: "Vande Mataram!"

Ramettan, who had dozed off, woke up with a start. Patients on the cots and some bystanders looked around -



who had shouted?

The unconscious Pillai was shouting loudly, again and again: "Vande Mataram!"

At dawn, Pillai's frame convulsed in uncontrollable tremores. He groaned in great pain. Briefly, he opened his eyes. Ramettan hovered around hopefully. Had he come out of the coma? The eyes were glazed and did not seem to register anything. Pillai did not recognise Ramettan. He did not seem to be aware of time and place. The eyes had a sickly yellow tint which reminded Ramettan of congealed fried eggs.

Suddenly, Pillai raised a clenched fist and as though addressing a crowd, spoke in ringing tones. He had regressed several decades, into a time of native states, rajas and diwans.

The voice, rising in a strident crescendo, shook the entire ward-

"I warn you, wretch! You Diwan Sir CP, you Tamil brahmin bandit! This is my land, mine, given to me by Sage Parashurama...the land of the brave rebel Velu Thampi....the soil on which the Fearless Swadeshabhimani Ramakrishna Pillai stood and breathed fire against the despotic Maharaja! We warn you, bloodthirsty Diwan, we won't allow your rape and plunder ... I won"t as long as I live..."

The clenched fist dropped, the eyes closed again.

Long moments of silence.

Suddenly, Pillai began to sing, in a grating voice:

"*Mysore Bhimakumar,*
Young, handsome, the darling of the masses,
His heart pure, full of fire,
Mysore Bhimakumar,
Came to my state, Travancore
To rescue her from dishonour,
The virile fighter, Mysore Bhimakumar.
The forces of darkness,
The Diwan' s mercenary police sepoys,
They kicked him and tortured him,
To a red mass of pulp..."

Pillai's voice rose and fell. The lines were repeated again and again. Ramettan wondered— who was this Bhimakumar? The verse sounded like a ditty composed by some local wag to enthuse some protest march of an earlier period. Could it be that Bhimakumar was a real person, a young daredevil from Mysore who had



fought in the ranks led by Pillai?

Pillai, now exhausted, mumbled in a weakening voice, the words rolling from the throat like a death rattle —

"*Mysore Bheem Kumaaaar...*"

Another day.

Pillai had a painful coughing fit.

Hack-hack-hack...

Blood -filled froth spewed from the corners of his mouth. Ramettan was frightened. He ran after a passing nurse and begged her to come and attend to Pillai. One look and she rushed to fetch a doctor.

A doctor came, a senior one. He took a long look at Pillai and remarked sardonically, "This man and the kidney case in bed thirty-eight are racing each other. I wonder who will go first!"

Ramettan was furious. Yet he controlled himself. How could a doctor make such a cold-blooded remark?

"Doctor, please do something! Do you know who this is? He is Madhavan Pillai, a great leader of our freedom struggle..."

"Okay, okay ... makes no difference. We are doing our best, but that's not saying much!"

Ramettan glared and stood silent, head bent. The doctor hurried to make amends. For a moment, he let the mask slip and with a contrite look, patted Ramettan on the shoulder.

"Don't think I am being callous. There's not much room for hope, there is no way I can give you false reassurances. This man must have been strong once, or else he would have succumbed long ago. We can only hope for the best. Do you believe in prayer? Pray then that he does not vomit blood again."

Ramettan prayed.

Maybe the prayers worked. Until ten o'clock, Pillai did not vomit any blood. The hospital superintendent came on his rounds, a dapper looking middle-aged man, smelling of aftershave lotion.

"Doctor!" Ramettan accosted him.,

The superintendent stopped.

"What will happen, doctor? Please tell me."

"Who is looking after him? Dr Varghese?"

"Yes."



"It's too early to say anything. Let us see what happens today. If he does not vomit any more blood, well, he may come around, who can say?"

The superintendent continued on his rounds.

At four in the afternoon, Pillai was still in a coma, but he had not vomited any more blood. Was there hope after all?

It was the visiting hour. The ward was filled with people, friends and relations of the patients. Suddenly, Pillai woke up, sat up ramrod straight. Ramettan was stunned. What was happening?

"Lie down, lie down please!" Ramettan tried gently to make him lie back on the sheet.

Madhavan Pillai did not seem to hear. His frame shook violently. In a hoarse voice, he sang:

"Forward, forward, comrades!
This is our final struggle!"

Some of the visitors turned and stared. Ramettan heard one man whisper, "Looks like a mental case."

Pillai raised both hands in the air and bellowed:

"Bolo Bharat Mata Ki Jai!"

The yelling continued. Pillai twisted and turned, his body in spasms. His palms were outstretched as if to ward off some unseen attacker. Was he in the thick of a struggle, trying to ward off lathi blows and the hooves of the horses of mounted policemen?

Minutes of agony.

Then, Pillai slumped back on the floor, limp and spent.

A ward nurse came and briefly examined him

"He's better!" She said matter-of-factly.

At the nearby beds, there was a flurry of visitors . Fond relations bringing biscuits and oranges for the patients.

Ramettan felt a little pain in the pit of his stomach. He realised that he had not eaten anything since the time he had entered the hospital. He had to eat, also get some money. Unless tipped heavily, the hospital attendants would not give Pillai proper attention. If the man in bed thirty-eight died, he must capture that bed for Pillai. That meant he had to bribe the hospital staff. Where could he go for money?

He thought of Mary Eapen.

She would have some cash. Or else she could borrow some from her friends at the hostel. He would take it as a loan. Somehow, he would repay it some day.

But how could he leave the hospital? When would he be able to return? He had to go all the way to Thycaud and back. That would take a lot of time. Till he returned, Pillai would be lying here, unattended. If he came late, the hospital gates would probably be closed. But there was no use just keeping watch here. He decided to approach the ward nurse, beg her for help.

The nurse agreed to help.

"The patient's condition is a little better now, so you can go for a while," she told him. "If you return very late, I can't say, but take your chance. The duty staff at the gate may agree to let you in, there won't be any trouble."

It was nine o'clock when Ramettan reached Thycaud. He was extremely tired since he had walked all the say.

There was none of the hesitation with which he had opened the gate of the hostel the last time he was here. He went straight in. The veranda was in darkness. The light from one of the inner rooms filtered onto the veranda. In that dim light, he saw a middle aged woman.

"I want to see Mary Eapen—urgently," Ramettan informed her.

The woman retreated into the inner room of the hostel, not uttering a word. Mary came out almost immediately.

"Ramettan!" she exclaimed.

"Yes...I need your help urgently."

"What happened? You are drenched in sweat."

Quickly, he told her everything. He was in a hurry, had to get back to the hospital at once. He needed some money.

"How much do you need?" she asked.

"How much can you spare."

"Just tell me how much you need."

"Hundred...no, seventy-five will do."

She went in and returned with the money.

"Here. I have eighty rupees. Take it."

"I"ll return this as soon as possible," he said. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	IC 90	3 5 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1330	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1620	2, 4 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0650	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W 902	0855	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1, 3 5 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 701	0715	1, 2 3 4 5, 6	9W-512	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 230	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-511	1000	1 2, 4 6 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
KHAJURAHO					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC 725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC 725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
SILIGURI					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	0855	2 4	KB-106	0910	2, 7
IC 731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
			IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6			
AI-306	1850	5	AI-305	1905	3
BRUNEI					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ BHANGA					
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3 4, 6 7
BG 094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
■ DUBAI					
BI 107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
■ KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 5	RA-213	1425	2, 6
■ LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU 538	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
■ PARIS					
KB-106	0955	2 7	KB 105	0810	2, 4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI 110	10300	4	BI 109	2045	3
SQ 415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3 7
■ TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
■ YANGON					
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6 45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun., Arr: Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4 40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep. & Arr. Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep. Tues., Frl. & Sat.; Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat	11 35	3074
3045	22 00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21 00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	4-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep. Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun; Arr: Sun., Wed & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep. Fri.; Arr. Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Saral Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	16-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19 20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6 00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr: Except Saturday	21 00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5 40	8033
8030	10 45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7 50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10 20	8014
8011	6 50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21 35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21 35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6 20	8016
8007	22 00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	9410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15 30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11 05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03 50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	93 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03 50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14 10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13 45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

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SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems



***Q.** I am a 23-year-old man. I am seriously involved with a girl for three-and-a-half years. We would like to get married. The problem is that my girlfriend had a relationship with her classmate for six months. Three years back this boy approached me and showed me a photograph of my girlfriend and him. My girlfriend tells me that it was mere infatuation as she was too young for anything serious. In the last three-and-a-half years, I have slapped her, kicked her, and fought with her almost everyday. Please tell me how can I forget the past and lead a peaceful life?*

Rakesh, Agartala

A. It is quite clear from your letter that your relationship with your girlfriend is an abusive and a dysfunctional one. It causes you pain and anger, and it certainly could not be fun for her to be slapped, kicked and fought with everyday. You should certainly give up any plans for marriage. I do not mean that you should fight and break up. What I want you to do is to detach yourself from your situation and view it from the outside. Look at it from her point of view as well. Part without anger or recrimination, remembering only the good things that kept you together in spite of all the tensions. You are both young and have many positive life-situations and relationships to look forward to. Do not at any cost get trapped in this negative and disturbing script. Otherwise, you will both end up destroying each others dignity and self-belief.

***Q.** I am a 20-year-old student of Chartered Accountancy. I have a beautiful 18-year-old girlfriend. I love her very much and she also reciprocates my feelings. But she is very suspicious. I have a few female friends who are nothing but good friends. But she refuses to believe me and does not trust me. I have tried to avoid this situation but to no avail. Please help me.*



Jealous girlfriend? She is possessive about you precisely because she cares about you. I would start worrying if she stopped getting jealous

Sumanta Chatterjee, Hooghly

A. With young woman, jealousy is usually a reliable index of love. She is possessive about you precisely because she cares about you. I would start worrying if she stopped getting jealous. As for the other girlfriends, who you say are 'just friends' — well, discretion is always the better part of valour.

***Q.** I am a young man who is married. I had a college friend who got married seven years ago but she has no issue till date. We met recently and according to her, her husband is incapable of being a father. Now she is persuading me to help her become a mother. I am very confused and worried. She had been badly treated by her in-laws for not having a baby. That's why she wants to be a mother by hook or crook. Should I help her to become a mother?*

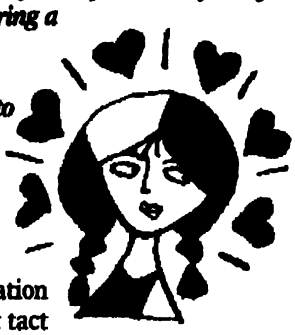


Prasenjit Paul, Calcutta

A. I think this college friend is an extremely confused young lady, who wants to compound an already difficult situation. The way to hell is paved with good intentions. Have you considered the implication of such a foolish and irresponsible act? You would be endangering your friend's already delicate position in her marital home, as well as the life of an unborn child. Your friend's marriage is weak in its foundations and such melodramatic and impractical "solutions" can only make matters worse.

***Q.** I have a daughter studying in Class IX. She fell in love with an intercaste Hindu boy who is quite useless and unemployed. The boy is 20 years old and they are deeply attached to each other. The boy said that he will marry her*

only after he gets a job. But they must meet frequently somehow or the other. If I refuse permission to my daughter she threatens to commit suicide. She has lost interest in her studies and is behaving rudely with her family members. I am suffering a great deal from mental tension and cannot decide what to do. Please help.



Name Witheld,
Ranchi

A. This is a situation which requires great tact and delicacy on your part. Tell your daughter that you will give your consent only after she has graduated, but that she can continue to meet the boy in the meantime. Half the charm of the romance will vanish when she does not have to rebel to prove her point. Keep her distracted with other activities. Send her out on tours to visit friends or relatives. Above all, give her the feeling that you trust and respect her and are only concerned about her happiness. Given time and correct handling, it is likely that she will outgrow this infatuation.

Q. *This is a problem faced by one of my intimate friends. She is a 25-year-old working woman who was in love with a man from her own office who left for a job abroad. Their relationship lasted for approximately one year. Since he left, he did not contact her over the past one year except to make a lone phone call at her office when she was not there. She does not know his contact number or address, nor can she contact his family in India. Now she is very depressed and confused as to what she should do. Should she wait for this man who has not bothered to contact her for so long or should she look for someone else?*



Ankita Basu

A. I think you already know the answer to your own question. Although your friend was sincere in her feelings, the man she was involved with seems to have been one of those who believe in "out of sight out of mind". Of course, beginning again in a new country involves so many shifts in perspective and identity that the past seems more distant than ever. There is no doubt that it is time for this young lady to put her past behind her. She should not get depressed or bitter about it; she should simply hold onto the good memories and determinedly abandon the rest. It would be helpful if you could divert and distract her: help her seek a challenging professional course, a holiday, new friends. Tell her very firmly that she is holding on to a non-existent romance, and it is time for her to exercise her common-sense and move on. The path of life is a long and winding one, and even with the best of intentions it is impossible to always walk it with those we want. However, the path is always full of surprises, and I am sure she will encounter many more eligible young men in its course.

Afraid of darkness? Your fear of the dark reveals a fundamental sense of insecurity. It is this insecurity you will have to work upon to remove your fears

Q. *I am a 21-year-old girl with a strange problem. I cannot sleep alone in a room at night. If I am left alone, I have to sleep with the lights on. I get eerie feelings if the lights are switched off. A night lamp is not adequate to drive away my fear of the dark. This really disturbs my mother's sleep with whom I normally sleep. I don't watch horror shows and don't read any scary novels. How can I overcome my fear?*



R. Lakshmi, Calcutta

A. Your fear of dark reveals a fundamental sense of insecurity. It is this insecurity you will have to work upon to remove your fears from their very source. You could begin by actually giving vent to your deepest, most private terrors. Lie in the dark and imagine all the horrible things that could happen to you in the state of vulnerability. Then switch the light on and rationally examine how realistic your fantasy-fears are. Work out strategies to combat these situations. If, for example, you are afraid of thieves make sure that all doors and windows are properly bolted before you retire to bed. If you are afraid of ghosts, keep a Hanuman Chalisa under your pillow and reflect on the fact that ghosts can as well appear with the lights on. Try to understnd the basis of your fears and then attempt to come to terms with them. Remember that the sense of sight, which becomes inoperative in the dark is only one of the senses. We can also "see" or get a bearing on our environment through the sense of smell, hearing and touch. Keep a torch under your pillow. I am sure you will be able to come to terms with your problem. Do keep me informed of your progress. ■

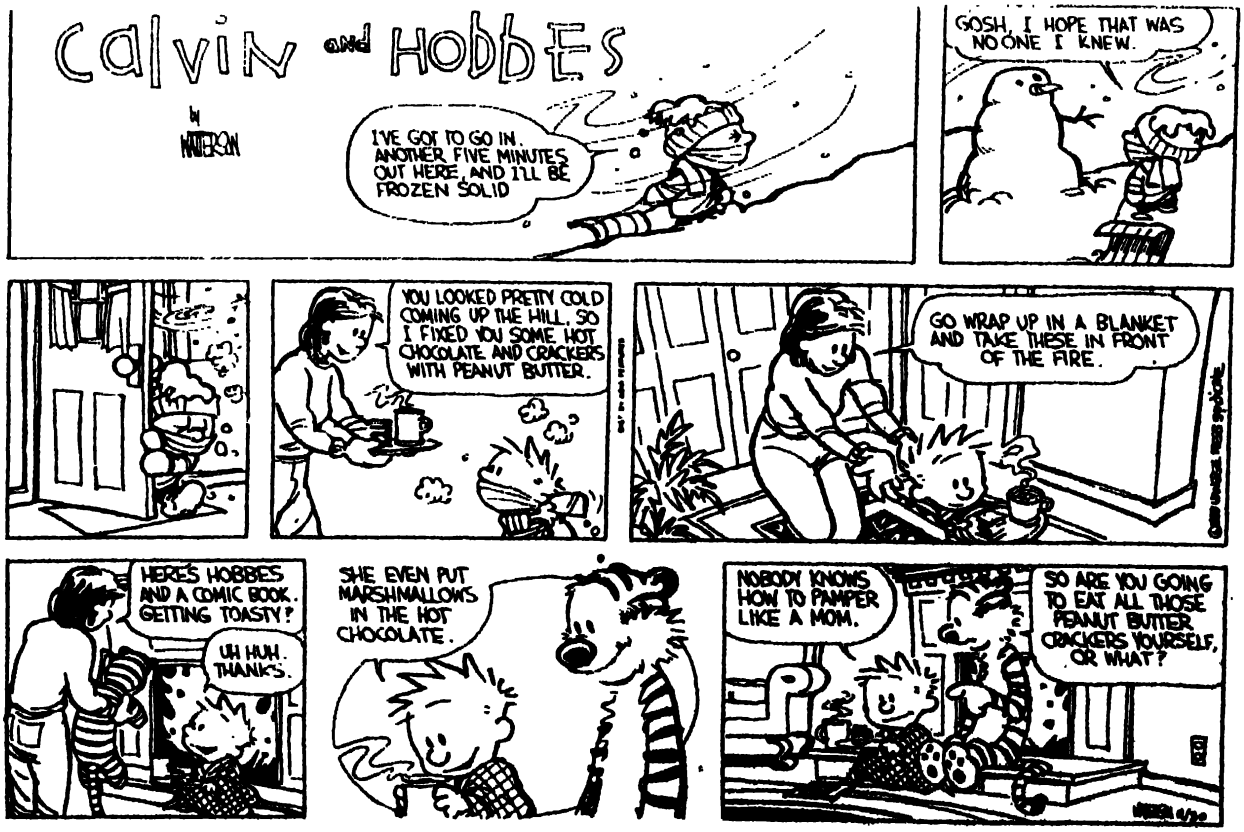
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COMICS

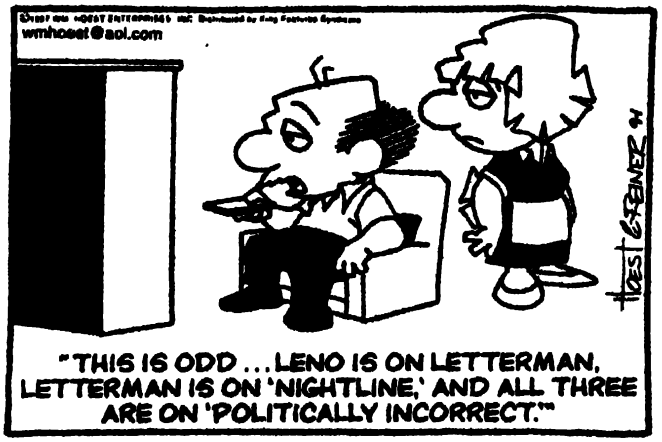
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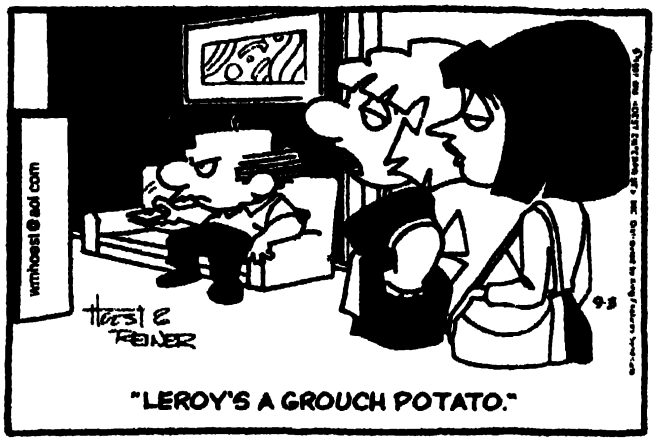
CALVIN AND HOBBES ☆ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

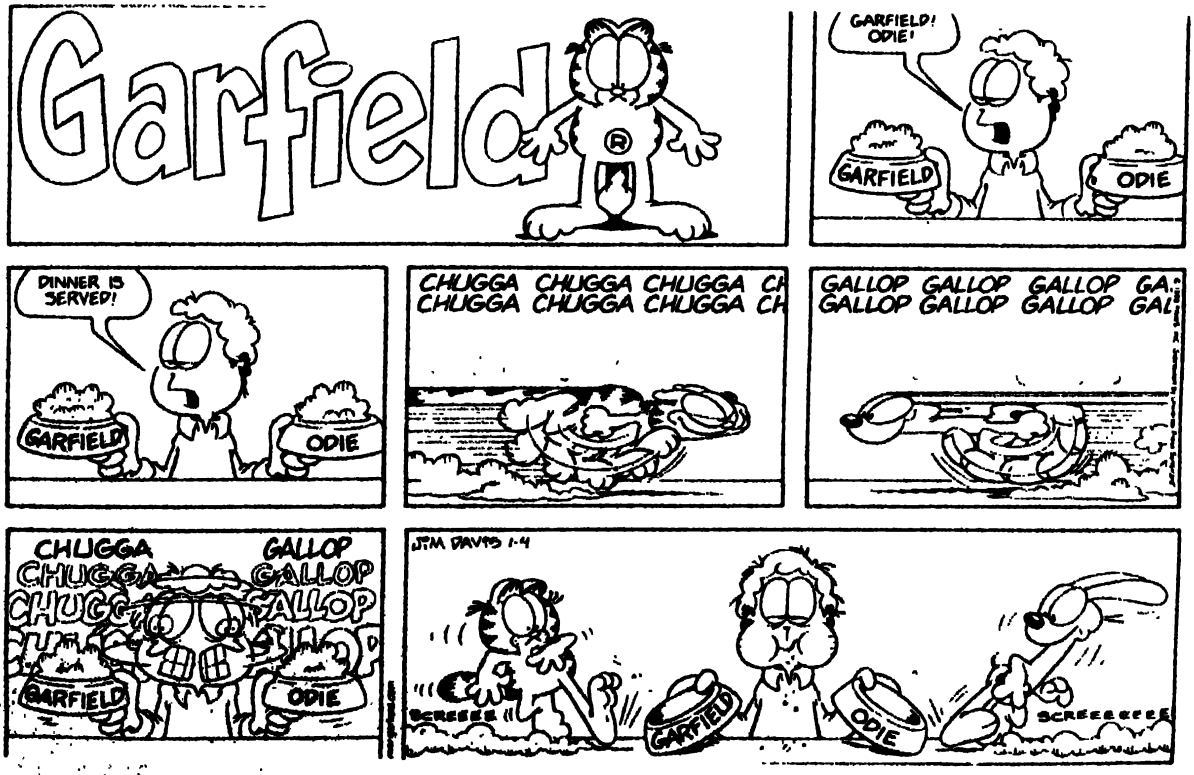








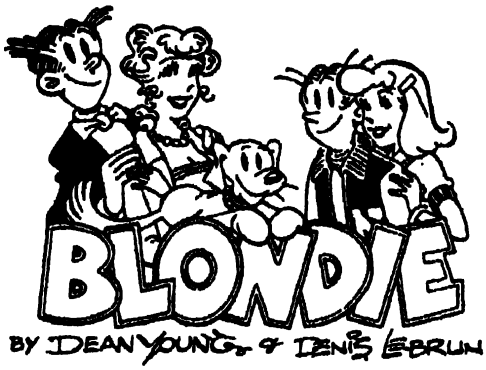
GARFIELD ▒ JIM DAVIS



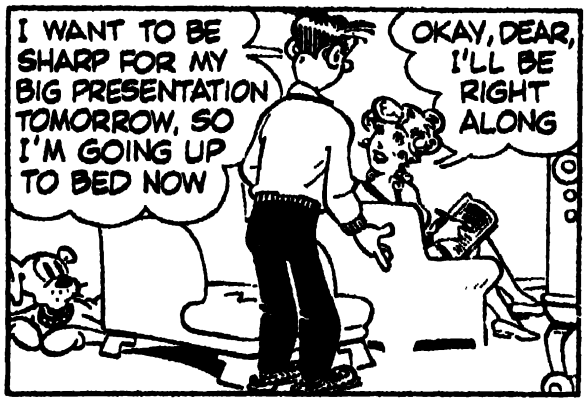
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

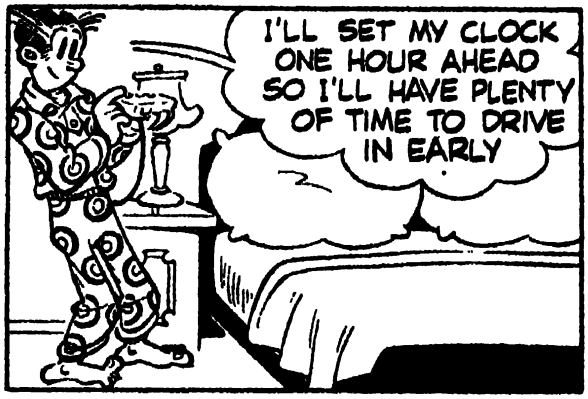


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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am 21 years old and have a lot of hair on my upper lip and chin. I get them waxed once a month. Is it going to affect my skin and make it sag later? Please clarify.*
Purnima Jain, Calcutta

A Waxing once a month is not going to affect the sagging of the skin although the I am sure it must be quite painful. Why not go in for threading which is really far gentler on the skin? Who says anything comes easy and waxing, especially on the face, can be extremely painful.

Q *I am 16 years old and have a combination skin. I use three different but good brands of toner, cleanser, moisturiser and cream. Is using three different brands harmful for my skin?*
Koyel Chatterjee, Burdwan, West Bengal.

A Who says that all the products of the same company should be good? As long as your skin is reacting well to them you can use different brands of products and keep your skin glowing. It is in no way harmful for the skin. I would suggest that you stick to the products that are agreeing with your skin and need not worry; you are not harming your skin in any way.

Q *I am a 24-year-old man and have a dry and dull hair which becomes drier whenever I shampoo. I have tried all brands of shampoo but to no avail.*
Indrajit, Chanda, Sambalpur, Orissa

A It is quite obvious that the shampoo you are using is too strong and not suiting your hair. I would advise you to use a mild herbal shampoo for dry hair. Also why not start to oil your hair once a week. You can use bhringaraj oil as this will deep condition the hair and make it shiny and lustrous.
If you want to avoid shampooing altogether I would advise you to make a concoction of amla, reetha and shikakai and boil it in a litre of water until it turns to half the amount. Shampoo your hair with this. Remember that it is important to have a clean scalp for a healthy scalp.Even if you have to shampoo more than once a week to make your hair healthier and shinier, just go ahead and do so.
A nutritous diet, exercise and plenty of water will also help the way your skin and hair look so start right away this year for a healthy looking scalp and hair.



Q *I am 20 years old and my elder sister is 34. Both of us are suffering from hair loss. We have dry and brown hair. If we apply oil, it becomes sticky and greasy. We use shampoo made of reetha, amla and shikakai. After half an hour we use a popular brand of shampoo. Please suggest a remedy.*
Rini Paul, Rita Paul, Barrackpore

A There is no harm in hennaing your hair but with a mix of burnt amla and henna. Burn the amla powder in an iron vessel until totally ashen and mix henna powder in this and soak in an iron vessel for at least two hours before application. Oil your hair with warm amla oil and shampoo your hair with a shampoo for dry hair. The brand that you have mentioned can be harsh and may not suit your hair. Also consume lots of raw foods like fruits and salads combined with plenty of water and a regular exercise programme will guarantee that your

locks appear shining and thicker in no time.

Q ***I am 17 years old and a regular reader of your column. I have split ends and my hair looks awful at times so I tie it tightly. Please advise.***
Renuka Chatterjee, Darjeeling

A Split ends are usually a result of under nourished and neglected hair. You need to chalk out a regular deep conditioning and hair nourishing programme to condition your hair. Oil it with warm coconut oil once a week followed with turban therapy. You can also apply the following hair pack—one mashed avocado, two teaspoons shikakai and amla powder and one egg. Apply all over hair and leave on for about an hour and shampoo off. See your hair simply smile!



To prevent split hair:

■

Apply warm coconut oil once a week followed with turban therapy

Q ***I am a 54-year-old woman and have to lead a hectic, social life. Recently I have discovered that I have a lot of lines and wrinkles around the eyes and on either side of the mouth.I use a light moisturiser, cold cream and a face wash made by a reputed company. I know wrinkles and age lines are inevitable with age but can they be controlled to some extent?***
Sudha Sharma, Apcar Gardens, Asansol



A I see no reason whatsoever as to why you cannot be a glamorous woman even at your age. After all, one should be able to age with grace. Continue to use the moisturiser and the other products you have mentioned. But along with them, mix the following paste before bathing and do this regularly and you will see the results in a fortnight!
Mix gramflour, one teaspoon fresh cream, chokker, lemon juice and almond oil. Apply all over face and neck and leave on till dry. Dampen with milk and start to scrub off very gently in circular movements. Now splash face with water. A regular mask of pure sandalwood powder mixed with a teaspoon of honey will also help.
For the eye area, massage very gently with almond and olive oil in slow, outward movements and apply 10 ground almonds mixed with half grated potato.
Apply this as an eye pack and leave on for about 20 minutes. Wipe off with cotton dipped in ice cold water.

Continued from Page 8

way of losing weight (all you need to invest in are a good pair of sneakers). But try selling that to any of India's new Keep-Fit Brigade. For these exercise junkies, nothing less than the



More cars on the road in 1998

annual membership to the most prestigious and high-tech gym in town will do (and if it's situated in a five-star hotel, nothing like it).

Here, they will toil long and hard on the treadmill and the exercycle; tone their muscles on the latest equipment; and top off their fitness routine with a half-hour spent in the sauna. As the fitness bug infects more and more victims, the number of gyms will proliferate. Not all of them will be worth going to though, as quality control will inevitably be thrown overboard in the attempt to bring in more clients — and more money.

Diet:Green vegetables will be in demand



DIET

The other side of the fitness coin. With everyone wanting to lose 10 kilos in a week, miracle diets will be the name of the game. While some stick to fruit and raw vegetables, others will go in for food combining in a big way (no carbohydrates with protein, etc.).

Those who can afford it, will hire the services of the New Messiahs of the 20th century: the Diet Gurus. Of these, Mumbai-based Anjali Mukherjee will be Queen of the Heap, given that she has made everyone from film stars to first-division industrialists lose all that extra flab with a sensible rather than drastic diet plan. As far as health food goes, whole grain will be much in demand (unrefined rice rather than Basmati, *atta* rather than *maida*), as will green vegetables. This year will also be the time when mushrooms, babycorn and broccoli make the transition from 'exotic' vegetables to everyday *subzi*.

FILMS

The heroine will come of age in this year. Karisma and Madhuri Dixit have already proved that they can sell a film at the box-office the same as any hero. And in 1998, producers will finally look beyond the Shah Rukh Khans and Salman Khans for giving 'initial' (the primary push that gets audiences in the cinema halls in the first week) to their movies, and rely on first division heroines instead.

We have already seen the MTV-isation of Hindi film song sequences in 1997 — all of which are choreographed to look like music videos. But this year, movies will go the same way as well.

TELEVISION

This will be a year when current affairs programming comes of age in India. The general election will provide the perfect opportunity for every television channel to go in for this kind of programming in a big way.

And with luck, once the election results are in, at least some of these shows — or at least the formats — will survive.

What is certain is that in 1998, television will change how we view news completely. Not only will newspapers and magazines alter their methods of gathering news in the shadow of such television shows as Star News and Good Morning India, even people will increasingly rely on TV for breaking news, expecting the next day's paper to fill in with the requisite analysis and perspective on the event.

HOME ENTERTAINMENT

The cinema-going habit may be increased in recent years, but the kind of electronic equipment that is available in the market today will ensure that home entertainment will take off



Indian fashion will go international

in a big way.

Laser disc players provide much better viewing than most movie theatres in this country, and coupled with such innovations as surround sound and the like, they will transform your drawing room into one of the most impressive cinema halls ever.

MUSIC

Pop music will rule the roost. And that's pop music in such Indian languages as Hindi, Punjabi and Gujarati, not the English language stuff that now seems to be the exclusive preserve of Sharon Prabhakar. But the only version that will be able to vault over linguistic boundaries is Punjabi Pop, with its Pasha, Daler Mehndi, proving to be India's most popular artiste ever.

This is the year that will show the Shweta Shettys and Suneeta Raos that a sexy body is not what it takes to get the cash registers singing. At the end of the day, talent will tell.

FASHION

Indian fashion will finally go international this year. That's not to say that Rohit Bal and Ravi Bajaj will be selling out of Harvey Nicols in London or Barney's in New York, though Abraham and Thakore have already made an inroad of sorts by retailing out of such prestigious stores as Browns on London's toniest South Molton Street.

Instead, Indian fashion designers will be completely in tune with global trends, using the same fabrics, colour palette and silhouettes that are being paraded on the catwalks of Paris and Milan. At last we will have something more to look forward to than the same old *salwar kameezes* and *saris* ensembles.

MAKE-UP

The older woman will be targeted with a vengeance by cosmetic companies this year. And when you think about it, this strategy makes a certain amount of sense.

After all, teenagers and younger women have already fallen for the oldest marketing tricks in the world, and are buying up copious quantities of bleaches, skin whitening creams and miracle face packs. So, if you want to increase sales, there's no option but to get others into the dragnet.

Enter, the Woman of a Certain Age. She's traumatised by the white hairs that seem to increase every day, and by the fresh wrinkles she sees on her face first thing in the morning as she's brushing her teeth. So, she's only too willing to spend thousands of rupees on hair dyes, wrinkle control cream, skin tightening cream, and various other miracle pastes of the same school. And as the years go on, she's going to need these products even more. For cosmetic companies, she is their ideal customer.

HAIR

Your crowning glory should only be one length only this year: short, as is very, very short. The day of the glorious mane of hair is long past. Now, if you want to be trendy, have a rather drastic haircut that makes the most of your cheekbones. That's exactly what Dimple Kapadia and her glamorous daughter, Twinkle, did — and they look loads better as a consequence. There's an added advantage to this style as well. You save on shampoo and conditioner. And you can wash your hair every other day without having to spend hours blow-drying it into shape. ■

The day of the glorious mane of hair is long past. Now, if you want to be trendy, have a rather drastic haircut that makes the most of your cheekbones.

Love of Music

For some of our classical musicians, it is far more evident abroad than in India, says **Geeta Sharma**

Every time the young sitarist sought to give a performance, the organisers would ask Shujaat Khan, "But have you played abroad? How often and where?" This, to gauge his 'popularity' before giving him the stage. Tired of seeking appreciation and acceptance among his own people, Khan then decided to first gain acceptance abroad.

He has been decorated with all possible awards and titles, be it the Padam Shree or the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award. But as the sarangi, the instrument that brought him such adulation waned in popularity, there was little option for the septuagenarian Ustad Sabari Khan but to take his art across the shores where it attracts hordes of appreciative listeners.

A much coveted Grammy and years of perfecting the instrument of his own creation later, Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt is yet to find as appreciative an audience back home as he has abroad, where his music was first recognised and decorated.

What binds the three music virtuosos — Shujaat Husain Khan, Ustad Sabari Khan and Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt — with a common cord is the fact that they have, for varying reasons, performed more across the shores than on their own soil. And in the process each of them has gone a long way in popularising Indian music with an appreciative and discerning audience.

The road for performing across the shores was laid by stalwarts such as Uday Shankar, Ravi Shankar and Ustad Allah Rakha. And it is maestros such as Shujaat, Sabari Khan and Bhatt who are making good and keeping alive the idea of cultural ambassadorship through music.

Take, for instance, Shujaat Khan. Since 1974, the son of Ustad Vilayat Khan has been performing abroad, in such prestigious venues as Carnegie Hall and the United Nation's Assembly Hall. The sitarist has been hailed as the cultural ambassador of traditional classical music since he has performed in nearly all the countries of eastern and western Europe, Scandinavia, the far East and the US where he spends a major part of the year.

Besides these, he has also been invited to distant places like Siberia, China, Mongolia, and the Seychelles.

Even today, Shujaat, who belongs to the Imdad Khan Gharana and is the seventh in the unbroken line in this family, spends almost eight to nine months of the year mainly in the U.S. giving performances and lectures. So of the 70 performances he gives in an year, only 15 to 20 are in India.

Shujaat candidly attributes this to the little appreciation he has got back home and the easy acceptance of his art abroad. "I have tried to gain acceptance and appreciation here but people either expect some grey and balding musician or say, 'He is Vilayat Khan's son, and can do without patronage as he already has the world at his feet," he says.

Besides, he feels that because of the colonial hangover, people back home accept you only if you are accepted by the *goras* (white-skinned people). "Somewhere into my career when I found it was not working out, I strove earnestly to first prove my capability here and then go abroad. But I found people asking me all the time, 'Shujaat, you play the sitar, where all have you performed...?'"

And ostensibly, Shujaat, who has released 25 CDs abroad as against just a couple in India, has no regrets. "People in my own country, have not given me the recognition that I have got in other parts of the world. But I am not craving for any minister to tie some red thread around my neck. But I want to know how many Indian musicians have played at the Carnegie Hall or the UN Assembly Hall, specifically at my age?"

Shujaat Khan says, if anything, he has missed out on being around when his two children, aged 13 and 9, were



Sabari Khan: Preserving his art



Vishwa Mohan Bhatt: Popular abroad

Pics

growing up. "But my wife, Parveen, who handles all my accounts and finances and manages the house, has been more than a mother to them. I am a very lucky man and have nothing to complain about," he adds.

For Ustad Sabari Khan, who is perhaps the only maestro to have kept alive the dying tradition of sarangi, performing abroad is something that he did more to keep his art alive than to gain appreciation. He began his career as a staff artiste with the Delhi station of All India Radio. Titles and awards came his way, as he kept at the sarangi, despite the waning interest and use of it as an accompanying instrument.

As the audiences and opportunities to play at home dwindled, with the sarangi losing its place to the harmonium as an accompanying instrument, he began performing abroad. His first performance abroad was in Afghanistan, where he was invited by the Afghan King Zahir Shah in 1954 for '*Jashne Azadi*.' Thus began the odyssey that has kept the love and appreciation for his music alive abroad if not at home.



Shujaat Khan:No regrets playing for the gorus

Sabari Khan feels that the classical music buffs at home had for some strange reason, begun to turn away from the sarangi and associate the instrument with mourning ("perhaps because it was telecast a couple of times during the official mourning period after the death of some national leaders" he explains) Nevertheless, the instrument, which is meant to be like a human voice, and can play to both melancholic and celebratory moods, found an engaging audience in Europe, America and West Asia. In fact so wide has the instrument's appeal been outside this country that a majority of Sabari Khan's disciples stretch across the globe.

And the maestro, who plays the sarod and tabla with equal ease, has little regrets. "It is sad that in my own home soil, there is less and less appreciation of the sarangi. But what is gratifying is the interest and earnestness among the audiences and students of music abroad." The sarangi maestro, who has been a visiting professor at the Seattle University, Washington, also feels that there is much more professionalism and discipline among concert organisers and music lovers in the West.

Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, the creator of the 'Mohan Veena' and recipient of the Grammy award in 1994, feels the same. Bhatt, who attracted international attention with his successful Indianisation of the western Hawaiian guitar and with his perfect assimilation of the sitar, sarod and veena techniques, feels the same. Bhatt who has performed in over 200 U.S. cities alone, besides the Soviet Republics, Canada, UK, Germany, Spain, France, Dubai, Bahrain, Muscat and Abu Dhabi is another major player in the foreign circuit.

"The degree of professionalism and discipline abroad is unmatched and makes for a more erudite listener which is always gratifying for an artiste." Bhatt who was first appreciated abroad when he won the Grammy in 1994 along with Ry Cooder for their World Music Album, *A meeting by the River* says people would travel 200 miles for his concerts and still be on time.

"The moment I would play a talah, many among the audience, would say, 'So, you are going to play this raga?'" he says. Bhatt compares this with a recent incident where during a performance at the Benares ghats, he had to stop his performance half-way, to request the front row of listeners to stop talking as it was breaking his concentration.

The music maestro who has cut more than 25 CDs in the U.S. and Europe and has done fusion Jugal Bandi, with a host of international musicians — Chinese Erhu player Jei Bing Chen Hen, American Dobro guitar, player Jerry Douglas and Arabian Oudh player Simon Shaheen — has set new sales records of Indian music abroad.

The main channel for musicians to perform abroad is through the circuit of concert promoters in Europe and the U.S. These concert promoters fix dates and concerts for the musicians, arrange and pay for their travel, boarding lodging and food and pay them a certain sum — normally 25 to 40 per cent of the amount earned from the performance.

So effective and professional is the network that the dates for many artists are booked almost a year in advance. "All my performance dates have been worked out and booked in the US for the coming year already," says Shujaat Khan.

Besides the well-established artistes, concert promoters also provide a platform for the younger artistes to perform, be noticed and be comfortable enough to sustain their interest. The earnings from the concerts range from $500 for junior artistes to $8,000 for the established ones. "In terms of opportunity and exposure, the concert promoters are doing a better job than the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, which is only able take a couple of artistes abroad each year," says Sabari Khan.

His own disciple, Dheeraj, who lives in his house and has learnt santoor, tabla and the flute from him, says that though he is only a fledgling artiste, he has already performed in France, Germany and Japan through the circuit.

Similarly many other artistes, such as Sabir Khan, Rashid Khan, Mashkoor Khan and Rajan and Sajan Mishra, are among those who have performed through such concerts.

For better or for worse, for money or for music, these ambassadors of Indian culture are keeping Indian music alive across the borders. ■

My Personal Style

What Rohan Gavaskar wears depends on the occasion—and the company



Sunny Moods



SHADES & WATCHES:

Sun glasses and wrist watches are something which I am crazy about. I just have to see one of my liking and I will pick it up. Many people think that cricketers wear sun glasses more out of fashion than anything else. However, I do not agree. The sun's glare can be very bad for the eyes which can even lead to a dropped catch.

I am not too fussy about my clothes but, at the same time, you will never catch me wearing a pair of sneakers with a pair of trousers and a shirt. Just give me a pair of jeans and a T-shirt. I could live in them.

What I wear depends on the occasion. It also depends on the company I keep. I mean, if I am going out with my friends or people of my age-group, I will obviously dress casually. But, if I am likely to meet some elderly people, I will wear something more formal.

Some people have hang-ups about wearing certain dresses, especially formal clothes. My principle is: If the occasion demands it, wear it.

For example, if I have to attend a wedding, I am quite prepared to dress the part instead sticking out like a sore thumb in a bid to be different. When I have to attend a formal gathering where I am expected to show up in a three-piece suit, I will wear one and even try to make myself comfortable in it.

Of course, I have to like what I wear. I have seen people buying designer clothes blindly. In my case, unless I like the stuff, I will simply not buy it.

I love to wear cotton trousers as they are extremely comfortable in the Mumbai weather as well as in Calcutta, the two places where I spend most of my time.

At office (Sungrace Mafatlal) I wear trousers and shirt with a tie in place as it is mandatory.

Blue is my favourite colour—different shades of it. I also love black. Nothing too bright for me. And, being a cricketer, whites are an integral part of my wardrobe. I always pack in a pair of whites whenever I am travelling not knowing when I might need them.

I belong to that school of thought which preaches: A man is known by the shoe he wears. I am very particular about my leg-wear. Especially shoes. Be it my batting shoes or the ones I wear on formal occasions.

The long hours I keep on a cricket field out in the sun makes it imperative that I take special care of my feet as well as my eyes. So comfort is the key word as far as I and my shoes are concerned. I have a decent collection of shoes and strictly go by the occasion while selecting the appropriate pair.

Sun glasses and wrist watches are something which I am crazy about. I just have to see one of my liking and I will pick it up.

Many people think that cricketers wear sun glasses more out of fashion than anything else. However, I do not agree. The sun's glare can be very bad for the eyes which can even lead to a dropped catch. Sun glasses are very handy especially while fielding during day games. And I just love them.

■ As told to Sumit Mukherjee

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POST MORTEM

Star Track

The cover story on Vyjayantimala Bali was indeed a Sunday treat ('Bali High' December 14). This lady, even in her sixties, deserves a big hand for the manner in which she has steered her career from a dancer-actress to golfer and parliamentarian. She has always been in the forefront in whatever she has done, be it cinema or sports or politics. She is still a big hit with the Indian audience. Can contemporary Bollywood boast of any actress of her calibre?

T.R. Anand, Calcutta



Age is really a curse. When you compare Vyjayantimala Bali of *Ganga Jamuna* and the person she is today — a once pretty face marked by umpteen lines and a sagging skin which cannot get concealed by any make-up — you realise the bitter truth: beauty is transient.

Sonali Chatterjee, Howrah

Vyjayantimala Bali is one of the finest heroines the Hindi screen has produced. She has a versatile and colourful personality : celebrated dancer, politician, orator and actress all rolled into one. She was so charming and good looking in her youth, that — legend has it — President Nasser was quite mesmerised by her beauty and talent when he attended a Bharata Natyam recital by her staged in honour of the guest at the behest of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Prahlad Agarwal, Nadia

Vyjayantimala Bali comes across as a woman of many parts. She is indeed an all-rounder. Intelligent actress, social worker, politician, choreographer, dancer and an avid golfer — a many-faceted personality who does not cry for women's lib but enjoys her life as a woman sharing its agonies and ecstasies.

Rudra Majumder, Calcutta

There was a time when the Hindi screen produced actresses of such talent and beauty that they were revered almost like goddess by the people. Madhubala is one such evergreen favourite. In the case of Vyjayantimala Bali, in addition to her beauty and powers of histrionics, she was an accomplished and graceful dancer whose sculpture-like physique could quicken many heart beats in the auditorium.

Arnab Saha, Calcutta

Thanks for the cover story but we missed out on those little details of her relationship with the legendary Raj Kapoor. That was in their youth and since then both had separate ways with Vyjayantimala settling down with Dr Bali, but the interviewer could have asked her to comment on this chapter of her life.

Nivedita Sen, Calcutta

Most of these actresses from the south are exceptionally good classical dancers and at the end of their careers they turn to this art giving all their time and energy to it. Thereby, they get a new image for themselves and at the same time remain in the limelight.

Suvra Bose, Calcutta

The Telegraph

1 FEBRUARY 1998



PAGE 4

The People's Princess

Politics in their blood. What with a mother, brother and sister all in politics it is difficult for Yashodhara Raje not to be drawn to it. But after many years of living in the US and her social works there, she finally returns to her roots — her home.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

Mr Green



His religion is environment. He will do anything within his power to protect it. In fact, such is his commitment that he was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay award last year. Meet Mahesh Chander Mehta, the green crusader.

PAGE 30

First Person

Pottery keeps Noyonika Chatterjee busy in her leisure hours.

Cover : Sunita Kunwar

COVER STORY

The Peop Princess

Yashodhara Raje is both social worker and polo freak. **Samita Bhatia** meets this woman of many parts

The youngest of the four Scindia progeny, Yashodhara Raje Scindia wears many a hat. But first and foremost she is an activist mother, who has left an indelible mark in American society through her tireless charity work in areas as far ranging as ballet to AIDS. Her children, aged 18, 12 and 10, are specially proud of her cosntribution to New Orleans' zoological park which has a permanent Indian exhibit.

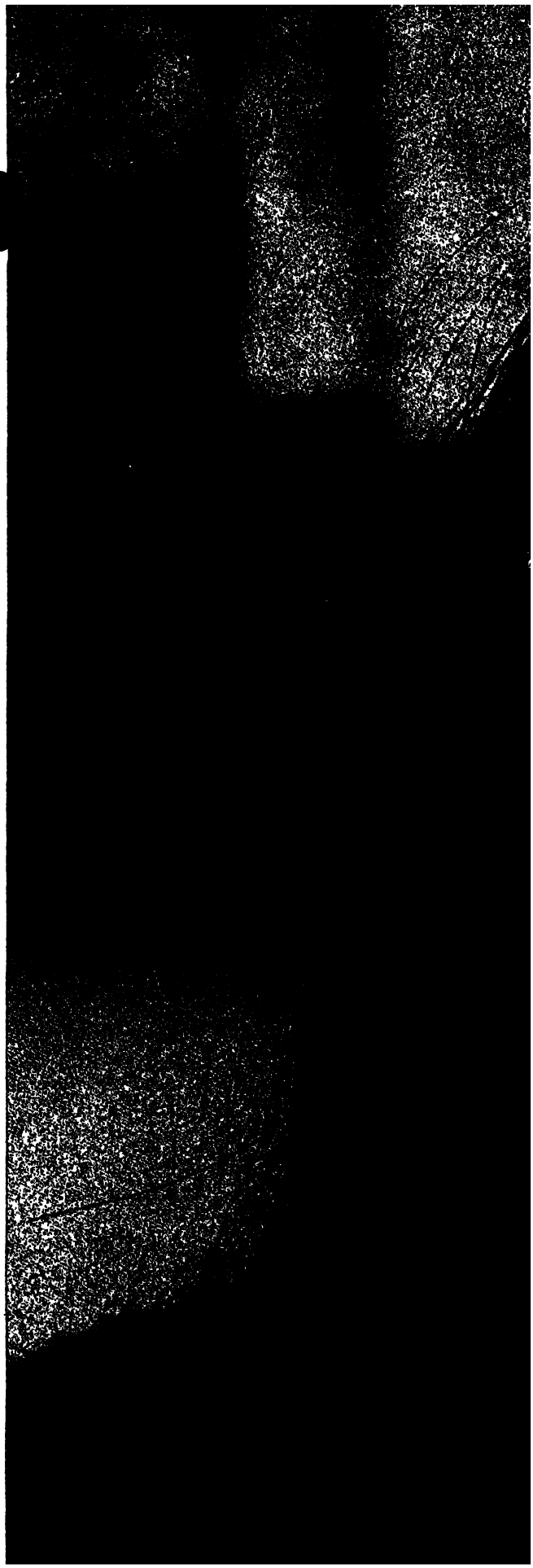
Today, as president of the Delhi Equestrian and Polo Association and part of the country's creme de la creme, Yashodhara Raje is a crusader for a spanking new sport, arena polo. She says enthusiastically, "I hope that some day we will play league matches in this sport just like we play cricket."

At the grassroots level she's the social worker who braves the summer heat and the monsoon downpour to visit the hamlets of Guna, her mother Vijaya Raje Scindia's constituency. The elections of 1996 saw Yashodhara Raje take over the reigns of the election campaign when the Rajmata — as Vijaya Raje is popularly known in these parts — suffered a heart attack. She says, "My mother is perhaps the only parliamentarian who never stepped out to campaign and won reasonably well." Her own efforts are brushed aside as all-in-a-day's work.

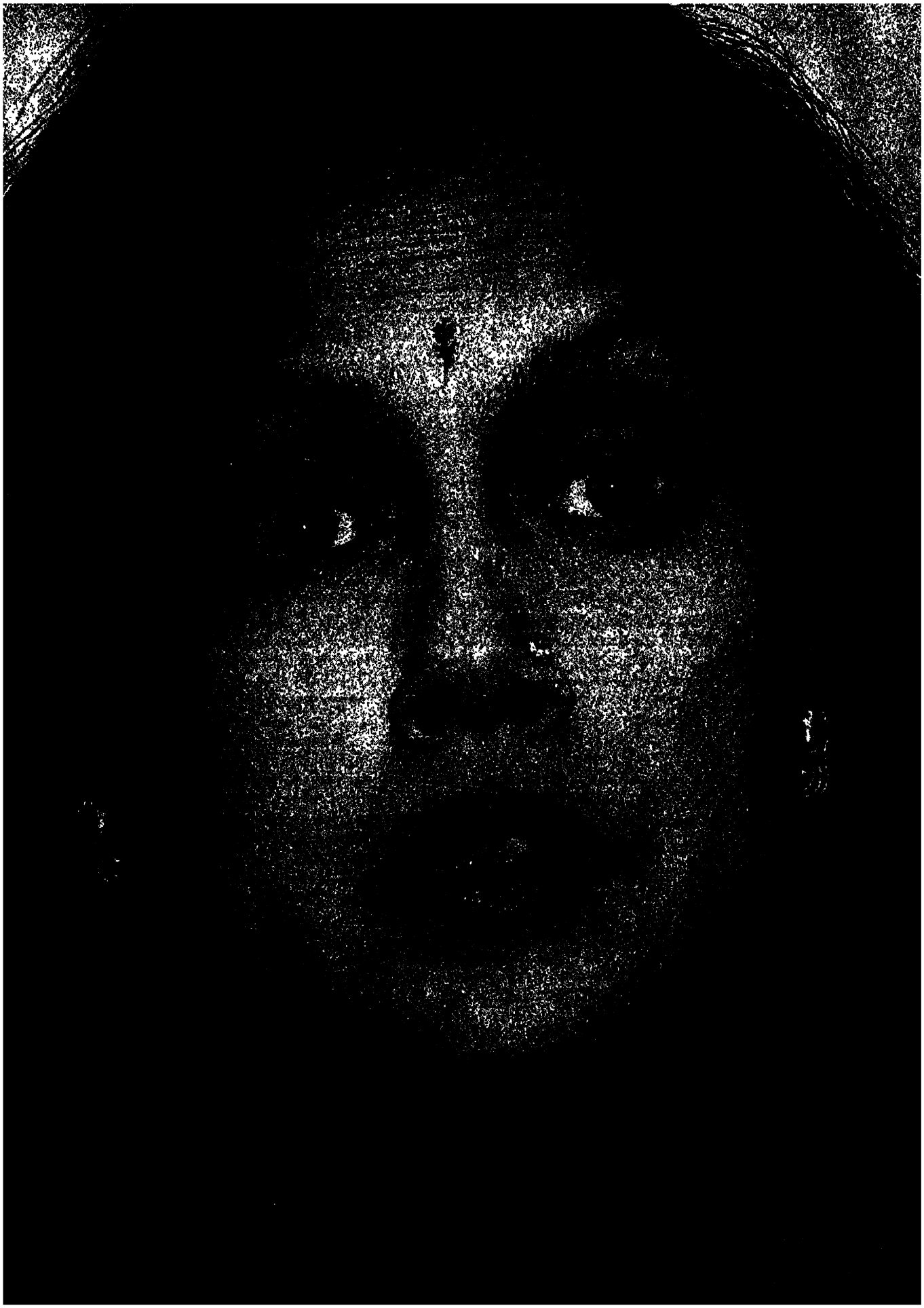
Away from the country for nearly 18 years Yashodhara Raje is back, and this time for good. She says flicking aside the lush tresses that frame her face, "I had gone away as a teenager and have returned in mid-life" (that would be in her early 40s) "To start all over again is always difficult, especially for a woman who lives alone," she says softly.

She reminisces about her growing years, and looks back in wonder at her childhood days, which seem like a fairy tale, a dream. Vijaya Raje Scindia, ever the pragmatic mother, sent the children to boarding school which kept them rooted to the real world. With no hint of snobbery, Yashodhara Raje says, "We lived in a world apart, and were revered by the masses, and so had no inkling about the real world."

Those were the days when birthdays were celebrated by throwing open the palace gates to everybody — from the



Yashodhara Raje Scindia: Back to her roots





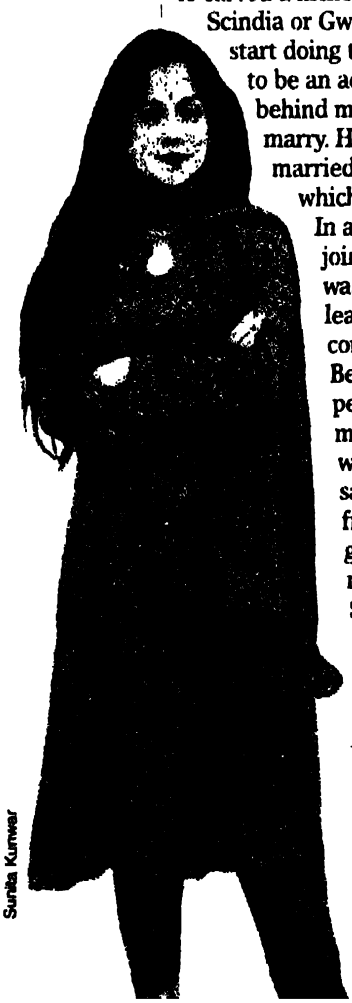
'Though some thought it frivolous, I just wanted to be a good rider and make my mark'

nobility to the general 'janata' — who desired to felicitate the little prince or the princesses. These special days grew from being social occasions to rituals and gave people the chance to mingle with members of the royal family.

Those were also the days when a teacher was called upon to drill Sanskrit *slokas*, passages from the *Gita* and *Mahabharata* into the Scindia siblings; when a sitar guru taught them the nuances of Indian *ragas* and when they learnt to ride on horses imported from distant shores. She says with a laugh, "Madhavrao Scindia may not 'look' like a good rider today, but he is in fact a very elegant rider."

In this pampered scenario, a boarding school proved to be the equaliser. The sisters were packed off to Presentation Convent in Kodaikanal which was run by Irish nuns. She says of her days as a boarder, "It taught us to live with other girls and to be able to do everything the way they were doing it — including lugging our own suitcases. It was a culture shock in the beginning but proved to be a very necessary part of our upbringing."

Sometimes, says Yashodhara, she found the Scindia name working to her disadvantage. When teachers favoured her, her friends resented her for it. So after school she decided to carved a niche for herself without using the Scindia or Gwalior name. She says, "I had to start doing things for myself as I wanted to be an achiever. With my schooling behind me my mother desired that I marry. However, I wanted to get married in a particular direction which she didn't want."



Sunita Kunwar

In a bid to discover herself, she joined the BSF Academy (and was the only woman there), and learnt the nuances of competitive horse-back riding. Before long she was tent-pegging, which hitherto was a man's domain, and competing with the best in the field. She says, "Though some thought it frivolous, I just wanted to be a good rider and make my mark."

She succeeded and before long figured in Asia's Who's Who for two consecutive years. She says, "I was happy to be looked at as Yashodhara Raje, a rider of repute, rather than the princess of Gwalior who was interested in riding."

The need for self-realisation and her days at boarding



Sister Vasundhara Raje Scindia

school came to her rescue during her early days in America. Married to a student of cardiology, life was difficult at best what with having to "live on a student's salary." Going to a grocery store in the early days meant that choices had to be made and even an extra magazine had to be put back on the rack if it didn't fit the budget.

While she could have called for support from back home, Yashodhara desisted. She explains, "I couldn't ask for help as it had taken me three-and-a-half years to marry this man." She mulls that if it hadn't been for the Emergency in 1975 she may not even have married the man of her choice.

The Emergency had brought with it traumatic times what with customs and excise raids, frozen bank accounts and arrest warrants for her mother and brother. While Madhavrao Scindia had left the country with his family, Vijaya Raje Scindia had been taken into custody. She says, "Just to see my mother in Tihar Jail was extremely disconcerting." However this period of hardship was a watershed for her as it taught her to be strong. "I grew up fast as before this I had been treated like a cotton wool doll," she says.

The trauma she suffered at the time perhaps softened her family's stand towards her choice of life partner with whom she subsequently left for America. Once in the States she threw herself into the mainstream of American life refusing to live a sedentary lifestyle.



Yashodhara: 'You have to work hard to earn people's respect'

She looks back on the 18 years she spent in America with a sense of satisfaction. "I'm proud of the contribution I made to New Orleans, where I lived." She recalls having involved herself with innumerable charities — from arts societies to social and health organisations — for whom she helped generate huge monies.

The Scindia name did make her entry into American society a little easier. "But you had to work hard to earn people's respect," she says firmly.

Among her achievements in America was raising funds to sustain art and cultural activities; raising as much as half a million dollars to develop an Indian exhibit at the zoological gardens in New Orlcans; and above all putting together a volunteer organisation for creating AIDS awareness. She recalls, "That was some 10 years ago around the time when even in America AIDS was a scourge, considered a homosexual disease and was much looked down upon."

It took her two years to bring people around to accepting AIDS patients and to educate them about the disease, quashing some unfounded fears. She says, "Those in my social circle who once thought that AIDS was a problem only of a certain section of people and would have nothing to do with them, are today actively working towards the cause of AIDS. It's nice to know that you acted as a catalyst for a certain movement."

The years spent abroad didn't diminish the desire to return home. She left India when in her teens and she returned as a grown woman, drawn almost like a puppet on a string. She emphasises, "My roots are very strong and even when I left the country it was with a clear understanding that we would eventually return." However, like any other young couple they, too, got caught up in chasing the American dream.

"The American dream became a reality for us. However flimsy it may sound, but to me the pull of my roots and country was immense and I knew that I had to come back home." She says softly.

So she returned for good at the end of 1994, seeking "peace of mind". And she sought solace in the sport closest to her heart — riding.

The ball was set rolling with her as patron of 'Olympic Riding' that organised

Brother Madhav Rao Scindia : Elegant rider





'Just to see my mother in Tihar Jail was extremely disconcerting.' However this period of hardship was a watershed for her as it taught her to be strong. 'I grew up fast'



'If the party deems it fit that I should contest the elections, so be it; but if the party thinks that I should continue with the work that I'm doing, that's fine by me too'

International Show Jumping competitions regularly. This was followed up with helping organise competitions for the Equestrian Federation. As her involvement with horses grew she helped form the Delhi Equestrian and Polo Association which she heads today as its president.

Apart from her love of horses her other preoccupation was Guna, her mother's constituency where she had been returning to consistently since 1989. She says of her initial forays into Guna, "I was idealistic in those days and the scenes of abject poverty that I saw would pull at my heartstrings — and this is no political rhetoric. But today I know better, and I learnt that your party must be in power if things have to be done."

So, is she a politician in the making, following in the footsteps of her mother, brother and sister, Vasundhara Raje Scindia? She says, "I don't feel that I've entered politics, as the dividing line between doing social work in the constituency and being elected from the same constituency is like the tenuous Lakshman Rekha. But I'm very emotionally attached to the constituency."

Yashodhara may not have an MP's tag at the end of her name but feels that she has earned her stripes. "If the party deems it fit that I should contest the elections, so be it; but if the party thinks that I should continue with the work that I'm doing, that's fine by me too." And adds, "All the seats have not been decided but I will go back to Guna from where my mother is contesting."



Mother Vijaya Raje Scindia

Ask her about how she feels about riding on her mother's coat-tails and she retorts, stung: "Nobody ever asked me to go back to Guna to work there. I did it of my own volition — rain or shine. It was a conviction and the fact that I wanted to do something. I'm not a crusader, but am happy doing what I'm doing." While she admits that her mother's personality may have helped her to achieve much in the area, however, it has also been her emotional attachment with the people that has earned her their respect and love.

Currently her agenda is to continue working in Guna. "But if I do stand for elections then I'm sure my agenda will not be very different from what it has been so far," she says convincingly. She brushes aside the divergent political ideologies in the family. She explains, "It's an independent viewpoint that we take in our family. For example, my mother and brother had two very divergent views only after a certain time. My brother was in the party but then he found that his ideology was

Like her mother, will Yashodhara turn to politics?





Vashodhara: The sport closest to her heart

different. Maybe that was because of the youth n him; maybe my mother grew up in a totally lifferent atmosphere or environment which nade her want to sacrifice much more. We an't throw stones at another person's views."

She's not uncomfortable about her ontrasting lifestyles, either. One part spent at wish polo clubs and the other spent working t the grassroots level with the people of Guna. he explains with a smile, "I'm a Gemini — so m a natural split personality, and not in the horror movies sort of way." Her lifestyle she says is a happy marriage of interest and conviction. Often a charge leveled at her is that of undue aggression. "It's all a means to an end," she explains, "and I find that if you are convinced about something and committed towards it then it is interpreted as aggression."

And it is this commitment to her varied interests that keeps her going — dividing her time between "amma's work" and her own dedication to the sport that she loves so much. ■



She's not uncomfortable about her contrasting lifestyles. One part spent at swish polo clubs and the other spent working at the grassroots level in Guna

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Pending work must be completed on schedule. Garner information about property and stocks, keep your contacts with foreign representatives fully buzzing, announces Ganesha. The moon's first quarter will also lead to buying, selling, conception, birth, artistic pursuits and hectic activities.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



You will be ready to take on the world single-handedly. But it would be better to have all the support you can.Gains accrue on or before February 7. Do make it a point to socialise, do the corporate rounds and attend meetings. Inspiration, ideas, travel, discovery and money form the Panchsheel of your bte.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



You will be in good spirits. Luck and good timing make you a winner. But expenses will be heavy. Protect your good name. Lost articles will be found An old acquaintance or a relative pops in your life. News, views, documents, contracts and calls will decidedly shape your future this week.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



You will be riding high on money, social whirligig, status and success. You will exchange love, information and joy with older people. Love will burst the banks and that should be exciting. Most importantly, you will have a sharp sense of direction and motivation, the two attributes, so vital for victory.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



All arrows point to pressure, responsibility, prestige. career, business and professional relationships, deadlines, dramatic issues and above all, leadership. On exactly February 5, Jupiter changes signs, according to Western astrology, so give your best shot now. Learn to cheer and motivate yourself.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



A long-distance call, letter, fax, contact could mean travel, collaborations, fashions, political or a charitable project working happily for you. Your artistic and culinary talents come to the fore with sharpness and clarity. Ganesha says a week to move and get things done. A very eventful week ahead.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Diplomacy is the key as you deal with words and people. This is the week to mend and repair broken objects as well as personal relationships. The astro menu has unique possibilities of loans, funds, joint-finance and public issues. If there are any loopholes in the law they will be corrected.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Domestic adjustments are possible, so also are travel or even tours. Alliances of all sorts—from simple companionship to elaborate collaborations and platonic admiration— are foretold, quotes Ganesha. Clandestine arrangements also come in the same partnership bracket. Avoid unnecessary hassles in your work area.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Attention revolves around job, health, financing, pets, buying and selling and this will continue right through May. You could well be in a mood to replenish your wardrobe. Romance and dilly-dallying may not go well together. So be firm of purpose and direct in your dealings. Look around for help.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Time to burn the candle at both the ends. Time also, paradoxically to spruce yourself, go in for fashions and foibles and even fads. Photography, management, painting and music are a few interesting hobbies which could be a vocation. Mercury, messages, in good placing with Neptune.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Home and house, property and assets in general. The good news is that you get help from known and unknown quarters and they-change everything for you. Get set to travel, have a home away from home. Enemies will try to cow you down by abrasive tactics.The puzzle piece fall in place.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Like the Aquarians, the puzzle piece will fall in place for you, too.Optimism and faith will work wonders because of Jupiter-Neptune combination. You will communicate with vivacity and verve and thus put your message, ideas or point of view across. Travel and commuting will be unusually important.

BIRTHDAYS

February 1: This will be a very interesting birth year. Time to wrap up long term projects, meet deadlines and complete pending assignments. Good year for romance, too.

February 2: Those in government service, civil services, engineers and doctors do well this year. Try to avoid conflict and resolve it as a last resort.

February 3: A very happening birth year. A year of hectic activities, wish-fulfilment, travel or even foreign postings. Try to relax and take time off for your family.

February 4: A year of mixed fortunes, commitments, work and some play. A very good week for artists, writers, actors, musicians, dancers as well as computer professionals, technocrats and those in armed services.

February 5: Time to plan out future strategies and game plans. A very eventful year with a lot of excitement, romance and few minor disappointments.

February 6: Do not be excessively adventurous. Try making prudent investments and go for safe ventures. Do not neglect your health as you may suffer from minor injuries.

February 7: A year of mixed plenty.A significant increase in income which is also directly proportional to increase in expenditure specially in big projects.



May it be a Dream-come-true New Year

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TRAVEL

Flying High

Air France is ideally placed to make a dent in the Asian market, says **Mona Sengupta**

Air-France is all set to lure the Indian business traveller — away from the evergreen hospitable Asian carriers like Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines and the popular British Airways and KLM.

Following a bilateral agreement signed between the French and Indian governments on November 27, 1997, the 34 year-old French airline will increase its passenger capacity by 30 per cent on its flights from India, beginning April this year. The company is also planning to operate 13 flights instead of seven per week from Mumbai and Delhi within the next three years, according to Kamal Sengupta, general manager, commercial, South Asia, Air France.

Sengupta is heading a new commercial set-up involving India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Bangladesh that will aim at placing Air France among the top five carriers within the Asia-Pacific by 2000.

Also, effective from December 1, 1997, Air France Frequence Plus members can accumulate and redeem miles on the Air India and Indian Airlines network. More importantly, Frequence Plus members can double their mileage if they travel between January 15 and March 31 this year, confirmed Ms Sengupta. This is valid on all Air-India/Indian Airlines flights and on all Air France flights involving the Paris-India-Paris route.

Meanwhile Air India has now moved to Paris Charles de Gaulle 2, the hub of Air France's operations, which will enable Air India passengers to avail speedy and easy connections. The Charles de Gaulle hub is considered the best European hub. Beating London's Heathrow International, it handled 32 million passengers in 1996. and is the only European hub that has the potential to grow.

Meanwhile, Air France (the airline has merged with Air Inter, a French domestic airline, and now travels to 199 destinations in 93 countries) will be the official carrier for the World Cup Football tournament scheduled to be held in France this June. At the peak of European summer this year, the airline will start providing exclusive holiday packages or "Aerotrack," through which the client will not only economise in the course of his trip but can also avail of special holiday packages in Europe.

So if you are planning a sight-seeing spree in London, Brussels, Bonn or Vienna, you can select your hotel and avail Euro-rail tickets at special discount prices.

To compete with premiere airlines, under the brand names, "L'espace



127" (First Class) and "Tempo," Air France has been offering a host of technological innovations. For example, on longer journeys as a passenger you cannot go wrong. The seats on inter-continental flights have been specially designed for the traveller. The thermoformed foam of the seats adapts to the shape of the individual's body and retains it in memory.

Further, for the First Class traveller, besides regular facilities like individual lap-tops, fax machines, telephone, TV and video sets, the First-Class section of Air-France will have a 24-hour bar serving wine, cocktails or a cognac. Also, as a First Class client of Air France, you not only savour the finest French culinary traditions, enjoy a light snack or the delights of regional cooking, but you are also provided a mineral water list.

Once in flight, you have complete freedom of movement. If you walk up to the buffet-bar you can choose from a selection of light snacks, drinks, games, paperbacks, magazines and newspapers. And you are a smoker, you can make your way to the smokers' bar.

Facing continuous challenges from Cathay, Thai and Singapore Airlines, Air France is striving to be among the top five airlines within the Asia-Pacific. Therefore, it is planning to upgrade the quality of service in its economy class and provide certain benefits to the clients concerned. The economy class will extend international phoning facilities to the traveller, the business traveller will be seated in front, and be able to relax at restaurants before departure and special kits will be gifted aboard to families travelling with children.

Besides all these, "La Navette" is the latest addition to Air France's services. It caters for last-minute travellers with flights every hour or every half-hour between Paris-Orly and Marseilles, Nice and Toulouse. Dedicated halls, counters add signage and speed and fluidity to this new service which also offers a range of attractive fares.

Finally, Air France's long-term requirements are now being focused on larger-capacity long-haul aircraft with the purchase of the latest Airbus 340-300Es and Boeing 777-200s involving an investment of 40 million French francs. With a fleet of 198 aircraft, Air France carried 16.7 million passengers and over one million tons of freight in 1996-97. So, it is ideally placed to make a dent in the Asian market. ■

EXTRACT

A Killer in KAILASH

Extracts from ***Satyajit Ray's*** The Royal Bengal Mystery and other Feluda Stories

It bagan pouring soon after twelve o'clock. The rain was accompanied by frequent thunder. Lalmohan Babu and I sat in our room trying — in vain—to work out what possible role we might have to play later in the day. Mallik had been arrested, the *yakshi's* head was safely locked away. As far as we were concerned, that was the end of the story. What else could Feluda be thinking of?

The *chowkidar* told us at one o'clock that lunch was ready. We went into the dining hall without Feluda. He was probably having lunch with Mr Kulkarni in the guest house.

Mr Raxit joined us. He had seemed extremely cross this morning when we had spoken to him, but now he appeared cheerful once more. "On a day like this," he said, "a Bengali ought to have *khichuri, pakoras* and fried *hilsa*. I have lived out of Bengal for many years, but haven't forgotten Bengali habits."

The meal we were served here was different, but no less tasty. I finished my bowl of *daal*, and had just helped myself to the meat curry, when a car drew up outside the front door and a thin, squeaky voice cried: "*Chowkidar*!" The *chowkidar* rushed out, clutching an umbrella. Mr Raxit soaked a piece of his *chapati* in the curry, put it in his mouth and said, "A tourist? In this weather?"

A tall man walked in, taking off his raincoat. Most of his hair was grey. He had a short moustache and goatee, and he wore glasses. "I've already had my lunch." He told the *chowkidar*, who was carrying his aged leather suitcase. Then he turned to us and asked, "Who has been arrested?"

Feluda had told us not to say anything about Mallik's arrest, so we simply stared foolishly. Mr Raxit gave a start and said, "Arrested?"

"Yes. Some vandal. He was apparently trying to steal a statue from one of the caves, and was caught. At least, that's what I've just heard. I only hope they won't decide to close the caves because of this. I've travelled quite far simply to see the statues here. Why, haven't you heard anything?"

"No."

"Anyway, I'm glad the fellow was caught. I must say the police here are quite efficient."

The man was given the third empty room. He disappeared into it, but we could hear him talking to himself. Perhaps he was slightly mad.



Extracted from *The Royal Bengal Mystery and other Feluda Stories* ***by Satyajit Ray Published by Penguin Books, Price: Rs 200***

The rain stopped at around two-thirty. Half an hour later, I saw the new arrival walking towards the eucalyptus trees. He came back in five minutes.

The *chowkidar* brought us our tea at four-thirty. I noticed a small piece of paper on the floor as he left. It turned out to be another message from Feluda: "Go to cave number fifteen at seven o'clock. Wait in the south-eastern corner on the first floor".

He was still running a campaign, totally unseen. This had never happened before.

Fortunately, it did not rain again. When we left the bungalow at six-thirty, both Mr Raxit and the man with the goatee appeared to be in their rooms, for their lights were on. Lalmohan Babu muttered a short prayer as we set out. My own feelings were so confused that I am not even going to try to describe them. My hands felt cold. I thrust them into my pockets.

We reached Kailash ten minutes before seven. The western sky was still quite bright since the sun did not set here at this time of year until after six-thirty. The caves and hills seemed darker, but the sky had cleared.

We turned right after reaching Kailash. The next cave was number fifteen, the Das Avatar cave. It was at this one that Feluda had thrown a pebble last night.

There was no one around. We walked on. The courtyard before the cave was large. There was a small shrine in the middle of it. We crossed it quickly and climbed a few steps to go through the main entrance that took us into the cave. We had been told to find the first floor. I could dimly see a flight of steps going up. God knew if there was anyone already hiding in the dark. We went up the steps, trying not to make any noise.

The stairs led us to a huge hall. Rows of carved pillars stood supporting the roof, as though they were carrying it on their heads. There were scenes from Indian mythology, beautifully carved on the northern and the southern walls.

We found the south-eastern corner. It was too dark inside to see clearly. I had taken off my sandals before climbing the stairs, but now the rocky floor felt so cold that I had to put them on again. As neither of us knew how long we might have to wait, we sat down, leaning against the wall. Who knew what was going to happen next in this cave, built twelve hundred years ago, and filled with amazing specimens of ancient art?

Something happened almost immediately. As soon as we had sat down, my eyes fell on something that made me give an involuntary gasp. Only a few feet away from where we were sitting, barely visible in the dark, was a solid round object lying on the floor. Sticking out from under it was a white square object. Neither was a part of the temple decorations. Someone had placed them there deliberately. What could they be? Who had kept them there, and for whom?

"P-paper?" Lalmohan Babu whispered, pointing at the white object.

We rose and went closer. What we saw made us stare in utter disbelief. It was indeed a piece of paper, but what had been used as a paperweight was the *yakshi's* head! There could be no mistake. We had seen it only this morning — first in Mr Ghote's hand, and then in Mr Kulkarni's, who had locked it away in his safe.

I shone the torch on the piece of paper. It was another message from Feluda, this time addressed to Lalmohan Babu. "Keep the head with you," it said, "If anyone demands it, hand it over to him."

What could this mean? But there



was no time to think. Lalmohan Babu said, "Jai Guru!" and picked up the head. I put Feluda's message into my pocket, and we returned to our positions.

Our eyes were now getting used to the dark. There appeared to be a faint moonlight outside. We could see a portion of the western sky through the pillars. It had turned a deep purple. Gradually, it changed its hue. Perhaps the moon had risen higher. It didn't seem as dark inside the cave as before.

"Eight o'clock!" Lalmohan Babu muttered, letting go of a long sigh.

Suddenly, a faint noise reached my ears. Someone was coming up the stairs, placing each foot with extreme caution. Then the noise stopped.

A second later, the footsteps continued. The man was now walking on flat ground, among the pillars. There, now he was visible through a couple of pillars. He stopped, and looked around. Then, with a click, he lit a lighter. The small flame went out almost as soon as it had appeared, but it was enough to illuminate his face. We recognised him instantly.

Jayant Mallik!

How could he be here? He was supposed to be in police custody. My head began reeling. After this, I thought, if the dead Shubhankar Bose turned up in person, I should not be surprised. Mr Mallik resumed walking, but did not come toward us. He made his way to the north-eastern corner. That part of the hall was in total darkness. He disappeared from sight.

My throat felt dry. I could hardly think clearly. Only one thing kept going round and round in my head. Where was Feluda? Where was Feluda? Where was Feluda? Lalmohan Babu had once declared he would give up writing crime stories because his real-life experiences were so much stranger. What would he say after today?

The moonlight grew stronger as we waited. A dog barked somewhere in the distance. Then it was quiet once more.

But not for long. A second man was climbing up the steps. Like Mr Mallik, he stopped for a moment on reaching the flat surface where the stairs ended. Then we could see him walking, but could not tell who he was. He did not stop to use a lighter.

He was coming towards us, getting closer and closer, walking with slow, measured steps. Then without the slightest warning, our eyes were dazzled by a powerful light. The man was shining a torch directly into our eyes. The footsteps came even closer, and a voice spoke, softly, but with biting sarcasm.



"Dreaming of the moon, weren't you, you puny little dwarf? Who taught you to write threatening letters? 'Come to the Das Avatar cave at 8 pm then you'll get back what you've lost, or else...' where did you learn all this, professor? A professor of history, didn't you say? Can you hear me now? Or are you still pretending to be deaf? How did you get involved in this, anyway? You had noted everything down in your notebook, hadn't you? I saw it myself — Fokker Friendship crashes, a *yakshi* from Bhubaneswar gets stolen, the Kailash temple in Ellora, even plane timings ...! Why have you got a child with you? Is he your bodyguard? Can you see what I've got in my right hand?"

I had recognised the voice as soon as it had started to speak. It was Mr Raxit. In his left hand was a torch. In his right was a pistol.

"I...I..." Lalmohan Babu stammered.

"Stop whimpering!" Mr Raxit's voice boomed out, "Where's the real thing?"

"Here it is. I kept it for you," Lalmohan Babu offered him the *yakshi's* head.

Mr Raxit took it with his left hand, making sure his right hand did not waver. "Not everyone can play this game, do you understand?" he went on, still sounding furious, "It's not for the likes of you, you stupid little —"



he broke off.

A strange thing had started to happen. Great clouds of smoke were coming into the cave, spiralling up and slowly enveloping everything — the pillars, the carvings, the statues. As we stood gaping in absolute amazement at this thick sheet of haze, another voice rang out, almost like a bullet. It was Feluda.

"Mr Raxit!" he called, his voice as cold and hard as the stony floor we were standing on, "There isn't one, but two revolvers pointing at you at this very moment. Put your gun down. Go on, throw it down."

"What...what's the meaning of this?" Mr Raxit cried, his voice suddenly uncertain.

"Let me explain," Feluda replied, "We are here to punish you for your crime, and it isn't just one crime, either. First, you destroyed and damaged a part of India's history. Second, you sold bits of your — and our — own heritage to foreigners. Third, you killed Shubhankar Bose."

"No! Lies, these are all lies!" Mr Raxit shrieked, "Bose slipped and fell into the gorge. It was an accident."

"If anyone is lying, it is you. The crowbar you had used has been found behind a cactus bush fifty yards from where Bose's body was found. It is heavily stained with blood. Had Mr Bose slipped and fallen by accident, he would certainly have screamed for help. None of the guards here heard a scream. Besides, you had hidden a blue shirt among the plants behind the bungalow where we were all staying. A portion of this shirt is torn. I found it. The piece of blue fabric Bose was found clutching is the same."

Mr Raxit did not stop to hear any more. He leapt up and tried to dash out of the smoky curtain, only to find himself being embraced by three different men.

To our right, Jayant Mallick lit his torch. Now I could see Feluda, who had taken off his make-up. Next to him was Mr Ghote and a constable. At a nod from him, the constable put handcuffs on Mr Raxit.

Feluda turned to Mr Mallik. "I must ask you to do something for me," he said, "See that other cave over there? You'll find Mr Raxit's raincoat in it, tucked away in the left-hand corner. Could you get it for me, please? Well, we mustn't stay in this smoke any longer. Come along, Topshe. Are you all right, Lalmohan Babu? This way, please." ■

Illustrations: Nirmalendu Mandal

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1230	3 5 7	IC 74[illegible]	1110	2 4 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1900	1 2 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1 2 5 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1720	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2 4 6	CD-268	2125	2 4 6
IC 715	1620	3 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1 2 3 4, 5 6	IC 202	1635	2 4 6
			IC-202	1555	1, 3
			IC-202	1400	5
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1 2 3, 5	IC-722	1925	1 2 3 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0550	daily	IC 772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2110	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2, 4 6	IC 965	0915	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3, 5	IC 778	0930	1 3 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2 4, 6	IC 965	0905	2 4 6
IC-762	1900	daily	IC 766	2145	daily
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W 901	0815	daily
9W 902	0430	daily	AI 852	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	*IC-855	0715	2, 6
*IC 856	1545	2 6	IC-451	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W 911	1125	daily
			IC 264	0940	daily
CD 412	1715	1 3 5 7	CD 111	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3, 5 7	IC-702	1440	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 216	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 258	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1620	3, 5 7
			IC 704	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4 5, 6	9W 512	1250	1 2, 4 6, 7
IC 249	1000	daily	IC-202	1105	6
			IC 202	1655	2, 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
9W 611	1000	1 2 4 5, 7	IC 714	1450	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 772	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1 3 5	IC 779	0910	1 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1 3 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1 3 5
CD-213	0900	2 6	CD 213	1300	2 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5 7
JORHAT					
CD-212	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
9W 621	0940	3 5	9W 622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201 203	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-41[illegible]	1715	1, 3, 5 7	CD 111	2120	1 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC 675	0935	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI 305	0625	2	AI 306	1535	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI 679	1700	7	AI 561	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2 4 6
PATNA					
IC 775	1230	2 6	IC 776	1625	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3 5, 6	CD 411	2140	1, 3, 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2 1 6, 7	CD 286	1010	2 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1230	2 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD 572	1100	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	5	RJ-184	0545	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 875	0425	7	KL 875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB 105	0855	2, 4	KB-106	0910	2, 7
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG 313	1235	1, 3, 6
			IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC 855	0855	2, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6			
AI 306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
DUBAI					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG 092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG 094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI 107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI 109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3 5
IC 747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA 214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA 142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
NEW DELHI					
KB-106	0955	2, 7	KB-105	0810	2, 4
SINGAPORE					
BI-106	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI 110	10900	4	BI 109	2045	3
SQ 415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1900	3 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6 45	2312
3005	19 20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13 15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16 15	2382
2303	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep. Mon., Tues. Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16 15	2304
2301	17 00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed Thurs., Fri & Sun	10 45	2302
2305	13 45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun., Arr Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23 30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23 00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Samighat Express Dep Tues Wed. & Sat, Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	06 00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5 15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21 45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15 25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6 30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6 30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr. Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep. Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr. Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri; Arr Tues	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kather Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Tues., Thurs. & Sat	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20 15	Madras Mail	6 55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8 20	8001
2860	12 25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15 30	2859
2021	6 00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21 00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16 20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19 40	2704
8013	17 30	Tata Steel Express	10 20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16 45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr. Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16 30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14 10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03 30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a 28-year-old man and was in love with a girl. We had even decided to marry. Unfortunately, I was emotionally blackmailed by my parents to marry a girl of their choice. Today I am a very miserable man. I have no relation with my wife (emotional or otherwise) although she lives in my house. I cannot bear to see the grief and suffering of my girlfriend. Our mutual anguish have strengthened our love for each other. I have consulted a lawyer who says that I cannot divorce my wife since I have no grounds for one. Please tell me how can I go back to the girl I love.*

Vikram Srivastava, Calcutta

A. Your's is a difficult question to answer. I understand your dilemma, but unfortunately in life it is not possible to unravel the past and travel backwards. By getting married, you have assumed a responsibility to make your wife happy. Have you given the present situation a fair try? After all, it couldn't be easy for your wife either. She has had to leave her home and family and has no one but you.



I suggest that you put your former girlfriend out of your mind for a while and give your marriage a fair try. Try to understand and communicate with your wife. Don't hold any grudges or prejudices. Give yourself a year or so to truly judge if you can be compatible together, and please be honest and objective about it.

If after a year or so you still feel as uncomfortable together as before, it may be best for you to consider a break-up. You could then discuss a divorce by mutual consent with your wife.

However, what is the guarantee that you will be able to achieve happiness with your girlfriend after so much water has flowed under the bridge? Examine the issues at stake from all angles, keeping in mind the happiness of all the people involved. Marriage is not only about love — it involves duty and forbearance. Good luck!

Want to divorce your wife and go back to your girlfriend? What is the guarantee that you will be able to achieve happiness with your girlfriend...? Marriage is not only about love — it involves duty and forbearance



Q. *I am a student of Class X and am in a great dilemma. My Board exams are due in March but I spend most of my time thinking absurd things. I think of myself as a hero performing supernatural feats and being at a higher plane than the others. I keep having these dreams. I am neither good at studies nor do I have a great physique. Please suggest a remedy by which I can break out of this Utopia of my own creation and lead a normal life.*



Name Withheld, Nimta

A. Nobody in the world is ever really normal. Daydreams can, and do, become reality. Never be afraid of dreaming, but learn to make your dreams real, rather than turning reality into a mere dream.

Please do concentrate on your studies. People who daydream have a strong imaginative and creative faculty, which can be used in a positive or negative manner. After all, visualising your goals is necessary before you can actualise them.

Since your examinations are only a month or so away, I suggest you summon all your creative energy and will power and put in all your faith and belief into your studies. It's just a question of beginning and sticking to your studies with total determination. Go ahead — surprise everyone, including yourself. I know you have it in you.

Q. *I am married for nine years and have a seven-year-old son. My problem is that despite my best efforts, my wife is never pleased with me. She will not rest till she gets what she wants — be it material or any other requirements. She is very dutiful about her household work and*

towards me also. But how can I touch her heart?

Suddhasatta Basu, Calcutta

A. There seems to be a failure of communication on both your parts: though you are working for the same common goals and objectives, you seem to have lost the joy of sharing. Perhaps you do not assert yourself enough in your family situation, and so your wife has begun to take you for granted.

You must learn to say no sometimes, to draw a distinction between duty and demands. I do not think you have a serious problem: all that you need to do is stop being such a henpecked doormat and become stronger and more dominant in your family context. Who knows, your wife may respect you more that way! Whatever else happens try to get the joy back in your life, for your own sake and that of your son, who should experience the pleasures of a happy and contented home life. The way out in such a situation is to talk and laugh together and to demolish the barriers of silence and resentment that build up in any marriage.

Q. *I am undergoing a difficult phase in my life. My parents have started looking for a groom for me and recently, they found a suitable match. I am not too keen about the idea of marriage because I feel that guys get married purely for physical reasons. I decided to go to an astrologer in order to match his horoscope with mine. He told me that this match is a* raj-jotok *one, meaning an ideal match. But I consulted another astrologer who opined that it is neither a very good nor a very bad one. Do you think I am a fool to consult astrologers for marriage? What is your prediction? My date of birth is 28/02/73 and the proposed groom's is 02/05/70.*



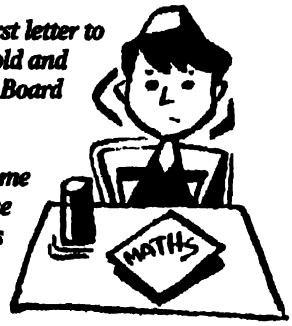
Devika Barman, Burdwan

A. Life is such a gamble anyway that astrologers can end up thoroughly confusing one. You patents will obviously have done their best to find a good match for you. The question now is for you to understand your own mind. Physical compatibility is as important in marriage as mental compatibility. It is important for you to meet this young man and judge your own reaction to him. Sometimes the inner voice is a very powerful guide. I sense a fear and confusion about sexuality in your letter. You will have to examine your response to this and figure out why you are so afraid of men in general.

As for your query I have done a one card reading of the tarot. I drew the Ace of Pentacles which signifies perfect contentment, harmony, wealth, happiness and even ecstasy. It's a good omen for the impending match. Anyway, in such an important matter you must trust your own heart and instincts above all other things.

Maths phobia? Sometimes students become so anxious and stressed out about mathematics that their own fears create a reaction and they fail.... Exercise regularly — go for regular walks. Practise your mathematics intensively but always in a relaxed and happy atmosphere

Q. *This is my first letter to you. I am a 16-year-old and had appeared for the Board examination and got Compartmental in Mathematics. This came as a great shock to me as well as my parents because I am quite good at my studies. When I sat for the Compartmental paper again, I failed to clear it the second time, too. I am very depressed and wish to drop out of higher studies. But then I have decided to sit for the exams again but I am unable to concentrate. I have dirty thoughts when I try to study. Please help.*



Dolly, Calcutta

A. A psychologist will tell you that there is a very real problem called maths phobia. Sometimes students become so anxious and stressed out about mathematics that their own fears create a reaction and they fail. I know because my own daughter had a lot of difficulty with maths until a wonderful teacher came along and got rid of her maths phobia. Once she was not so afraid of the subject my daughter found she wasn't so terrible at maths after all!

Start preparing seriously for the exam. Give an equal amount of time to discipline and to relaxation. Exercise regularly — go for regular walks or do some yoga at home. Practise your mathematics intensively but always in a relaxed and happy atmosphere. Get examination oriented and time the duration of each question. Above all, stop worrying. It is difficult to focus on anything when one is worried. Remember, if at first you don't succeed try, try again! ■

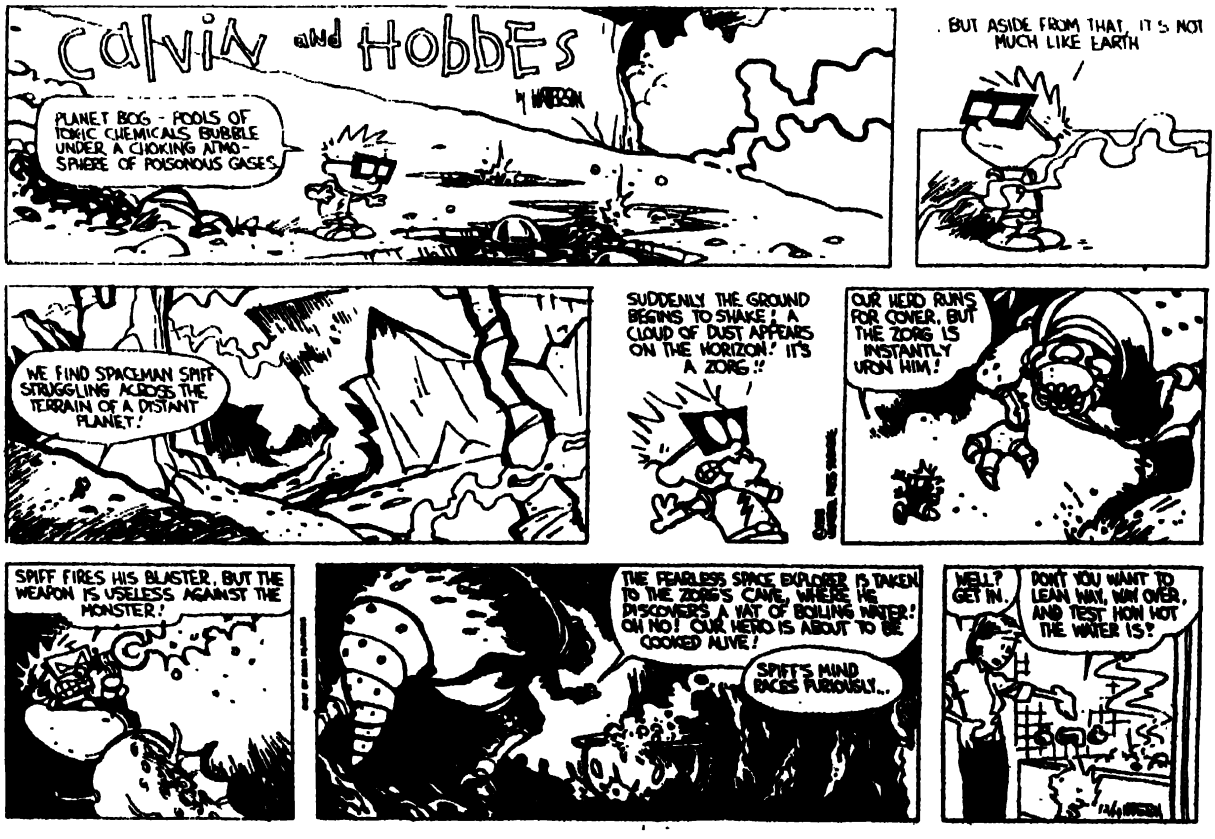
Illustrations: Debasish Deb

COMICS

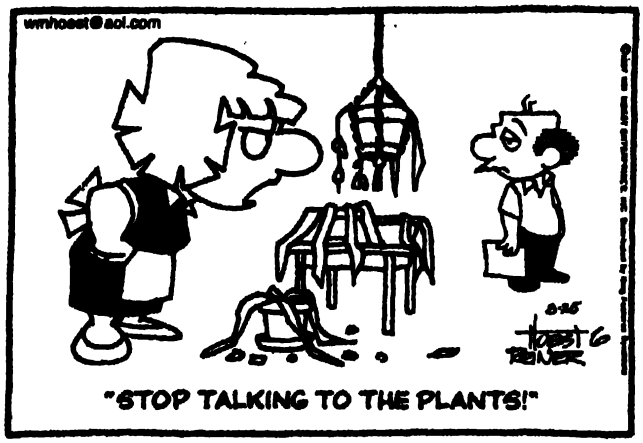
ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES ■ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

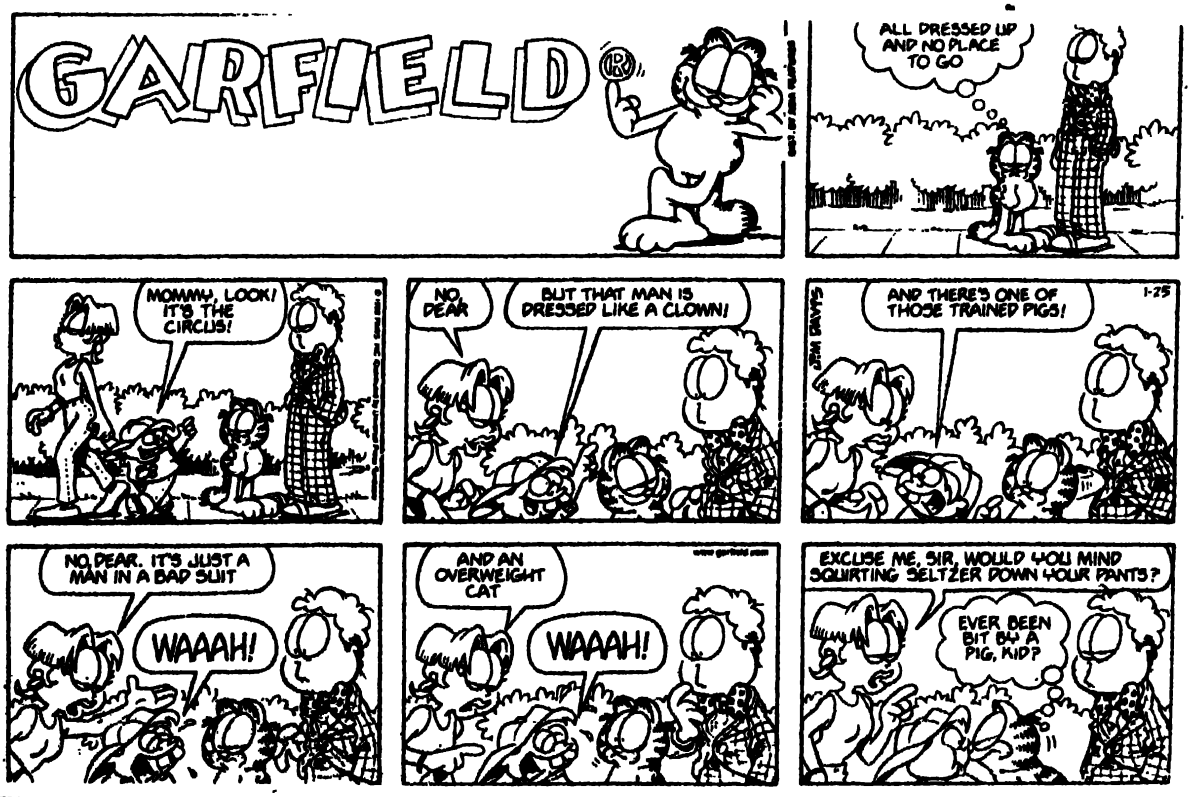








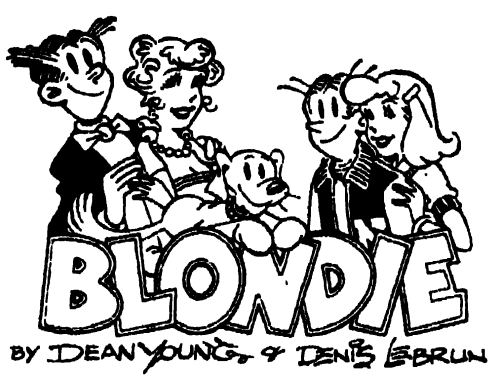
GARFIELD ■ JIM DAVIS

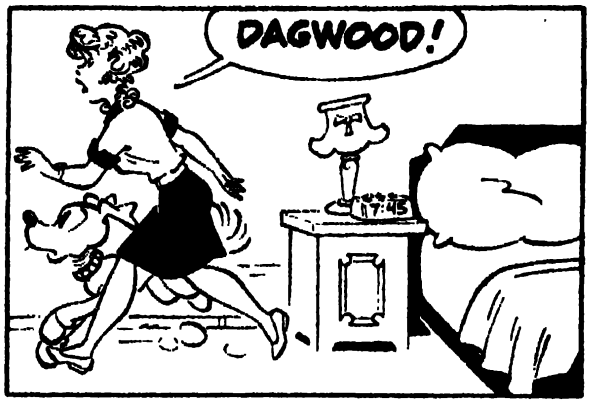


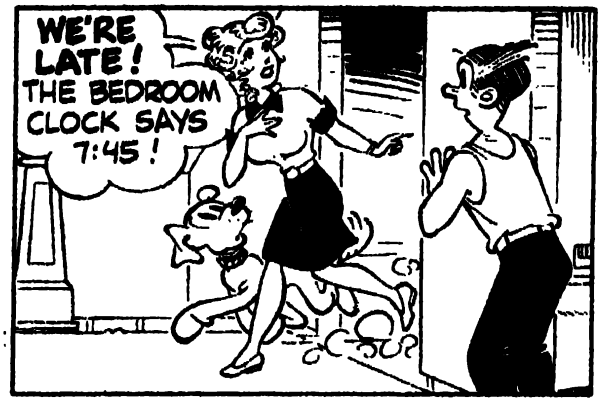
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

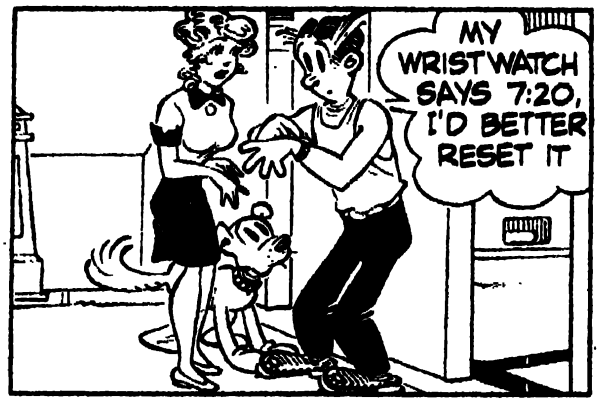


BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

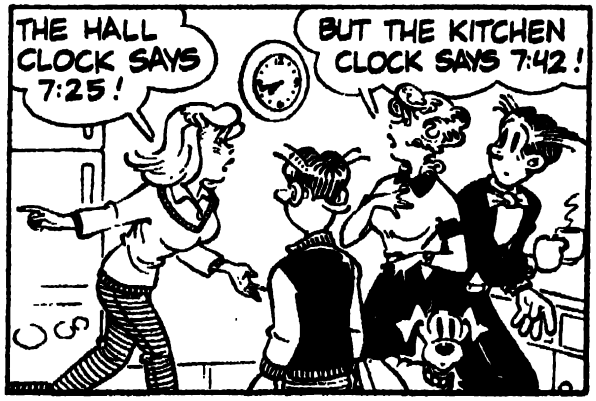




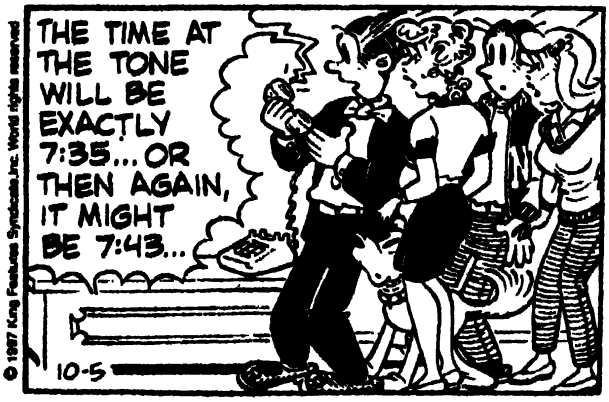












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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q ***I am a 24-year-old man and have very rough and curly hair. It is having an adverse effect on my personality. Please suggest a natural vegetarian hair pack.***
Amit Singh, Calcutta

A Many people have a particular hair texture that is purely hereditary. I would suggest that you oil your hair with warm coconut oil twice a week and apply the following hair pack once a week for about a month —two teaspoons shikakai, two teaspoons amla, two teaspoons powdered fenugreek, one cup of curd, two teaspoons reetha, half a mashed avacado. Mix into a thick paste and apply all over scalp and hair generously —this is more of a scalp-nourishing food than anything else and you will feel the results after one application, leave on hair for about an hour and shampoo off normally.
Besides external hair care, it is important for you to have a nutritious diet consisting of lots of fresh fruits, salads, juices and dairy products.

Q ***I am a 42-year-old woman and have dark circles around my eyes. Dark patches have also appeared on the same area. I have a dry skin and apply cucumber juice all over my face regularly but to no avail. Please suggest a home-made remedy.***
Nilu, Jamshedpur

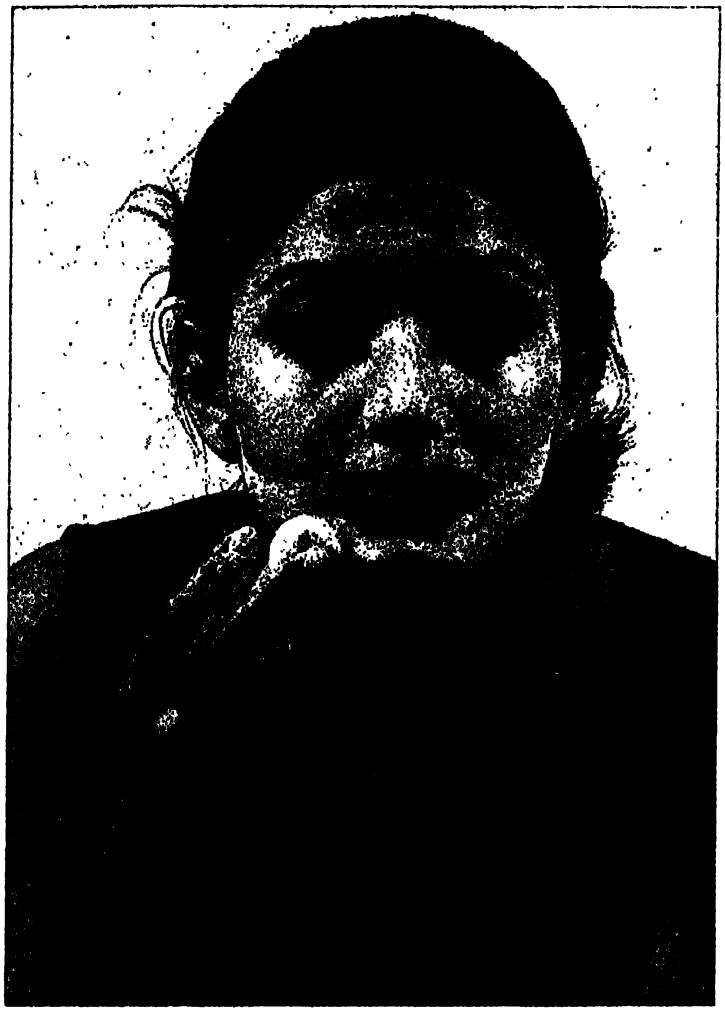
A Life starts at 40 and I hope that wisdom follows. Unfortunately, there seems to be so little awareness and knowledge about the effects of natural products and such a raging demand that I see people applying just about anything on their faces recommended by friends, relatives and well-wishers. However, there are very few people who know about the benefits of natural ingredients, how and where to use them. Cucumber has a lightening effect on the skin but is astringent in nature and thus will dry out your skin more. No wonder there has been no improvement. Use this daily homemade pack around the eye as well as the face for a month and you will see a marked improvement in your skin: Powdered almonds, one teaspoon fresh cream, lemon juice, kaolin clay and milk. Make a smooth paste and apply all over face evenly. Leave on for about an hour and then dab with cotton wool dipped in milk and start to scrub the face very, very gently. Do this in a rotating movement. Wash face with milk and then water. Some people just take a short cut by washing with water directly after scrubbing. But believe me, there has to be some sense in what I'm saying if I am asking you to wash with milk first! Now massage face with pure almond oil. Leave on skin for about an hour or so before splashing with water. Remember that a good night's sleep, plenty of water and a well-balanced diet go a long way to a healthy skin.

Q ***I am a regular reader of your column. I have been applying henna to my hair for a couple of years. If I apply burnt amla powder to darken grey hair, do I stop using henna or continue with it as well?***
Indrani Singh, Bhubaneswar

A I have not asked anyone to stop using henna and instead use burnt amla. What I did suggest



for greying hair was to burn a cup of powdered amla in an iron vessel until totally ashen and then mix with an equal quantity of henna powder and soak in an iron vessel for a minimum of two hours This henna applied to hair will have a naturally darker tinge and will not give that orange colour so often seen with cheaper brands of henna.



Q ***I am a 16-year-old woman and want to know if I can use face creams of different companies. For instance, if I use a suncreen lotion of company A and a night lotion of company B, will I have any skin problems?***
Bipasha Sadhu, Calcutta

A As long as you are using quality products on your skin and hair, believe me, there's no way you can harm yourself. It is not at all necessary to use all the products of the same company. You have to work out a specific skin care programme with products that suit your skin type and make it smooth and healthy.

Q ***I am a 15-year-old girl and love wearing shorts. But there is a lot of hair on my legs. I am allergic to waxing and I am afraid that hair remover will result in thicker growth. What should I do?***
Riya, Assam

A I am afraid you do not have much choice but to go in for a ladys razor and shave the unwanted hair. Most people I know who cannot wax are very happy with shaving . Some very safe and effective products are available in the market that can be used on the body. So why not start and make your legs silky smooth. Always remember to slap on lots of moisturiser after removing hair.

Q ***I am a 13-year-old girl and having a problem with dandruff and pimples. I have a lot of dandruff and sometimes get pimple-like eruptions on my shoulders. How shall I treat them?***
Meenakshi Sinha, Alipore

A You certainly have a problem specially common among teenagers. Dandruff would be the sole reason for your pimples and I would suggest that you treat the dandruff problem first. Oil your hair with warm coconut oil once a week and apply the juice of one lemon all over the scalp. Steam your hair and leave for about an hour or so before shampooing normally.
Also ten glasses of water daily are an essential medicine for you; so start daily. It is very important that you take lots of raw foods, salads, fruits, juices etc.Wash your hair whenever it feels oily as a clean scalp is a healthy scalp, and as long as you are using a mild shampoo it is not harmful to the hair. Wipe your skin with cold rose water several times a day and use the following natural face pack daily for two weeks for controlling the pimples—fullers earth, ground cloves, lemon juice, mint paste and ground neem leaves. Leave on till dry and wash off with cold water.

To prevent teenage pimples:

- Ensure you don't have any dandruff, apply a natural pack and wash face several times a day

Q ***I am a 17-year-old girl and had permed my hair last year. I am having excessive hair loss. I oil my hair once a week and apply henna once a month but my hair continues to fall. Please advise.***
Zera, Calcutta

A You have already done enough disaster to your hair by perming it. Do you know that the strong chemicals used in perming damage the scalp and hair shaft? No wonder it's falling off! Increase your oiling to twice a week and that too with castor oil massage followed with turban therapy.
Henna your hair thrice a month and take a vitamin supplement daily for about two weeks. You will see a noticeable change in the condition of your hair within the next two months. And please, don't perm your hair again.



BINA RAMANI

Socialite/columnist

My favourite antique is a bronze and shell lamp which I had picked up from a Christies auction in London way back in 1971. The lamp is typical of the art nouveau period in Europe. It shows a petite nude woman with just a few leaves and flowers covering her body. The shade is a shell that covers her head. Though I have a lot of antiques of the art nouveau period, this is the most prized one.



Sunita Kunwar

RITU BERI

Fashion designer/model

My favourite antique piece is a table lamp I bought in Paris. I find it the best because it has unique colours. The design is colonial and very different. Also it fits beautifully in my room. When I buy an antique, what I look for depends on my state of mind, the quality of the piece, and how well it fits in with my style

Forbidden Treasures

The antique market in India has been forced underground, says **Geeta Sharma**

There was a time when wealthy Indians considered bleached wood interiors and homes that were all glass and chrome to be the last word in sophistication. But as they have become more comfortable with their origins and the rich and varied cultural history of their country, their homes have incorporated more and more Indian elements.

So be it the bronze icons of Tamil Nadu, stone figurines of Khajuraho, miniature paintings of Rajasthan and Himachal, or the brass sculptures of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh — these centuries-old works and painstaking products of nameless artists have become the status symbols of today.



Anyone who is anybody is keen to be the proud owner of these antiques. The most favoured among these objects d' art are bronze figurines, wood carvings, utensils with fine engravings, terra-cotta, sandalwood and ivory figures, jewellery pieces zari-embroidered textiles.

The only inhibiting factor, that has put many keen antiquarians on their guard, is a fastidious law that governs the sale and ownership of these art objects. The law — The Antiquities and Art Treasures Act, 1972 — allows the sale of registered antiques (objects that are more than 100 years old) within the country but prohibits exports or their sale outside. But there is a rider to it—it is mandatory for people owning antiques to register the artefact with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), the nodal agency that certifies whether or not an object is an antique.

The condition has made many an antique collector and owner refrain

ARPANA CAUR

Artist

My favourite antique is our family relic — the Guru Granth Sahib — that has been in our family for generations and occupies a very special place in our home. It was kept in a special room in our house where my grandfather would read it. In fact in my latest work, the painting shows my grandfather reading it. Whenever I sit in front of it, I feel that I am reaching out to my forefathers.

from talking openly about their possessions, even though they may flaunt them at private gatherings.

As the director of an art museum and an expert on antiques who requests anonymity says, the registration clause often leads to a lot of harassment of the antique owners by the ASI authorities. They are made to answer a number of questions about how and when the object was acquired and why it wasn't registered before? "Even if a person inherits an antique as a family heirloom from his father, he is questioned about the antecedents of the object and the reasons for it not being registered before," the expert points out.

"It's like being put in the dock, trying to prove that the object you possess and cherish is not a stolen one," says an antique collector who did not want to be quoted for similar reasons. It is this attitude that has deterred him from getting his antiques registered. And he is not the only one to do so. "At least 90 per cent of the antique collections in the country are not registered," he says.

Antique lovcers suggest that to prevent these priceless objects of art from being smuggled out of the country or remaining closetted in people's homes, the government must relax the law. Instead of making registration mandatory, it should allow for voluntary disclosure of such art objects so that people declare their possessions without fear of legal harassment.

Apparently, the law has not deterred antiquarians and art collectors from buying objects d' art. There are many who would pick up an antique from a licensed dealer, from people selling their own antique wares or from remote villages or moffusil towns, where people, unaware of their value, sell them to any takers.



It is the requirement of the law that has prevented an open antique market from existing and flourishing in India unlike the US and Europe. Though there are hordes of handicrafts shops that sell antique look- alikes in major cities, there are only a handful of licensed antique dealers, mainly in Bombay and Madras. As a result, people keen to own an antique, but lacking the discerning eye to distinguish the real from the fake, often end up becoming easy game for unscrupulous dealers.



AMJAD ALI KHAN

Sarod maestro

■

My favourite antique is my late father and guru Ustad Hafez Ali Khan's sarod. It is my favourite because it is more than an antique to me. It is a family relic and almost an object of *ibaadat* for me. Since my father is no more, it is this sarod I take *ashirwaad* from. It is like God to me. It lies today where it belongs ... at the Sarod Ghar, a memorial I have made as a tribute to my father at his Gwalior residence.

The museum director points out that what is worse, it has spawned a two-way trade where not only are the fakes sold as real to unsuspecting buyers, but the real ones are being smuggled out of the country as reproductions. Often these objects of art land up in European capitals where they fetch huge prices at auctions and sales. These are being churned out by replication centers that spread from Delhi and Madras to Jaipur, Moradabad, Ahmedabad and right across the border to Nepal. "Often, an object that is worth Rs 10,000 is sold to buyers for Rs 500,000!" he adds.

Another antique collector from Delhi, who has since turned his personal collection into a museum, says those keen on antiques, should observe some thumb rules if they don't want to be duped and cheated.

The first and foremost is to have a collection, it is better to buy an antique from a licensed dealer. If one is not buying from a licensed dealer, then one must ensure the authenticity of the piece by taking advise from an antique dealer or scholar or an antiques expert. Since there is no fixed price for such objects, often even marginal antiques that are barely a hundred years old are passed off as period pieces for over ten times their actual value. Secondly, one must try to have a focused collection. "Buying antiques by date is like buying clothes for the label," he says. Instead of having a motley collection of this and that it is better to have more objects of one kind. A place for picking up such objects, he says, is from mofussil markets or from people who sell their family heirlooms because they have fallen on bad times.

The law and the stringency notwithstanding, as long as the appreciation of the country's rich heritage of craftsmanship continues to grow, antiques will remain the collectors choice. ■



Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya meets lawyer and environmental crusader, M.C. Mehta

Environment is his religion and he will do anything in his power to protect it. In fact, such is his level of commitment that he was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for public services in 1997. The citation had it that he had won this award for "claiming for India's present and future citizens their constitutional right to a clean and healthy environment." But Mahesh Chander Mehta, often dubbed Delhi's Mr Green, dismisses this as just another incident in his life.

A crusader with a cause, Mehta combines the dual roles of lawyer and environmentalist with surprising ease. As he sees it, every person should be an environmentalist because air and water, which are basic to life, are no longer clean.

Mehta considers himself a citizen first and a lawyer second. "As a citizen," he says, "it is my moral duty to protect the environment". As a lawyer his understanding of environmental laws and constitutional rights give him an edge over the common man who may not be aware of the laws. "Don't you think," says Mehta "lawyers should have a sacrificing spirit? An environment in peril needs them to re-establish its claims."

Mehta's rented house stands on Delhi's Khel Gaon Marg. Security does a thorough check before letting in strangers through the barbed-wire gate into a lawn overgrown with shrubs and rose bushes. A flight of stairs and one is ushered into Mehta's modest office.

Save for the white-washed walls and some wooden furniture, the spartan cubbyhole has one other colour dominating its interiors: green. Large canvases in muddied shades of brown, green and muted yellow gives the room an aesthetic look.

Mehta sits behind his cluttered desk, a grey stubble adding years to his 50-something visage. Your eyes are drawn to the quote of an American Indian leader, Chief Seatl, printed on a calendar lying at his desk. "Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it, whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

The phone rings. It is a friend asking him to speak on 'Defence of Socia and Environmental Rights in India'. Mehta promises to oblige.

A crucial subject for Mehta today, environment wasn't pivotal to his existence in the early Eighties when he was just another Supreme Court lawyer. But it all changed when a Bombay-based businessman accused lawyers of indifference towards the yellowing of the Taj Mahal, thanks to the polluting industries in the area. Mehta, who had never visited the Taj Mahal reacted by roaming the ecologically fragile edifice and researching the subject with a scientist for six months before filing a petition in the Supreme Court in 1984.

His efforts were boosted when the Goldman Awards ——instituted by the Goldman Environmental Foundation of San Francisco, US—— honoured Mehta in 1996 for fighting a 12-year long court battle that compelled the government to issue a "close up or clean up" order to nearly 2,350 industrial units corroding the Taj.

The serious ecological threat to the

monument was a moot point of discussion last year when Yanni descended with his troupe of musicians upon Agra. Mehta was not pleased. "The army was deployed to make bridges for the concert," says Mehta, anger writ large over his face. The Supreme Court set up a committee to point out that sound levels far exceeded the normal stipulated level of 40 decibels.

"Nobody objects to these programmes, but couldn't they have been organised 500m away from the Taj? Yanni came and left the next day but who accounts for the ensuing pollution? Will Bill Clinton allow me to construct similar bridges near the statue of Liberty in the US?" asks Mehta

His next important move concerned the government's 450-crore Ganga Action Plan where he gave a graphic account of how pollution levels in the 2,500 km long river—considered the country's life giving source—were alarmingly high. The marathon case, fought in the cities of Delhi, Allahabad and Calcutta has forced the closure of several industries while still others are being forced to pay huge compensation.

Apprehending an oleum gas leak in Delhi's Najafgarh area in 1985, Mehta filed a Public Interest Litigation which forced a lethargic government to finally introduce the Principle of Strict and Absolute Liability, though not before lives were lost in the tragedy. Mehta also ensured the relocation of several hazardous and heavy industries in Delhi including the operations of 300 stonecrushers emitting 2,000 metric tonnes of dust per day.

Vehicular exhaust, a major polluting source, came under attack from Mehta in 1985. He prodded the government into introducing lead-free petrol in the four metros ever since, besides making it mandatory for vehicles to use catalytic converters. He focussed, too, on the aquaculture industries which were minting money in the name of prawn exports. "Mangroves were being mercilessly felled to facilitate artificial farming of prawns along the coastline," says Mehta. He ensured no construction activity is allowed within 500m of the high tide line.

Students also have reason to be grateful for the pioneering efforts of this environmentalist lawyer. Without him, environment as a course at



Mahesh Chander Mehta: Crusader with a cause

schools and universities would have been a distant reality. The court also directed DD to regularly beam at least a 7-minute programme on the environment on prime time every week.

Mehta's deep regard for the environment may have unconsciously stemmed from his boyhood days in Dhangri, a lush village in Jammu. The scion of an agricultural family, he swam two rivers to reach school. After practising as a lawyer in Jammu, he moved to the Supreme Court in 1983 It was also the year when he got married to Radha, a journalist and painter. The couple have a school-going daughter,Tarini.

Litigation consumes a major part of Mehta's time and accounts for at least 60 per cent of his earnings. His simple life revolves round a 6:30am-11pm schedule. That barely leaves any time for his family though Mehta makes up for it by taking them on long tours across the country, inspecting the levels of pollution while catching up on his interest in the country's heritage.

On one such visit he forced the closure of 500 tanneries which were affecting 1 lakh hectares of land in Vellore. From Patancheru near Hyderabad he brought back samples of a black grimy liquid. "People have been forced to drink this water ever since chemical units have played havoc with the ground water level," says Mehta bringing out the bottle which jostles for space with law books on his shelf.

His 'Green Marches' covering 2,000 kms have opened dialogues among bureaucrats, businessmen and the academicia on an equal platform. Says he, "Environment has no caste, creed or colour." So far the green brigade has been successful in planting 7-8 lakh trees, under the auspices of the Indian Council for Enviro-Legal Action, an NGO which he helped set up in 1989. This year the body resolves to take up the National Rivers Conservation campaign with an emphasis on possible solutions.

Mehta's concern in the past showed how 70 per cent of Delhi's sewerage was going straight to the Yamuna river affecting the lives of 10 million people. Now on the directions of the Supreme Court, 16 sewerage plants are to be constructed in the city.

He is disillusioned with an inactive bureaucracy for whom environment is a topic to be discussed one moment but forgotten the next. "People's participation can never be expected when there is a total lack of transparency in the government machinery," rues Mehta. The government, he feels, should set up a Natural Resources Council for the conservation of whatever is left of our resources.

For his part, his activism has earned him the wrath of industrialists, bureaucrats and peers alike; threats to his life are commonplace. But as a man who is undeterred in his missions, Mehta stands tall."It is a question of man's survival," he thunders and swears on his life to save it. That's his sacrificing spirit talking — but he means every word of it. ■

My Personal Style

Noyonika Chatterjee is busy with pottery in her leisure hours



Feat of Clay



HUMAN FACTOR:

I like books on people, not autobiographical, but those on human relationships. I enjoyed reading Satyajit Ray's short stories, but haven't read enough of R K Narayan from this genre While science fiction is not for me, those on philosophy are close to my heart

Thankfully I have finally arrived at a point in my life where I have been able to sort out my career and my personal life. There is more quality time available now for constructive use to further my vocation —pottery, which now takes up most of my leisure hours.

The ramp and my vocation are completely divested from one another. While one sees a perfectly groomed and manicured person at fashion shows, in the latter case I end up with chipped nails and muck all over myself. The normal cloud of frizzy hair is usually bunched up in a knot, which again is liberally smattered with clay by the end of the day.

However, in all honesty, I must admit that I have also neglected my art, which is a complete disgrace. But then one is dogged with practical problems as well; trying to acquire a studio in Mumbai being one of them. But I have been able to put up a couple of shows in the past. I have thus been able to gauge the market and reach out to people with more affordable stuff. The smallest item on display at my shows was priced at Rs 50 and the most expensive was a coffee table at Rs 1000.

I am not out to cater to a niche market. People must be able to afford my stuff and not buy them to stock away, too afraid to use them fearing damage.

One of my teachers in Pondichery, Ray Neeker, was a great influence on me. I admired him for making most of the work appear so simple. His classic method of teaching, however, was to to cut up a piece of work as soon as it was done, his belief being, if you are good at it, you should be able to do it again. I was aghast when my first piece was similarly taken apart. But then we made so many more.

Apart from this, when I am off work, I prefer to curl up with a book at home. I like books on people, not autobiographical, but those on human relationships. I enjoyed reading Satyajit Ray's short stories, but haven't read enough of R.K. Narayan from this genre. While science fiction is not for me, those on philosophy are close to my heart. Not the high level stuff though. but that which deals with the fortunes of the commom man —*Fountainhead*, is one such.

Other than this, television is okay if one switches it on once in 10 days. Is there anything new to watch? I tried watching something yesterday — there was *Family Album* for one, being shown for the 50th time and later, *Terminator*, again for the nth time. Otherwise, there is the usual Hindi crap, or a choice of more English soaps dubbed in Hindi. I like going to a good play once in a while — *Salgirah* was one that I thoroughly enjoyed. The Prithvi is a favourite haunt of mine.

But then, all this is for me only when I am off work completely for days together.

■ **As told to Sudipta Basu**

Go gay the milky way



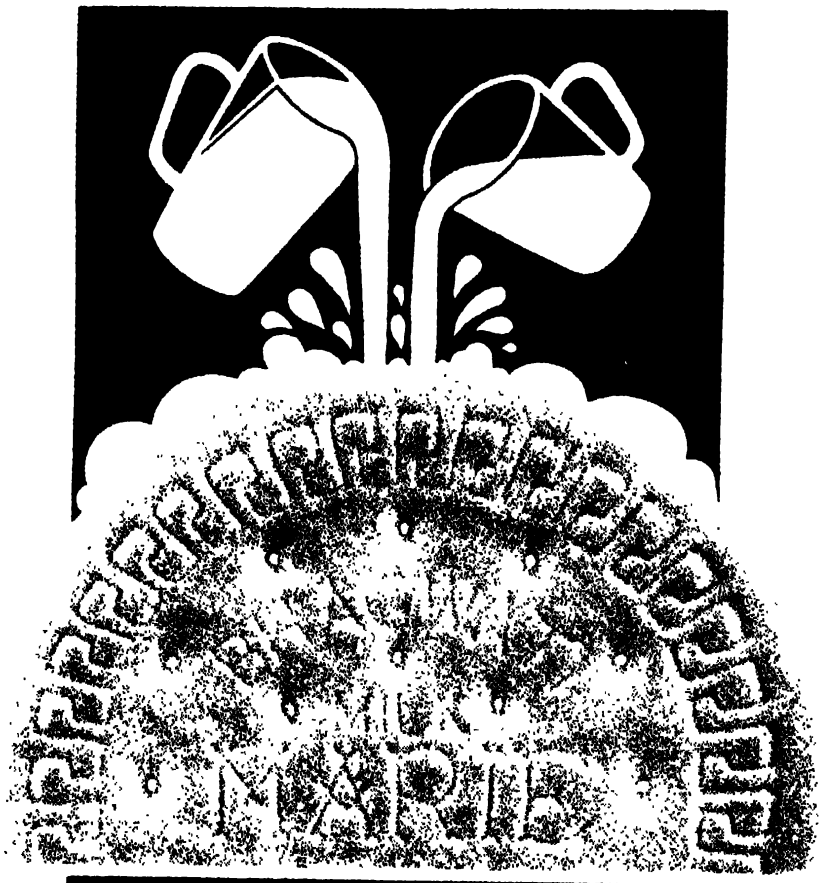
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Go gay the milky way



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Royal Sport

Polo has always been a royal sport; as is evident from its concentration in places like Udaipur, Jaipur and Jodhpur ('Sport with a Goal', December 28). The principal requirements of the game being large green stretches, good horses and very agile riders, only the army and the royal houses can provide this kind of infrastructure. The game may have earned popularity in recent years but can it ever be the sport of the masses?

Tarun Bhattacharjee, Calcutta



Colonel R.S. (Pickles) Sodhi may be an ace polo player, having been on the field since 1959, but he is more famous as Nafisa Ali's husband! Ever since this Calcutta beauty lost her heart to him, Pickles Sodhi became a name which everyone knew.

Ritu Das, Calcutta

Polo has traditionally been a rich man's sport. It's always the prince who rides the horse and indulges in this game. Polo happens to be Prince Charles favourite pastime which left him with umpteen broken bones. But all said and done, it's a pleasure watching this sport for the sheer swiftness of the movements and the agility of the players.

Anu Srivastava, Calcutta

Polo may be a trendy sport of today but how many people can afford to play it? It is the exclusive preserve of the elite and will always remain so no matter what hype it enjoys.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Coffee, Tea or She

It is nice to learn that more and more women are making a mark in the tea industry ('Storming the Tea Cup', December 28). Tea tasting, no doubt, is a highly specialised job which requires a very sensitive tongue to understand tea. Most of us go for a strong brew and rich colour and if it is spiced it's all the better. But actually, the connoisseurs drink it without milk and with a lighter brew. It's the delicate flavour which makes all the difference.

Supratim Barman, Siliguri

Tea drinking is so common in India but we never drink it the way it should be drunk : that is, gently brewed and lightly laced with milk. At any average Indian home or the numerous road-side stalls that make tea, it is always overheated with *elaichi* thrown in to perk up the drinker. We might as well make a sherbet and not tea!

Sandip Chatterjee, Howrah

Really Wild

I wonder how singer Abhijeet would fare as a dress designer ('My Personal Style', December 28). And that, too, as a women's designer. However, the other bits about his wild jokes that he talks about are in keeping with his robust personality. Also, we can quite imagine him as a cook.

Sujit Mukherjee, Calcutta

The Telegraph

8 FEBRUARY 1998



PAGE 4

Heart Strings

For decades, Ravi Shankar has enthralled audiences the world over. Now, as the world's greatest and oldest sitar player, does he have any plans to pass on his mantle to anyone? Perhaps, his daughter, Anoushka?

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

The Play's the Thing



She is journalist Anil Dharker's daughter and just 20 and yet already in the limelight playing a 19-year-old terrorist girl, Malli, in the film, *The Terrorist*. Meet the budding Ayesha Dharker.

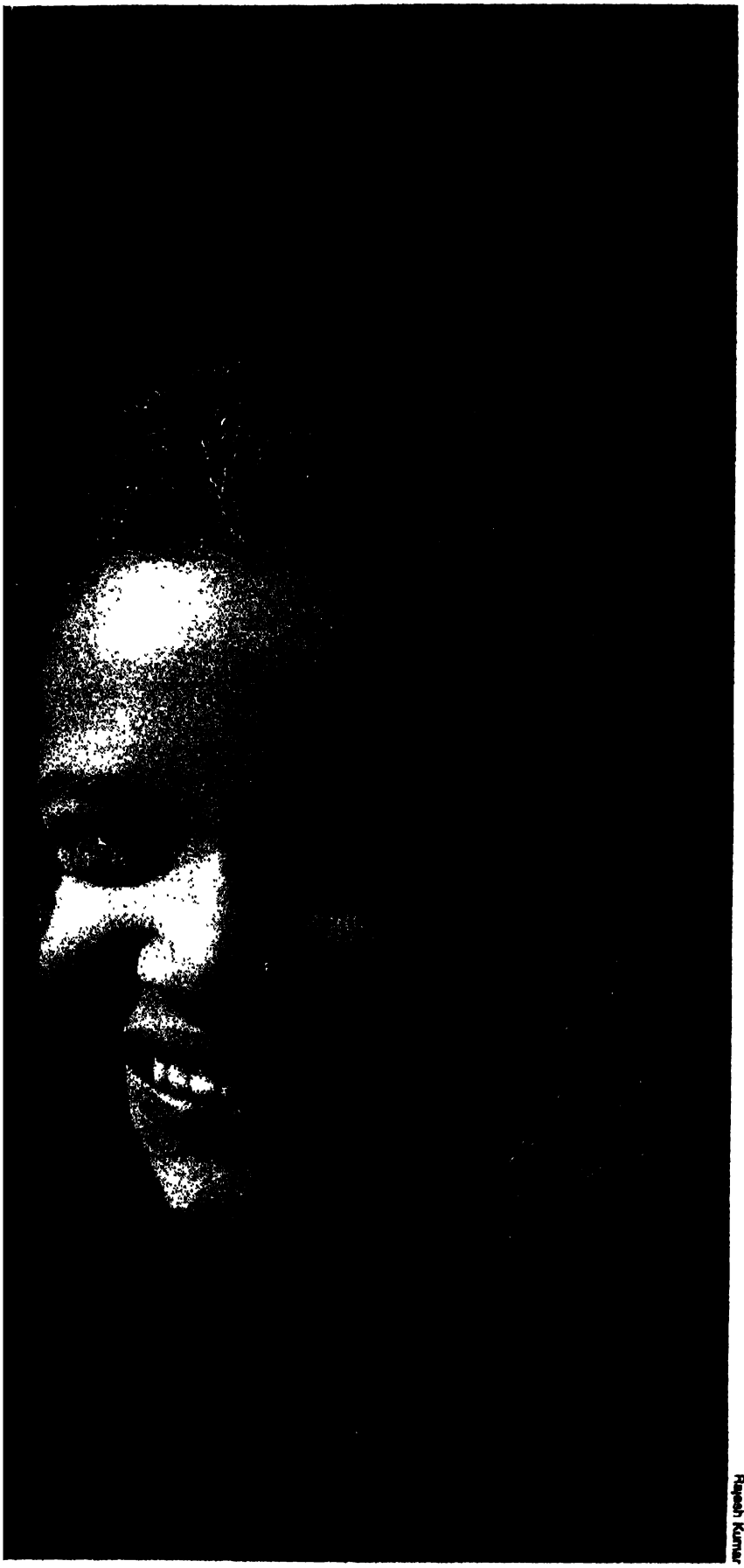
PAGE 30

First Person

Meghana Reddy wears her attitude when it comes to clothes.

Cover : Rajesh Kumar





COVER STORY

Heart Strings

That's what binds Pandit Ravi Shankar and his daughter, Anoushka, together, says **Geeta Sharma**

His presence is marked by the aura of serenity that surrounds him. So also, by the extraordinary grace with which the world's greatest — and now oldest — sitar player carries himself. But at 77, Pandit Ravi Shankar's small and frail frame, that has suffered two heart attacks, hardly shows any tell-tale signs of age or ailment.

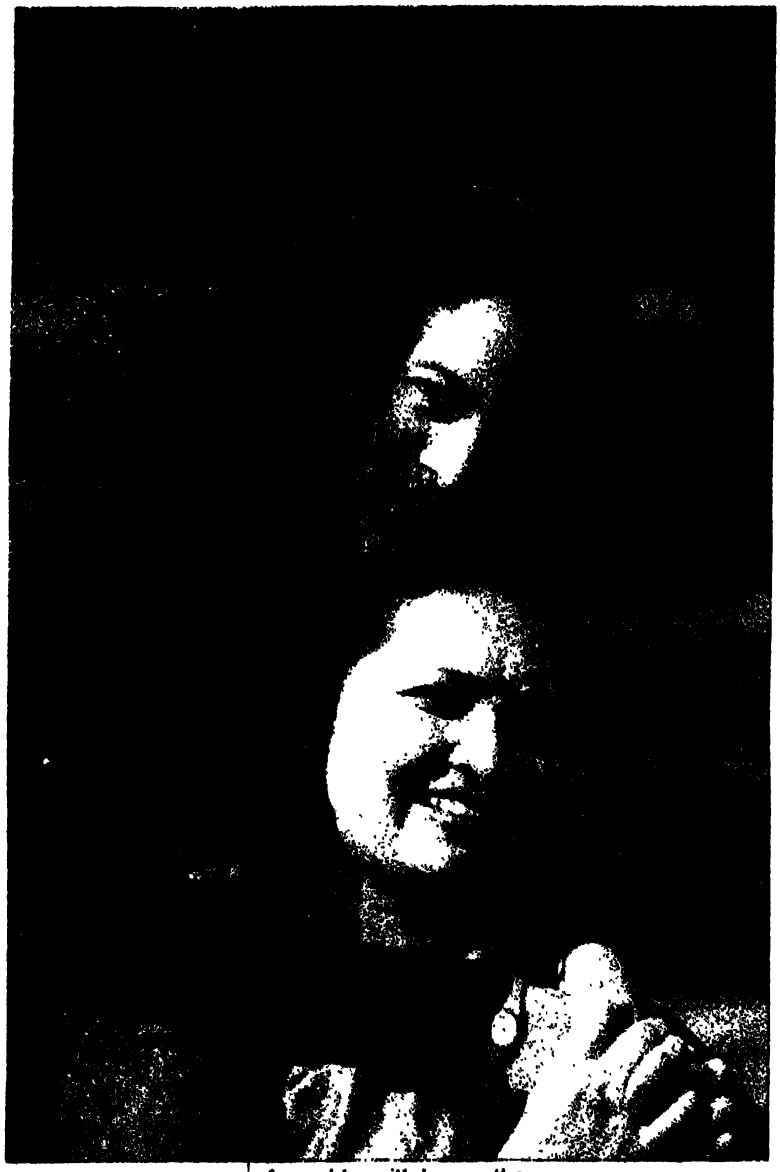
The front room of his spacious bungalow at Lodhi Estate, a gift allotment from the late Indira Gandhi for his services during the 1982 Asian Games, is adorned with posters, citations and honours, both old and new. A sense of warmth permeates as Sukanya, his wife, and Anoushka, his 16-year-old daughter, shower him with affection.

Before the maestro can say it, Sukanya tells you the good news: they have just received a telegram from the King of Sweden saying that Shankar has been selected for the 1998 Polar Music award along with pianist and composer Ray Charles. The prestigious award, instituted by the Royal Swedish Academy of Music carries a prize of one million Swedish Kroners and will be given away at a ceremony in May in Stockholm this year.

Shankar, who has the Magsaysay award, two Grammys, and countless other honours under his belt, is evidently elated. "It feels nice that one's *kala* has been appreciated so much and also because it is among the most prestigious music awards," he concedes. But in contrast to the bubbling excitement of his wife and daughter, Panditji is not willing to dwell on the subject. He prefers, instead, to

Rajesh Kumar

Ravi Shankar with his wife, Sukanya, and daughter, Anoushka



Rajesh Kumar

Anoushka with her mother

Shankar denies the oft-held view that he is keen to pass on ... all that he knows to Anoushka, because of the untimely death of his son from his first marriage to Annapurna Devi

talk about his current visit to Delhi from California, his home for the past few decades.

Shankar was here to present a special programme on January 25, the eve of Republic Day, to celebrate 50 years of the country's independence. Panditji has composed a new *raga*, christened *Swarna*, and a new *tala* called *Jayanti*, for the programme.

Though the function was his tribute to the nation, Shankar — like most parents — chose to give centre-stage to his daughter. Anoushka's performance — she was accompanied by world-renowned flautist, Jean Pierre Rampal, Ustad Zakir Hussain, and her proud father — was easily the mainstay of the programme.

The finale came with a rendering of *Sare Jahan Se Achcha*. The popular patriotic song, is something that touches a very sensitive cord with the maestro. "What hurts me immensely is that very few people are aware that I had composed the music for the song which is today on everyone's lips," he says, bitterness evident in his voice.

The hurt is due to the fact that HMV released a cassette of songs by Lata Mangeshkar about a year ago. But while all other credits were duly acknowledged, for *Sare Jahan Se Achcha*, the composer credit merely said 'traditional'.

The first question is, naturally, about Anoushka. Does he intend her to be heir to his musical tradition? But even before you can finish framing the question, Shankar rushes in with an answer. "No, she is not expected to take over my mantle," he says. "It is typical of our Indian tradition that whatever the parents have — paisa, knowledge, *vidya* or *kala* — they pass it on to their progeny. So I will try my best, the rest is her *karma*."

He sounds both hopeful and a little weary of the progress of his pupil. "On one side it is a wonderful feeling because she is picking up so well and her progress is remarkable," he says. But on the other side, he adds, "She is a teenager, there is television, friends, homework, films and other endless distractions that occupy her time and mind. And then, you know this *aaj ka zamana* and the concept of freedom. That's why I say it is all her *karma*."

He denies the oft-held view that he is keen to pass on — in whatever time he has left — all that he knows to Anoushka, because of the untimely death of his son from his first marriage to Annapurna Devi (his guru's daughter).

His son, Shubho, died of bronchial pneumonia a couple of years ago when he was 52 and was shaping up well as a music composer, lyricist and singer. "But he was very careless about his health, always eating junk food and drinking Coke all the time. I told him to be more careful, but he never listened." Thankfully his grandchildren — a son, 22, an animation artist and a daughter, 20 — are not like Shubho, Shankar adds.

He says it is not true that he has sought to pass on his art to his own flesh and blood. "I have several batches of well-known students to whom I have passed on my *kala*." He names Gopal Krishna, Vijay-Raghav Rao, Uma Shankar, Sashi Mohan Bhatt, his younger brother Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, their sister, Manju Mehta, Laxmi Shankar, Stefan Slavek and Steven James, among a few of his disciples who are spread across the globe.

The virtuoso musician says he cannot help comparing today's music *shiksha* with his own rigorous training, under the *guru shishya parampara*. Recalling his *taalim* under his *guru*, the legendary Baba Alauddin Khan of Maihar, in the early 40s, Ravi Shankar says learning from the Guru not only meant taking lessons,



Rajesh Kumar

but completely sublimating the self to him.

It was a tough regimen. The lessons began at the crack of dawn and continued for four to six hours before breakfast. It was back to class until lunch and then a short break was again followed by lessons which continued till late evening or even night, he says.

The maestro is quick to add that today's generation of *shishyas* are not to be blamed. It is the time — with excessive exposure, demands and aspirations— and the system that is to be blamed and "we should do something about it."

Born in Benaras in April, 1920, Shankar was exposed to Western influences from the tender age of ten. He attended school in Paris and worked as a dancer in his celebrated brother and first *guru*, Uday Shankar's troupe which performed in various capitals of Europe. The exposure stood him in good stead and he went back there as a young sitarist and created a niche for himself.

When Shankar was 14, he started learning Kathak and Kathakali as he had Uday Shankar as his role model, and wanted to become a celebrated dancer like him. But destiny had something else in store for him. At the age of 18, Ravi Shankar learnt the rudiments of playing the sitar in England from Ustad Alauddin Khan — known for his fierce and fiery temper. He then gave up everything to live in the sleepy village of Maihar, now in Madhya Pradesh, to learn the sitar from Khan as a full-time disciple.

When he was 25, Ravi Shankar composed music for two celebrated films *Dharti Ka Lal* and *Neecha Nagar*, and later for Satyajit Ray's films — *Pather Panchali*, *Aparajito* and *Apur Sansar*. Much later, he gave the score for the Hindi film *Anuradhu* and Richard Attenborough's *Gandhi*.

In the early years of his career Ravi Shankar also became active in the left wing movement spearheaded by the Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA). During his stint as director of All India Radio in 1949, he formed the national orchestra, the Vadya Vrinda. Later, his meeting with violinist Yehudi Menuhin started a close interaction with the West and he has not looked back since.

He attempted an East-West musical fusion by cutting discs with Menuhin, Andre Previn and later with Zubin Mehta. In the 1960s Shankar almost became a cult figure in the West and in India thanks to his musical association with the Beatles. George Harrison became his student and together they brought about a musical revolution as the sitar, *agarbattis* and *kurtas* became the rage.

But, says Shankar, "I never exploited my association with George Harrison, who is not just a friend and student but like a son to me. People say I got a name because of the Beatles. But that name could have held for a year or two but not for a lifetime," he points out.

Shankar is also upset that he has been accused of seeking greener pastures abroad

'Anoushka is not expected to take over my mantle. It is typical of our Indian tradition that whatever the parents have — *vidya* or *kala* — they pass it on to their progeny. So I will try my best, the rest is her *karma*'

'It hurts deeply that the very musicians who are benefiting today from the path shown by me and are giving frequent performances abroad, continue to accuse me and give me *gali* for living abroad.'

where he has chosen to reside. "It hurts deeply that the very musicians who are benefiting today from the path shown by me and are giving frequent performances abroad, continue to accuse me and give me *gali* for living abroad."

He adds that the only reason he has chosen to live abroad is "for reasons of health. I cannot take the pollution any more. The day I land in Delhi, I get a sore throat." He says he loves India for its past and not its present.

Shankar has composed several original *ragas*, and last year released two CDs based on Sanskrit verses called *Chants of India*. He is also credited with setting new trends in classical music such as the *Jugalbandi* and *Sawal Jawaab* series with artists playing the accompanying instruments.

Also, he has just brought out a limited edition autobiography, called the *Ragmala*, where he talks about his music and his life. The 2,000-copy edition, priced at around 200 dollars, is a collector's item, published by Genesis Publications of Britain.

Among his admirers world-wide is his daughter, Anoushka, who hopes that she too would be able to play and sound like him technically one day. "Bapi's (as she calls him) music is so soft and melodious, no one else has that quality."

But beyond that, Anoushka, a high school student in San Diego, California, says being his daughter has both its advantages and disadvantages. "One gets a little tired of constantly being referred to as his daughter. But then he is such a gentle soul and such a patient teacher that one cannot help admiring him," she adds. Anoushka feels her father was much more patient and lenient with her than with his other students, even though "I was totally raw and he had to teach me right from



Hajesh Kumar

Sa-re-ga-ma..."

A mature head planted firmly on her young shoulders, Anoushka says she is clear about the fact that she does not want to be another child prodigy, no matter what the world expects of her. "Child prodigies just work and work and then burn out and vanish one fine day. It is very important for me to maintain a sense of reality and enjoy other things in life too — friends, music, films and homework!"

Her parents, too, have not put any pressures or demands on her. Her *riyaz* consists of two hours of lessons on school days and up to four hours on others. And as she points out, unlike other Indian parents who are over-protective about their children, she has her freedom. "I can come back from a friend's place at ten on weekdays and at midnight on weekends. Beyond that the State curfew for minors, makes sure kids don't stay out too late!," she says, adding "I have never betrayed my parents' trust."



Vincent Limongelli

She also talks of her love for the piano, which incidentally she started playing first and instinctively. "But it is the sitar I play much better. There is just no time after school and sitar for piano." Anoushka, who has now trained for about nine years with her father and has played several concerts with him, says she is not sure when she would mount her first solo performance. "My father would decide that. Perhaps, it may be this year," she says.

As for his second marriage to

Sukanya, his wife of almost ten years, Panditji prefers to give the floor to her and says succinctly, "*Samundra mein hazaron goate lagane ke baad ek padav mila jahan shanti mili,*" (After surfing in the sea for so long, I finally found an anchor and peace.)

Sukanya, puts it in five words. "He is God to me." Her lips quiver and her eyes are moist (something of a surprise since they have been married for nearly a decade) as one prods her to go on. "We have been having an affair and it's still going on," she quips.

Sukanya says it all began with her admiration for him. "I was his niece's friend and would occasionally play the tanpura when he came to perform in London." The attraction grew and they met on and off, even though Sukanya was married and still living with her husband.

"Then one day it just happened and I realised that I had loved him all along." Anoushka, in fact, came six years before they were actually married. "I was totally in love with him and wanted to have his daughter, so Anoushka was a planned child," she says, adding she never expected to him to marry her.

"I lived with my ex-husband for about two years after I had Anoushka, with his full knowledge that it was Panditji's baby," she says. Gradually, things began to get a little difficult as the pressures mounted about the whole thing sullying her husband's reputation.

"There were threats and there were pressures which I could take no more. My marriage was nothing but a formality because of our diverse interests. So I just decided to walk out one day." She lived alone for about four years till one fine day, to her utter surprise, "Panditji said we were getting married!"





Recalling the days that she lived alone, Sukanya says it was uncanny and difficult. "One day, as Anoushka watched Raviji's performance on television, she turned to me and said, 'Mama, don't I look like him?'"

But those are the years she would rather forget. It's 20 years since her relationship with Panditji began and she doesn't want any bit of her forgettable past to creep in. After all, the Shankar family has a brilliant future before it; so why dwell on bygone days? ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Time for loans and funds, investment and capital formation, buying/selling/shopping, thanks to the full moon of the 11th. Passion and power will be hotly pursued. You may expect news from a distant place, thanks to Mars. Get your travel-kit ready.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



8-9 is very definitely action time. Clashes too are more than possible, so also are gains. Matters about partnerships, be they personal or professional, will come to a head. It is decision time for sure. Like the Ariens, you too, will be in for loans and funds.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Marriage, links, associations, collaborations, travel, tours — yes, the next 60 days do propel you to them. Human relationships will be predominant. Geminis will also have a chance to do a job switch, or get a promotion in the same firm. Time for hiring/firing, if you are the boss.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Bon gout (good taste), *bon heur* (good fortune), *bon marche* (bargains and discounts), *bon mine* (good appearance) — all help to make you comfortable, prosperous, happy because of a wonderful Mercury and Jupiter placing. Your creativity and ingenuity will carry all before it.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



The focus shifts to house, property, children, research, education, renovation/decoration/alteration/installation of gadgetry, land building and construction, and this will continue at least till the end of February. Promotion and gains are possible.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Use the media of communication and transport, e.g. fax and jet respectively, to grab what you want. In tests and exams, you should make it. Also, the right time to take a crash course in whatever interests you. A fast forward time, so to say. Keep your options open.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The name of the game is money and family. Please expect visitors and relatives to be with you, or invite you to be with them. Deeds, documents will be signed, sealed, delivered within 60 days. Rentals, taxes, loans, insurance, income from various sources are the possibilities for you.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Not cynicism but joy, not suspicion but open acceptance is the right attitude to have. Colleagues will back you up, friends will be with you, dear ones will love you and children/grandchildren give delight. Venus in your 3rd sign will help you to love and be cherished. Money comes in.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Moon-Jupiter in your 4th sign assures money, buying and selling, knowledge, religious rites, charity, good relationships, affairs of the heart, and plenty of action. A trip is on the cards the next 15 days. Secret deal and negotiations are probable for you.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



You will be a winner! Use your considerable talent for organisation and practicality to advantage, that is the astro tip. Let friends and well-wishers support you fully. Children, good money, grandchildren and a touch of romance make it a joyous week.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



A new high in status and prestige will be yours because of the full moon's placing in your 7th angle. This is the right time to take the initiative, start a project shortly, use all resources in whatever way you want. This week will be truly outstanding despite irritations, says Ganesha.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



You will be sounding the reveille, the morning bugle call for soldiers, as your enthusiasm will be boundless and your devotion, matchless. Journey, ceremony, publicity, form a happy trio of aces for you. The right time to steal the thunder of your foes and rivals.

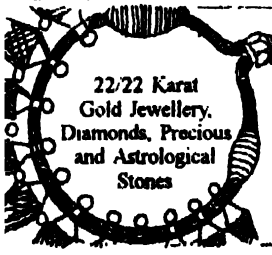
BIRTHDAYS

February 2: A mixed year in the sense that you will get what you have been long waiting for in the shape of a girlfriend or job. Financially you may suffer a setback though.

February 3: An eventful year for you will be taking many decisions regarding marriage and family. For people in business and sales it's a less profitable year.

February 10: A promotion is on the cards. A vacation abroad could also materialise and your children could have some good news for you.

February 11: After surfing in troubled waters you will finally reach your haven. Professionally you should do well. Get rid of [illegible] from your problems and be a happy soul.



May it be a Dream-come-true New Year

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SKETCHES

Potted History

What the chattering classes are talking about

This Week: The Gandhi comeback

The talking point is: Sonia Gandhi's entry into politics, what else? After several years of playing coy on the fringes of politics, Sonia has finally taken the plunge on the eve of the 1998 General Election. And in record time, she has become the most contentious poll issue of all.

Despite the fact that: Sonia has decided not to stand for election this time round — and even apologised to the people of Amethi for her decision. Nonetheless, she is still being talking about as the Congress prime ministerial candidate (by Congressmen) and The Foreign Hand of the Congress (by the BJP and the United Front).

And why is that?: Well, for starters, it may have something to do with the fact that Sonia is attracting hordes of the electorate to her meetings all over the country. They may or may not vote for the Congress at the moment of reckoning, but there is no denying that she has put the muscle back into the party's campaign.



Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka and Robert Vadra : Adding glamour to the Congress campaign

What is Sonia's attraction?: For one thing, she is a far more glamorous figure than Sitaram Kesri, I.K. Gujral or even A.B. Vajpayee. And she's often accompanied by her even more glamorous daughter, Priyanka, who appears to be in her element waving to the crowds and uttering the odd phrase in the local language.

It helps, of course, that with her short hairstyle, dramatic *saris* and business-like walk, Priyanka resembles her grandmother, Indira Gandhi, in her prime.

It's all in the family: As far as the Gandhis are concerned. In fact such is their commitment to the cause of the Congress that Rahul Gandhi even flew down from America to attend a party rally that his mother addressed in Rajiv's former constituency of Amethi. The entire clan — including son-in-law Robert Vadra — adorned the dais and waved cheerily to the crowds. And at one point (throwing security considerations to the winds) Sonia even went right ahead and plunged within the crowds to give them a chance to see her up close.

So, what's the motivation of the Gandhis?: The cynical would have it that they're merely trying to preserve their place in the sun. Were the BJP to come to power, then it would be all over for the Gandhis — and Sonia wants to prevent that at all costs. Also, had she remained out of politics, the Congress would certainly have withered away and died — and with it, would have disappeared the legacy of her ancestors and the inheritance of her children.

Last but not least: There's the spectre of Bofors that simply refuses to go away, despite Sonia's attempt to exorcise it by going on the offensive. And that alone is reason enough for her to jockey for some influence in the power structure of tomorrow. ■

EXTRACT

Dying YOUNG

Extracts from ***Subrata Sen's*** Fragrance and other Adult Tales

While the doctor was reading out the medical report, Ashesh did not bat an eyelid. He was staring at the doctor, who pronounced the death sentence slowly but convincingly. Ashesh could not believe he had just a few more months to live.

Once a palmist friend of Ashesh told him that Ashesh was not the sentimental type. "People who have extra-long thumbs, do not have the usual emotions of average human beings," he had said.

Paroma used to say the same thing and had always resented Ashesh's cold and unemotional behaviour. Ashesh remembered that he had simply not had any tension when Titir was born —— he was winding up some urgent work in college —— and reached the nursing home late. Paroma never forgave Ashesh for that.

Ashesh stared at his long thumbs as the doctor was putting all the medical reports neatly into a file. He had not felt any emotion today either. He knew that his death had come —— a bit too soon perhaps —— but not a line on his face changed.

He coolly took back the file containing the medical reports from the doctor, asked him when he was supposed to see him again, paid his fees and left the chamber.

The only deviation that Ashesh made in his daily routine today was that he did not go to college. He decided not to go to college while he was driving the car. He came back home straight. In any case, Ashesh knew there was nothing much to do in college.

No routine lecture was scheduled as the college was closed for summer break and the research students could always work independently. Ashesh was collaborating on a paper with one of his students, the final version of it could wait one more day.

Ashesh opened the door-lock and his empty flat greeted him. Ever since Ashesh broke off with Paroma, it had always been like this. Ashesh never liked the sight of an empty flat, lying dead, which Ashesh would now try in vain to bring back to life. Going home had ceased to be Ashesh's favourite journey.

Ashesh always avoided going home early and would come back only late at night just to sleep. Ashesh was always afraid to admit that he felt lonely.



Extracted from *Fragrance and other Adult Tales* ***by Subrata Sen Published by Crest Publishing House (A Jaico Enterprise) Price: Rs 85***

But today was different. Ashesh looked at his unusually long thumbs and knew he had plenty of things to do. He did not have much time. He had to take care of his finances first. Second, he decided to finish off the proofreading of the his new book, the publisher had been ringing up everyday.

Ashesh was more or less a renowned economist. He was a senior professor at Presidency College, quite respected both by students as well as academicians worldwide. He was successful in the conventional sense, though his wife had left him, along with their small daughter, a few years ago.

Ashesh chose not to marry again. His daughter, Titir, was now almost a grown-up lady. Within another two years, she would be in college. Probably she would go to the same college where Ashesh taught, though he wouldn't be able to see her there.

Ashesh looked at his long thumbs and sighed. He was in his study, which was neatly maintained. Ashesh had a fetish for keeping everything tidy. He put on the air-conditioner, adjusted the louvres and felt comfortable. It had been terribly hot and sultry outside.

Ashesh switched on the computer and stared at his personal balance-sheet. He smiled. He had been a successful economist with his personal accounts too. The time had come to make certain elaborate calculations in his balance-sheet, but before getting into all these he must quench his thirst. He was terribly thirsty.

Ashesh usually avoided drinking during the daytime. But today, he picked up a can of chilled beer from the fridge and took a long sip. Not bad, he thought, nowadays Indian beers taste quite good.

Ashesh came back to his computer. The computer had kept records of all his investments. Going through all his assets, Ashesh was quite satisfied. Paroma and Titir wouldn't be having any problems. Ashesh thanked god for making him a good economist and also to let him be born with extra-long thumbs.

Going by the meticulous listing on his computer, Ashesh brought out various important documents from the almirah. He must fill up the nomination papers for all his bank accounts, would probably close all his fixed deposits and immediately start the process of transferring his share-holdings to Paroma and Titir. The flat needed to be transferred to their names too. Ashesh decided he would pay off the few remaining instalments of the housing loan, so that they did not face any problems in the future.

In any case, a lot of things needed to be done. Ashesh called up his chartered accountant friend Gautam and asked for his advice.

"No problem," he said, "I'll send a junior to you tomorrow. He will take care of all the running around and the accounting."

"But take this seriously. I want the work done fast. I'll pay for his services."

"Fine. But why are you in such a great hurry?"

Ashesh laughed. "You know, these things should be done well in time. Who knows how long I'll live?"

Gautam, too, laughed at the other end. "You are only forty-four and already thinking about death? If you feel that frustrated you should marry again."

Gautam, like most of his friends,



was happily married. Ashesh looked at his thumbs and said, "Listen, I don't have time to listen to all your old-fashioned suggestions. I am really busy today. Please don't forget to send the guy tomorrow, okay?"

"Okay. He will be at your place at nine."

Ashesh hung up the phone.

One problem over, Ashesh was now busy with the manuscript that the publisher had left for him.

The final corrections in the proof had to be made and the publisher had asked him to finish the work as fast as possible. The publisher didn't want to miss the rush for good books just at the beginning of the new academic session. Ashesh's books had always been in a good demand. He had seven successful books on basic economics to his credit.

Proof correction was one thing that Ashesh hated. He could have given the job to professional proofreaders, but he had always insisted on correcting his own manuscript. Even a single printing mistake in his book always irritated Ashesh.

Ashesh knew he had to work fast. He was sipping another beer and worked at a brisk pace. He was quite engrossed in his work and was soon oblivious about anything else in the world.

Towards late afternoon Ashesh felt tired. The manuscript would take another few days to finish and he decided to stop working for the day. He realised that he had skipped lunch but was not feeling hungry anyway. The beer was making him feel light in the head and he liked the feeling.

Then suddenly it happened. Ashesh's mind went blank for a second and then came a line in his thoughts. A beautiful line, actually the first line of a poem, which was forming in his head. Ashesh immediately alerted all his senses. A poem was in the making after a long long time and he couldn't allow the next lines not to come.

Ashesh was in a way surprised with himself. He had not written poetry in a long long time and nobody could ever imagine that the serious looking middle aged senior professor was at one point of time regarded as one of the most promising poets in Bengal. Before becoming thoroughly engrossed in his career, Ashesh used to write poems, despite his long thumbs, many of which had been published and quite appreciated.



However, he had always thought that the poet inside him had died. For years Ashesh hadn't been able to write a singe line and gradually he had forgotten the excitement of creating a poem, when the lines came automatically into his existence someone from inside dictated the lines which he had only jotted own on a piece of paper.

Unbelievable but it was happening once again . Ashesh knew that it was only a matter of time before the rest of the lines of his poem would come. He waited for them constantly playing with the word which formed in the first line. He wrote down the line on a piece of paper and stared at the page waiting for the poem to take its full form.

But today, something was wrong. After the first line when the other lines were supposed to come automatically in quick succession nothing was happening. Ashesh waited for some more time and sighed. No chance. The poet inside him had actually died long ago.

Ashesh got up from his table and went to the bathroom to take a shower. The sadness of having lost a poem was soon forgotten as he enjoyed the flow of cool water over his body. He was rubbing soap all over, probably trying to rub off the dark patch inside his body which showed in the medical report.

Ashesh was so engrossed in the shower that he didn't realise that the telephone had been ringing. He thought the monotonous metallic sound was emanating from somewhere inside his brain.

He ignored the sound as he didn't want to be disturbed. The ringing stopped, then started again.

It was the telephone. Ashesh was irritated. Who the hell was ringing him at this hour? At this time everyone



should be busy at work. And didn't the person know that Ashesh was in no mood to talk to anyone? Why couldn't people leave him alone?

But the caller was persistent. Ashesh had to come out of the bathroom to pick up the instrument. "Hello?"

"Hello." Ashesh was surprised. It was Paroma.

Paroma was supposed to be in her office now. She never called at this time. Also, how did she know that Ashesh would be home? However, Ashesh was happy to hear Paroma's voice. In any case he would have called her up in the evening to tell her about the bank accounts and other things that she would have to take care of in future.

"It's good that you called. I would have called you up in the evening. I need to talk to you urgently."

"Why didn't you go to college?"

"I had some work at home. But how do you know that I had not gone to college?"

"I called up there. What does the report say?"

Ashesh didn't know what to say. He looked at his long thumbs and said, "Paroma, I need to talk to you about something."

"Something wrong?"

"You know certain things need to be settled. You have to take care of Titir and yourself. I don't want you people to face any problems."

"What does the medical report say?"

"It's bad. I have to hurry things up. That's why I want you to care of my accounts so that Titir doesn't have any problems in the future."

For quite a while Paroma didn't say anything. Then asked, "Ashesh, are you okay?"

Ashesh looked at his thumbs once again. "Yeah. Why?"

"Can I come over for a while?"

Ashesh thought for a moment. He wanted to be alone for the time being but at the same time wanted to discuss the bank accounts with Paroma. The sooner the better.

Ashesh asked, "Do you want to come now?"

"If you don't mind." Paroma sounded quite formal like she usually did these days. But Ashesh could sense hurt in her voice.

Ashesh said, "I'll be happy if you come. I want to talk to you." Ashesh changed into a kurta pyjama and was feeling fresh. He put a Ravi Shankar sitar disc on the player and sat in the drawing room with another can of beer in his hand. He was sipping slowly waiting for Paroma to come and didn't realise when he had dozed off to sleep. He woke up a long time after the disc had stopped and found the doorbell ringing incessantly. ■

Illustrations: Nirmalendu Mandal

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4 6
IC-715	1620	3 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
BAGDOGRA					
IC-201	0715	1 2, 3, 4, 5 6	IC-202	1625	2 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-721	1350	1, 2 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1 2, 3 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	dany	9W-512	2130	daily
BOMBAY (SAHAR)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3 5
BOMBAY (SANTACRUZ)					
IC-966	1015	2 4 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	dany
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
GAUHATI					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3 5 7
GWALIOR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
HYDERABAD					
IC-703	0700	2 4 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
9W-611	1000	1 2, 4 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4 7
JAIPUR					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2, 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3, 5
JODHPUR					
CD-255	0530	1 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
JAMNAGAR					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
KANPUR					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MADRAS (CHENNAI)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
PUNE					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
RAJKOT					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
SURAT					
CD-215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
UDAIPUR					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

BANGKOK					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
KATHMANDU					
KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
KUALA LUMPUR					
KB-105	0855	2, 4	KB-106	0910	2, 7
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
			IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6			
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SINGAPORE					
SQ-998	1710	2, 5	SQ-997	1630	2, 5

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ DHAKA					
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1 2 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
■ DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
■ KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC 748	1310	6
RA 214	1525	2 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
■ LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
■ PARO					
KB-106	0955	2, 7	KB-105	0810	2, 4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI-106	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
■ SYDNEY					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ TASHKENT					
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7 35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed Thurs & Sun Arr Tues, Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues Thurs, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Wed Thurs, Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21 10	2020
3073	23 00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep Tues, Fri & Sat, Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues., Wed & Sat Arr Tues Fri & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13 00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun Mon Wed. & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6 30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon, Tue. & Thurs, Arr: Mon, Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	16-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep Wed, Sat. & Sun. Arr. Sun., Wed & Sat	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7 50	Fulaimuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21 35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6 15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep. Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday; Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (8 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a 22-year-old boy, married to a girl of 16. After sharing a relationship for the last couple of years, we decided to marry two months ago. As my wife was not 18 then, we produced a false age certificate to get the registration done. Now we have realised it was a terrible mistake. We have decided to cancel the registration and do it again when she is eligible for it. Please suggest how we should proceed about this messy business.*

Debesh Banerjee, Shyamnagar



A. As I understand it, under the Hindu marriage act the marriage of a minor is a voidable marriage, that is to say, it is voidable at the instance of one of the partners, but it is not *per se* void in itself. A lot depends on the circumstances of your marriage, the reaction of your parents and hers. If there is an atmosphere of hostility and acrimony, you could be liable for producing a false\fraudulent age certificate. After taking the elders in your family into confidence, you should consult a competent lawyer to understand the full implications of your act. Above all, you must reassure your young wife about the continuing integrity of your intentions so that she feels secure in her situation.

Q. *Here is a problem concerning one of my female colleagues. She's 22 and employed in a city-based private firm. She is the only female employee under her married boss. Recently, her boss proposed her for a physical relationship (including intercourse) in return for which he has promised "all help". He has also warned her that he may deny her the training certificate if she refuses. She has probably agreed to everything, excluding intercourse, of course. But the boss is unlikely to settle for anything less. She is afraid of retaliating because she feels that would hamper her career. Please suggest a way out.*

Name withheld

A. The actions of your friend's boss constitute a clear case of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment in office? Contact a local women's support group or the legal aid cell of the High Court with your problems and enlist their support. Then, bring up the matter directly with the boss

She has protection under the law, and he is liable for prosecution. I suggest that your friend contact a local women's support group or the legal aid cell of the High Court with her problems and enlist their support. After this, she should bring up the matter directly with her boss. She should tell him in a direct no-nonsense yet no-confrontational way that while she has no hesitation in maintaining a pleasant and cooperative attitude within the workplace, she has decided to resort to litigation and activist measures if he continues to pressure her sexually. Most people are afraid of unpleasantness and if he is convinced of the seriousness of her intentions he is likely to see reason. Such an action will not hamper her career — on the contrary, it will make it. Yielding to pressure and oppression is not the path to success — fighting for one's rights and dignity is. Even the US President is not exempt from liability — why should she not take on her boss if need arise?



Q. *I am in love with my cousin brother. At our age we have realised that we cannot marry with our parents' consent. He also does not want to elope for fear of gossip that our parents might have to face. Now he is being forced to marry which, according to him, is a mutual settlement for him. But I can't bear it. Nor can I forget him. Please suggest a solution.*

Sananda, Kurseong



A. Love against the odds sounds very romantic when one is young, but all too often it is only an extension of childhood rebellion. If your boyfriend is inclined to get married and carry on with his life,

there is not much you can do about it. Broken hearts have a tendency to heal on their own. However, I have known of people who have nurtured or nursed a broken heart for years and years, causing no-one discomfort but themselves. I would suggest that you snap out of your present state of mind. Keep yourself busy with constant activity —reading, music, films, housework, studies and try to reach out for new friends. Draw up a chart of the plus and minus aspects of this relationship and convince yourself that you need to seek the way out of this no-win scenario. I have absolutely no doubt that in the not-so-distant future you will meet not one but many eligible men who will stir your fancy.

Q. *I am a 50-year-old executive, working in a public sector undertaking. My wife, a teacher, and my two college-going sons live in Nagpur. I have been away from my family for over a year and realise how painful it is to be away from wife and children. I cannot ask my wife to quit her job and join me as she is very interested in her career. I feel her absence in every part of my life. My loneliness has forced me to keep myself engrossed in my work, reading newspapers and listening to the radio. I am feeling withdrawn from my surroundings. I have no friends, no family, nobody to share my feelings with. I wish I had someone around to speak to me for sometime at least. I seek your advice.*

Name withheld

A. I completely sympathise with your situation, but you must keep in mind that loneliness is often a cage we construct for ourselves by the barriers we put up against the rest of the world. There are many ways in which you could use your loneliness in a positive fashion to strengthen and reinforce your inner resources. You could take to writing essays or short stories or even a series of long letters to your wife and children where you articulate and communicate your responses to the life around you. This would be a rewarding and fulfiling form of contact for both your family and yourself.

For that daily 'human' warmth, you would get to know some of your colleagues' families and call them over for a meal at your house sometimes. Build up a network of local friends with whom you can interact in a daily fashion. You could even get yourself a pet — a dog or puppy in the house which can give love, emotional sustenance and comfort in the most amazing way.

Q. *I am suffering from a very disturbing problem. I had a relationship with a man before my marriage. After two years he ditched me. I was shattered and it took a long time to gather myself up. I was married to a man after a few years. But my marriage proved to be a disaster. My husband provided me with every possible material affluence but has always been callous towards my feelings and never tried to understand me. He has tortured me a lot (mentally) and for years I have lived in suffocation and pain. Last August, I met a 'poet' who was six years younger to me and we began regular conversations over the phone. He, too, has a disturbed married life. We love each other but do not want to marry. We talk about a lot of things specially matters we had failed to discuss with our respective spouses.*



I have two problems. Though my elder daughter understands the problem and tries to help me, the younger one is very disapproving of my soul mate. She has even hinted about it to my husband who doesn't live in Calcutta.

The man has been avoiding me lately and behaved rudely with me a couple of times. He said it was because of his family problems. He doesn't call me up any more but whenever I do he talks affectionately.

I can neither live without my daughter nor can I live without the man. Please help me out of this dilemma.

Himani Nag, Calcutta

A. I think you are exaggerating the degree of your loneliness. Very few people in this world are blessed with a perfect family life— there are always some areas of discord and disagreement. On the whole, you seem to have a convenient and comfortable set up. Your real problem appears to be that of boredom, and all your discontent and complaints stem from this. Whether it is this "poet" or anybody else, no other human being can substitute for one's own inner resources. I seriously suggest that you learn to structure your time and keep yourself busy, whether it be in charitable work, creative writing or an absorbing hobby. This will help you to focus your energies and you will stop concentrating on the negative virtues of those around you. This will bring a sense of balance to all your relationships, be they with your husband, your daughter or your poet friend. Good Luck.■

Illustrations: Debasish Deb

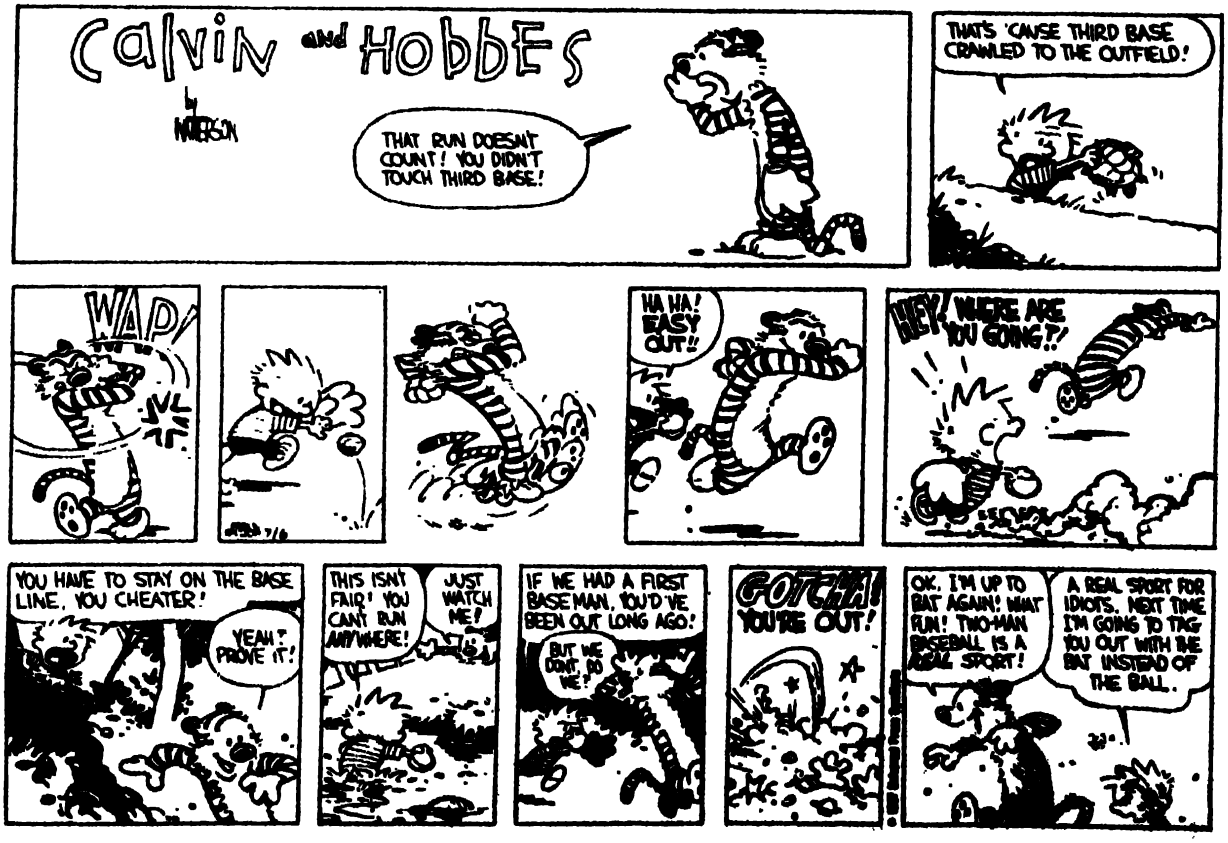
Living away from home and feeling lonely? You could take to writing essays or short stories or even a series of long letters to your wife and children where you articulate and communicate your responses to the life around you



ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES ■ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

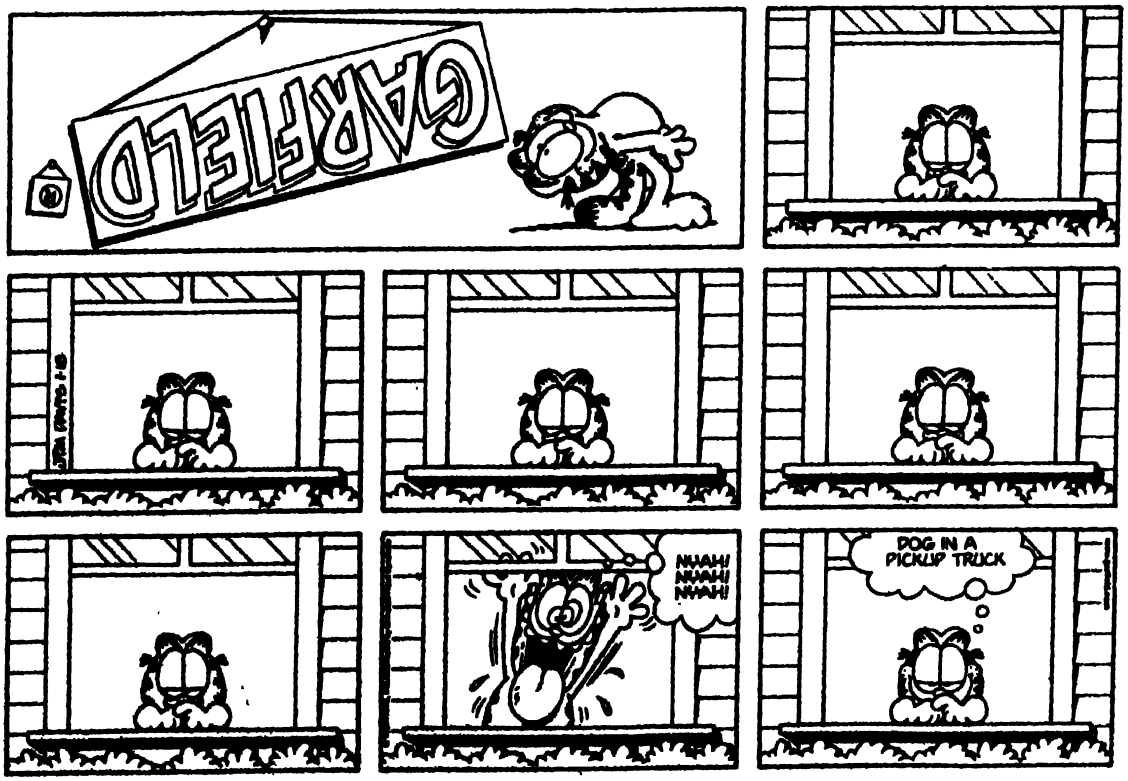








GARFIELD ■ JIM DAVIS



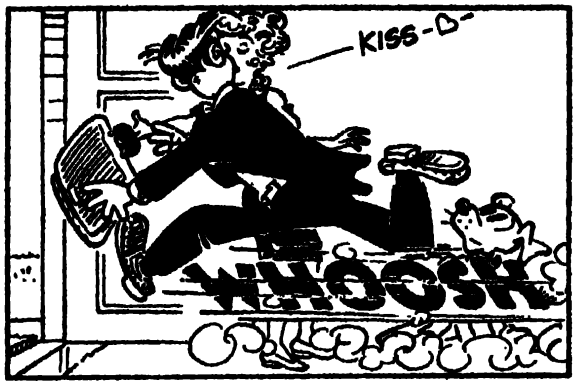
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

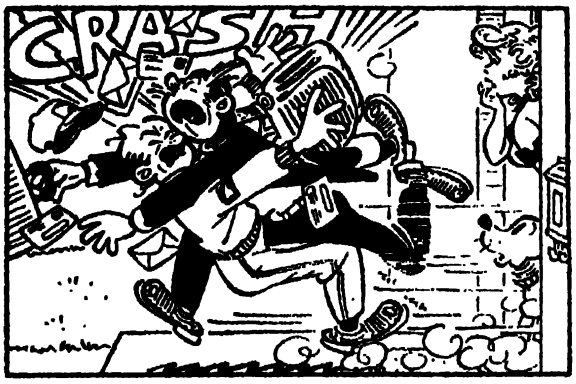


BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

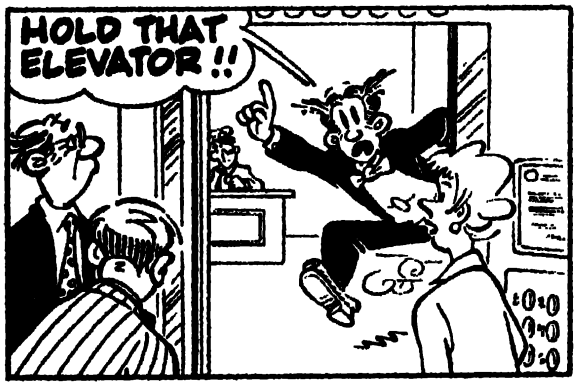
















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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

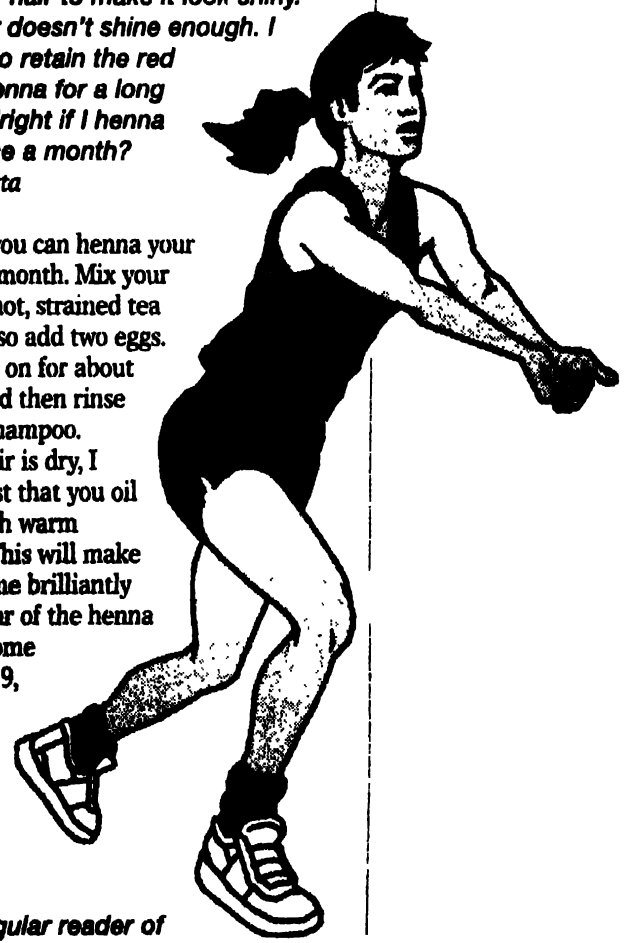


Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am a boy with fair complexion. But I have a lot of hair around my nose and under the eyes. Consequently, my face looks very odd. Can you suggest a permanent method of hair removal around these areas?*
L. Aggarwal, Calcutta

A Unwanted hair on the face can be quite embarrassing at times. I would suggest that you either go in for electrolysis with a specialist in the field, or if the hair is long yet limited, why not pluck out the prominent ones? The face, being a more sensitive area of the body, requires gentle handling and I would suggest that you try and tamper with it the least.

Q *I am a 19-year-old girl with thin, wavy and rough hair. I use henna and lemon juice for my hair to make it look shiny. But my hair doesn't shine enough. I would like to retain the red colour of henna for a long time. Is it alright if I henna my hair once a month?*
Richa, Calcutta



A Ideally you can henna your hair twice a month. Mix your henna with hot, strained tea water and also add two eggs. Leave henna on for about two hours and then rinse out, do not shampoo. When the hair is dry, I would suggest that you oil your hair with warm coconut oil. This will make your hair shine brilliantly and the colour of the henna will also become stronger. At 19, I'm sure one can work a little harder to have stunning hair and skin.

Q *I am a regular reader of your column and have seen that you often suggest the use of a loofah for cleaning elbows and knees. Can you clarify what is meant by loofah?*
Sangita Sen, Calcutta

A A *loofah* is a natural body cleanser which is a little coarse. This makes it excellent for exfoliation i.e.removing dead skin on the knees and elbows. You can use a jute mitten or even a small hand towel. With regular use while bathing, you will find your skin glow and become silky smooth.

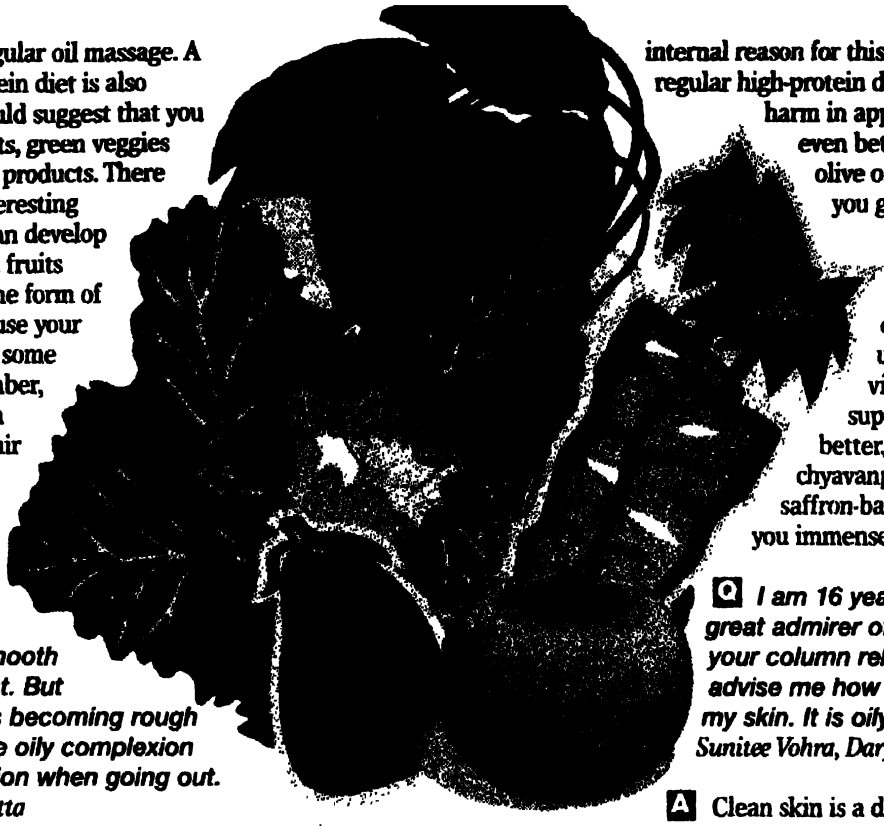
Q *I have a combination skin. My problem is that I am not sure how to take care of my skin. Please suggest a beauty care routine.*
Preeti Singh, Kanpur.

A Many people have similar skin type and all you have to be is a little careful. I would suggest that you take up a regular skin care routine. Wipe your face with rose water several times a day. Make a face cleanser-cum-face nourisher with the following ingredients—powdered green peas, mashed figs, milk, breadcrumbs and lemon juice. Make a thick paste of all these ingredients and apply to face and neck for about 20 minutes. Wash off or scrub off gently if the face is looking patchy. You can apply this mask three times a week for effective results.

Q *I have short hair but I persistently face the problem of split ends. I oil my hair once or twice a week before washing. Please suggest a remedy.*
Jayanti Das, Calcutta

A Split ends are quite a nuisance if not tackled properly and can leave the hair looking like live wire! Go in for a split-ends treatment at a professional saloon. Besides, it is important to condition and nourish hair regularly. Make a hair pack of the following ingredients —two eggs, shikakai, triphala powder and reetha powder. Apply this to the hair and scalp and leave on for about an hour. Wash hair with a mild shampoo. You should follow this hair care routine at least once a

week along with regular oil massage. A nutritious high-protein diet is also important and I would suggest that you eat lots of lean meats, green veggies and sufficient dairy products. There are a number of interesting combinations you can develop with vegetables and fruits together tossed in the form of a salad, so why not use your creativity to toss up some great ideas? Remember, beauty is not just an external skin and hair programme, it's also what you are made up of inside!



Q ***I am 18 years old and my skin used to be very smooth and soft in the past. But recently my face is becoming rough and spotted. I have oily complexion and apply foundation when going out.***
Anganu Mitra, Calcutta

A Have you ever heard of letting your skin breathe? At 18, I'm quite sure you are capable of creating a flawless complexion rather than covering it up with foundation! When you go out, your skin should be radiant and glowing, not covered with some silly synthetic cover-up. Look after your skin, you've hardly mentioned what you do to take care of it! I would suggest that you work out a proper cleansing and light moisturising programme. Drink at least 10 glasses of water daily. Keep a check on having a clean stomach and resist all those sweet temptations – those yummy *mishti dahis* —and oil-soaking mughlai *parathas* that do become quite irresistible at times but nevertheless have to be avoided especially if your skin type comes under the oilies! Wipe your skin clean with rose water several times a day. Use a fullers' earth-based face pack twice a week to reduce oiliness.

Q ***I am 32 years old and always had very oily skin with regular eruption of acne. However, I have recently started feeling that my skin is drying up especially under the eyes and on the cheeks. I hardly ever used cream but now I have to be extremely regular in moisturising my face.***
Kalpana Basu, Calcutta

A I have seen that many women suffer from this problem. Besides winter dryness, there may also be an internal reason for this. Be sure to take a regular high-protein diet. There is no harm in applying cream, or even better, why not try olive oil? Be careful that you get only pure olive oil and massage a few drops until the skin completely soaks it up. Start to take a vitamin supplement, or even better, try a good chyavanprash that is saffron-based. This will help you immensely.

Q ***I am 16 years old and a great admirer of yours. I read your column religiously. Please advise me how to take care of my skin. It is oily in nature.***
Sunitee Vohra, Darjeeling

A Clean skin is a dream and especially for those with oily skins. I would suggest that you wipe your skin with rose water. It is interesting that an oily skin reacts very well to rose water to which a pinch of camphor has been added. Add a pinch of camphor to your bottle of rose water and keep in fridge. Say no to sweets and make it a point to drink at least 10 glasses of water daily. Lots of raw foods —cabbage, spinach, carrots, cauliflower—can all be made up into an interesting salad. Be careful to keep those pimples at bay and you are sure to have glowing skin!

Q ***I am a 24-year-old woman with a good complexion. My problem is that I prefer to have long nails but they are very brittle and break easily. Please suggest a natural remedy to make them stronger.***
Ratri Dey, S.B.Road, Calcutta

A Brittle nails are a common problem with women and one must remember that just as our skin requires nourishment, so do our nails. You can massage your nails with glycerine or lemon peel daily to make them stronger. Start taking one teaspoon gelatin daily for 10 days internally. Consume lots of milk, curd, cheese and cream. Also, remember not to file down on the sides too much as this tends to make the nail weaker. It is always better to have roundish or square-shaped nails rather than pointed ones.





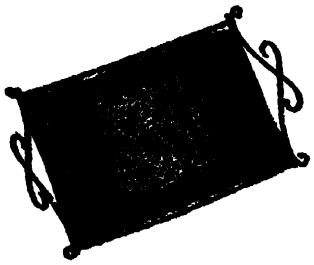
Manpal Kumar

SADIA DEHLVI

Columnist, TV actress

A seven seater sofa set is the best part of my furniture collection. It is one of my purchases from Delhi's famed Amar Colony from where I pick up most of my furniture. This set is a teak one and I'm sure is nearly a hundred years old. Though I picked it up for a bargain at Rs 15,000 I spent double the amount in rehabilitating it. It's comfortable and it's also in this corner that I've put up the best paintings that I possess.

The furniture market now has something for everyone, says **Samita Bhatia**





Sunita Kunwar

FRANCIS WAGZIARG

Restorer, exporter

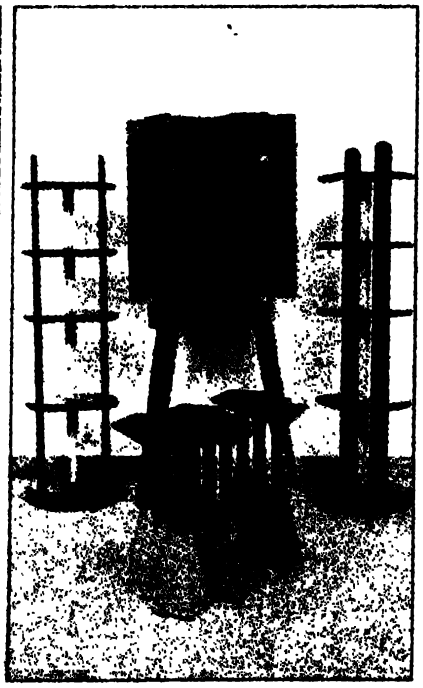
My favourite is my first purchase in furniture — a small Rajasthani cabinet that I picked up nearly 15 years ago. What makes it so special is the fact that while Rajasthan has a wealth of *petis* and dowry boxes there are very few such cabinets to be found. This is a rare piece and I haven't seen another like it. It's got two doors and drawers, has brass fittings and is light-brown in colour. It's perhaps the only piece that I'm really sentimental about.

Sofa, So Good

The desire to mesh the old with the new, and aesthetics with comfort, is giving furniture design a brand new look. Designers are having fun with design innovations, many setting trends with off-beat, often avant-garde furniture and accompanying odds and ends. And colours are simply exploding from their designer studios.

Says interior designer Rachna Yadav Khanna of Studio Line, "Today just about everybody who is doing up a home appears to have a penchant for colours. Be it a splash on the walls, the tapestry or the upholstery on the furniture." She observes that though the hottest selling look continues to be a conventional-heavy-on-wood one, people have begun to experiment with modern designs.

Rachna Yadav Khanna and her partner Vandana Prakash, therefore found themselves a market within



months of setting up shop in the capital. Says Rachna, "We offer a wide range of furniture and home accessories, nothing ethnic or elaborate but modern and very graphic." Their target clients are people who are looking for an unusual but affordable line of furniture. So Studio Line wavers between practicality and art or what the designers term "utilitarian art."

Like Studio Line, other designer stores too are playing around with blends of ceramic and wood, ceramic and leather, wood and metal, metal and ceramic and even a collaboration of wood, metal and ceramic when they design furniture. From Beeline Design in Khan Market to Works of Art and premier stores in Delhi's Hauz Khas Village like Wickerworld and Cover Line, designers are going all out to woo clients with vibrant designs in a variety of materials.

Says Rachna, "However, our

designs are not ultra modern or completely modern as we combine traditional designs with non-traditional materials." So, a piece of furniture that is essentially all about straight lines will give way at some point to give a hint of a curve.

Designers are also combining styles that span various periods — and that too in eclectic colours. At Poonam and Deepak Kalra's I'm you'll realise that a formal set-up can accommodate a profusion of colours and styles. A formal arrangement needn't include a colour scheme that's at best dull and boring, and brightly coloured walls and furniture needn't look "cheap and garish". Says Poonam Kalra, "A formal seating arrangement can look great even when you discard the greys and browns."

JYOTINDRA JAIN
Director, Crafts Museum

I came across this chest, 20 years ago in the deserts of Kutch. It has an intricately carved jali-work facade dating to the early 20th century. The villager from whom I bought it told me that when she lit the only oil lamp that she could afford, the lamp-light translated into myriad pinpoints of light. Today, in my home when all the lights have been turned off, the chest glows with every glimmer of light that falls on it.

Unconventionality is the obvious leitmotif and at I'm even a 'fat lady' — a huge chair from the designers — is made to look inviting. The fully upholstered wood and chrome finished iron chair comes with a healthy sense of tongue-in-cheek and a price tag of Rs 15,000. Clients of I'm have an affinity for the post-modern, beyond-the-contemporary look. And they don't balk at paying upto Rs 24,000 for a three-seater metal sofa, Rs 19,500 for a folding bar, Rs 15,000 for a teakwood three-seater sofa, Rs 6,900 for garden bench or Rs 30,000 for a chess set complete with cast iron chairs, all weighing 50 kilos. The designers, however, are just a wee bit wary to give their clients an overdose of ultra modern designs that they may not be comfortable with. "Though people — specially young people are very open to a new look they are single-mindedly seeking 'comfort' in the furniture they buy. You 'must' be able to sink into chairs and beds," says the lady behind the counter at Delhi's Cover Line.



A line of furniture that is clearly in vogue is wrought iron. But Studio Line's Rachna says, "Wrought iron may have caught on here but abroad it's on its way out." And at Studio Line the designers would "rather not do anything that has reached a phase-out stage worldwide," says Rachna. There's more metal, no-wood furniture from Indo Technolinks which specialises in a range of metallic tubular and wrought iron furniture. Says Aroon Kumar, managing director, Indo Technolinks, "Our no wood furniture is environment friendly and ranges from Rs 5,000 to Rs 50,000 for the gold plated range." Furniture from Indo Technolinks comes with an added advantage: it's easily self-assembled and its metallic powder coating makes it low-maintenance.

Another line of furniture that needs little maintenance comes from Decor Royale, which exports 70 per cent of its products. This includes a wide variety of furniture and some 80 styles of beds in a variety of finishes to suit customer requirements. The furniture can be dismantled as the joints are screwed together and in case of damage the particular parts can be ordered separately.

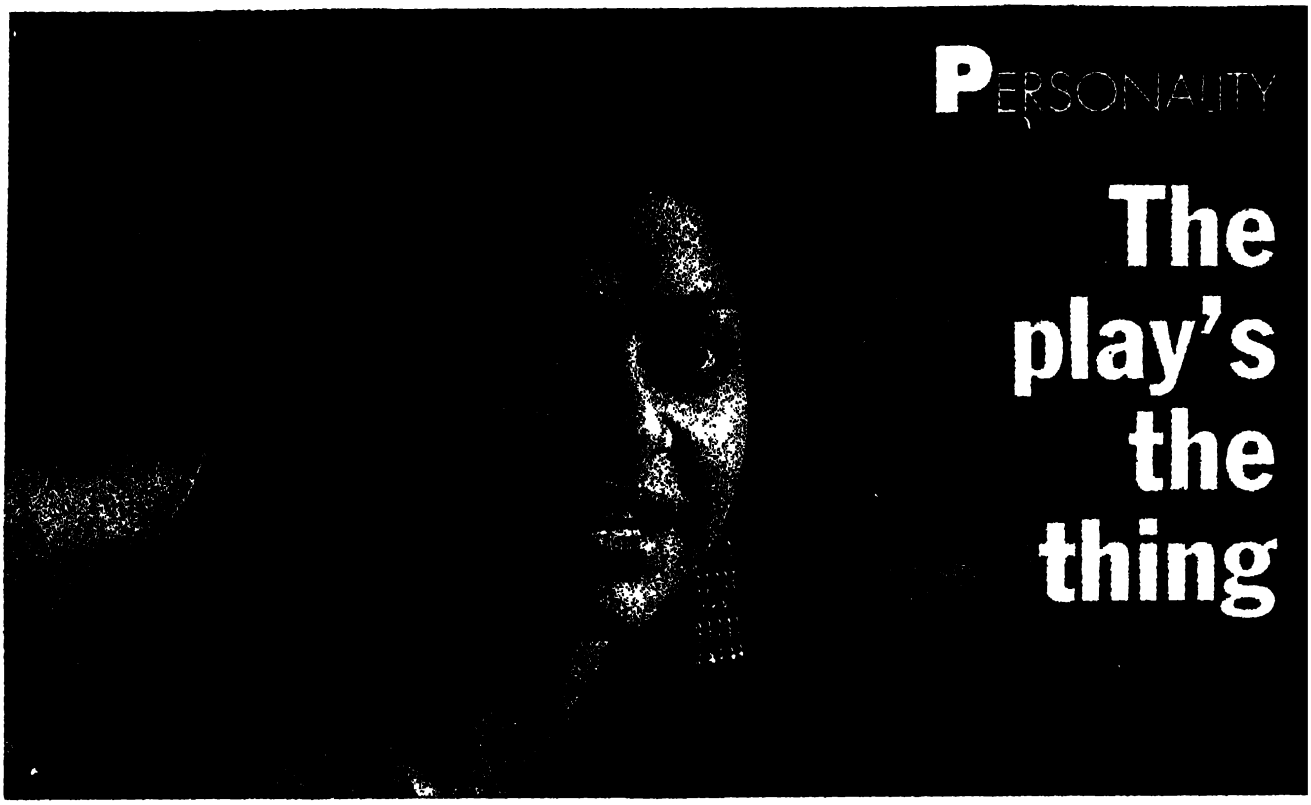
Designers who are partial to mixing and matching colors with texture and styles are obviously proliferating. And with them designer studios are fast metamorphosing into forums for modern design. ■



Mangal Kumar

NALIN TOMAR
Antiquarian

My favourites are the two stuffed sofa chairs or club chairs that were presented to me some years ago. They are are the favoured pieces of furniture in my home. Though not ornate, they are comfortable and my guests make a beeline for them. The chairs are about 70 years old and are the all-tapestry-no-wood-exposed variety and I've changed the tapestry a few times. My rooms are small but they have volume in terms of height and so very large sofas fit in quite well. And I know for sure that I'd never give them away.



PERSONALITY

The play's the thing

For Ayesha Dharker, who believes in picking and choosing her roles. **Sudipta Basu** meets the actress

Which 20-year-old would not be kicked about having lived with a machine gun for a month? Especially, when this bonds her ever so closely with her pals at St Xaviers "who are always doing something of consequence, besides college".

There are budding writers here, some aspiring film makers, admen, theatre directors and one actress in Ayesha Dharker who feels that she has been "sinfully lucky", for having created a niche for herself as a thinking actress. "I wouldn't stand much chance in Bollywood, since I am so terribly picky about roles," she says.

In retrospect, Ayesha Dharker puts it all down to her "pushy" parents who have persistently propelled her to think and react. Also, in the last couple of years in college she and her friends have found a role model in Eunice D'Souza, a professor in the department of literature, who has always egged her batch of students to live the lives of people between the pages.

"After all, the essence of literature is about understanding people and living several lives," says Ayesha. "Eunice is so on the ball. We have even dramatised Yeats' works in class." That, and her non-conformist parents — artist-poet Imtiyaz and journalist Anil Dharker — have been a great support system for her, she says.

They have even braved their child's compulsive adoration of Govinda and the overt animations of Top Cat, Snaggle Puss and Dexter's laboratory on the Cartoon Network as well. "It's amazing how he can let all his inhibitions down so mindlessly," she says of Govinda, the common-man's hero. Ayesha sucks in her breath deeply, thrusts her breasts out straining her cotton top and attempts a series of heave-hos a-la Govinda's co-stars. "Whew, how do the women manage that through all those tiresome song sequences," she says, lapsing into a fit of giggles.

Such an opportunity may never come her way and she might have to content herself by enacting bit roles for her boisterous friends within the confines of the college canteen. But for now, she is having her fill reliving her experiences of playing a gun-toting human-bomb in the interiors of Kerala.

Ayesha has just completed shooting for *The Terrorist*, a 90-minute film scripted by Santosh Sivan, shot mostly in Chalakuddi, an hour out of Cochin. Playing the character of a terrorist Malli (Mallika) in the film, has been the most intense role for her in the last 11 years she has been in business. "Gosh, am I a veteran, or simply an old hag here," she twitches up her nose, brushing her rich tresses.

Although a dark film, *The Terrorist* is not about violence, she is quick to add, knocking down any association with an otherwise controversial bandit queen. It is, in fact, about hope and questions, and eventually life. "Which is ironical because the pivotal character in the film is a 19-year-old Malli whose only ambition in life is to blow herself up," she says.

And yet, it is a much quieter film than *The Bandit Queen*, she says, for it shows how malleable young children are brainwashed and moulded into automations, till they eschew all personal desires, their only aim in life to die a glorious death. "And in that, Malli is a very complex character: selfless, but completely disgusting," she says. "Undoubtedly, then, this has been by far the most challenging role for me."

She prepared herself for it by

reading about several movements in history and watching Kislavsky's *Blue* and *The Decalogue*, a ten-part film based on the Ten Commandments. "These films offered insights to portray several layers of a human personality. In fact, the challenge of acting out Malli was to bring out these nuances, without ever sympathising with her. Which was the toughest of all, since she is so alive. One is almost tempted to feel sorry for her, but then I couldn't let that apology show on my face," explains Ayesha.

Even as she was counting her blessings, a chance to work in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* fell into her lap. "Here I play the grown-up version of the brass monkey, that of Jamila Singer, an urban woman who slips into purdah very easily."

"I hope that the film has only been temporarily blocked. It's one of the best books I have read, and what's more, Salman Rushdie has written the script himself. So it is very close to the original. Besides, imagine interacting with the man himself," she bubbles.

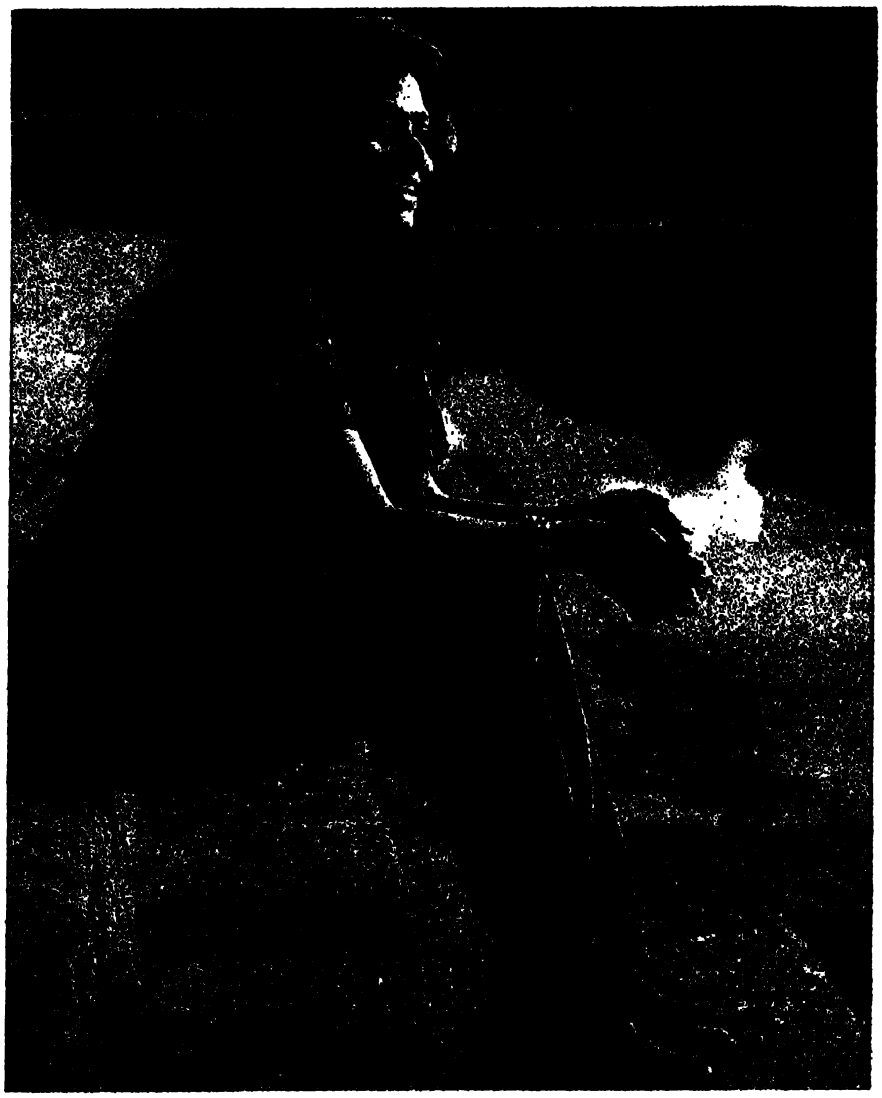
While Ayesha might like to believe that she has had a rush of good fortune in her life, her career has been carefully charted out all the same. She admits that she wouldn't have been left wanting for anything without her assignments. There was no need ever to play the cliched struggler waiting for the right break. Her forte was established even as a nine-year-old when she played the Catholic child-woman from rural south India, in a French film titled *Reincarnation*.

The film, while dealing with the concept of re-birth, eventually rested the spotlight on the Catholic priest in the neighbourhood who had to wake up to the conflicting questions on re-birth that went against the tenets of his religion. "So it was not so much a child role, and people started taking me seriously since then," says she.

Eventually, *The City of Joy* and Sai Paranjpee's *Saaz* followed. And then an odd role in *A Mouthful of Sky*, "just as I was getting too used to playing Shabana Azmi's daughter".

While in *The City of Joy* she played Azmi's daughter, a young prostitute, *Saaz* had her as a somewhat frothy young daughter of a star singer. *Mouthful* swung to the other extreme, where all belief was suspended. For her, this was also the closest small screen parallel to the popular riot of Bollywood.

"It was somewhat like *Dewana Mastana*. Completely bindaas." Here, Ayesha plays a social activist who later marries a swaggering yuppite. In the bizzare plot resembling *The Bold and the Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara*, "I kept my sanity alive by sticking close my character", she says. "The serial itself was worth the attempt, as a first-time English show on Indian television, though."



Vikas Khot

As work trickles in through a maze of academics, sundry theatre involvements and literary festivals in college, for the future she knows that she will remain on the firmament as long as "I have intelligent roles to do. I don't exactly need to tie myself down otherwise".

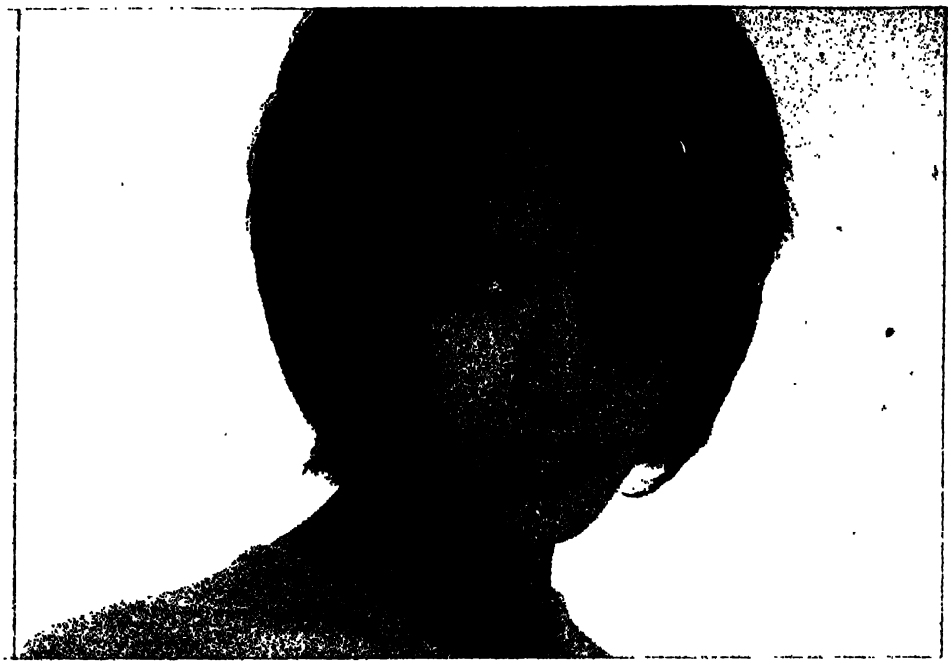
"And the moment I feel that I am getting too used to being lucky, I might get down to doing something else, like writing a book for children, for instance," she says. Then there is also the prospect of making corporate and feature films on the fringes.

As she keeps the glamour of several creative options lying open for the future, for the moment she is content to soak in the ambience of eclectic Mumbai. Otherwise, it is London — where she holidays with her cousins — that offers the much needed respite every year. Life there mostly revolves around operas, parties and hang-outs.

Back home, it forms an essential import for her and her peers to draw on as well. For between Mumbai and London lie several shifting images that often come alive at Eunice's lectures and spill over coffee cups at the college canteen. And then there is also that business of stashing it all away for later, as memories recollected in tranquility. ■

My Personal Style

Veejay Meghana Reddy wears her attitude when it comes to clothes



Reddy for the Show



COME ON BARBIE:

I am glad that I get to project my own look for *Winner Mangta Hai*. Otherwise, while on ad campaigns one is subject to client requirements. If you saw a sensuous nymphet in the aftershave ad look out for a Barbie dollish image for the forthcoming soap ad. The latter certainly conforms to at least one facet of my personality. I love going mad and not giving a s--t about it

I firmly believe Style makes Man. I have always fancied styling myself ever since I was a teenager. Afterall, you can only wear your attitude. I wake up in the morning and let my mood dictate what I will wear through the day. And they could vary from slim velvet pencil pants and bras or strappy gangees to actually a dramatic gown.

Around the Eighties, when I was growing up, my style used to be distinctly kitschy. But all that changed as soon as I came to showbiz.

So far as clothes go, I feel that I have come into my own in the last two years, become more of an omni-individual. I wear my own clothes and accessories for my shows (*Winner Mangta Hai*). The accessories include glitter bangles and bindis, which I wear on the inside of my eyes.

I am glad that I get to project my own look for *Winner Mangta Hai*. Otherwise, while on ad campaigns one is subject to client requirements: If you saw a sensuous nymphet in the aftershave ad, look out for a Barbie dollish image for the forthcoming soap ad. The latter certainly conforms to at least one facet of my personality. I love going mad and not giving a shit about it.

Since I have acquired a tan after a holiday in Goa, in the next couple of shows you will see me wearing short skirts, sticking out my legs and some itsy bits for a top. Blond highlights are not for me, I'd rather go all violet, blue or red over the head.

The most exciting outfit that I been in till date was the one I wore for the Channel [V] awards. The outfit was designed by me. I took me about two days to put it together and execute it for tailoring. Everyone thought that I would come up with something whacky for the show, and I surprised them by turning up elegantly dressed. I deliberately picked out a basic colour in lycra and satin and tried to be as articulate as possible. I know it was beautiful because I felt exactly that way wearing it. I got a thumbs up from the men all the way. The jewellery, too—a twisted copper wire around my arm— that I wore was created minutes before the show in my hotel room.

Otherwise, I like Shahab Durazi and Wendell Roderigues' designs. Then there is Prada, Dolce and Gabbana and Gucci — stuff I cannot afford just as yet, but which I do admire.

Most of my clothes are picked off the streets of Mumbai and Pushkar —basics that I can then mix and match according to my requirements. My most favourite combination is trousers and a black bra. I wear coloured sneakers —orange and violet—to go with them. When I am in London and Dubai, I pick up velvet jeans and other basics in black.

I must confess that I don't wear much at home. Ours is mostly a house of women (dad comes back pretty late from work) so its all right if I have next to nothing on me.

■ As told to Sudipta Basu


Indigo Arts

POST MORTEM

Freedom at 50

Thank you for the wonderful cover story, for your assessment of individuals who displayed the spirit of Independence was excellent ('The Spirit of Independence', January 4). Though the list was not complete, it made interesting reading.

Mamata Banerjee, the stormy petrel of West Bengal is certainly a crowd puller and she appears to be sincere. Madhuri Dixit, Maneka Gandhi and Rajat Sharma are success stories that truly deserve to be on the list.

M.S. Quraishy, Calcutta



Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi gave Indian tennis a spot in the limelight. They certainly are among those who gave a special feel to the 50th year of Independence. Their patriotism shines through and deserves to be recognised.

Sheela Singh, Calcutta

India has shown itself to be truly independent in all fields — politics, sport, film, fashion, television and countless others. A unique Indianess dominates all our preferences in music and the arts.

In spite of the invasion of multinationals, India retains its own identity and each individual shows a remarkable sense of independence.

Gautam Datta, Calcutta

A.R. Rehman has brought the spirit of Independence to the forefront with this rendition of *Vande Mataram*. Wherever you go the music haunts you. The song has gripped the people and the video invokes love for our country without any effort.

Soma Trehan, Calcutta

There can be no comprehensive list of people who showed the spirit of freedom last year. The names provided are not even one per cent of those who deserve to be given credit.

In a country of over a billion people 20 or 30 names hardly give the real picture.

Nikhil Bose, Calcutta

Manoj Prabhakar does not deserve a place in the list of people who showed the spirit of Independence. One cannot make allegations without proof and it's his word against anybody else's. If you start a fight you have to see it through to the end.

Tanya Mukherjee, Calcutta

Indian music is not confined to popular melodies churned out by A.R. Rehman, Asha Bhonsle and Daler Mehndi. Why have no classical artistes found their way to the list?

Indian classical music is rich, unique and there is nothing which compares with it. Even though the art is traditional, it is a living and vibrant one.

S.P. Paul, Howrah

Is there any triumph in displaying a spirit of Independence when we know that the hard-earned Independence has become a mockery with the political chaos we are facing in the country? No single party can form a stable government. Should we still feel proud?

Surajit Das, Calcutta

The Telegraph

15 FEBRUARY 1998



PAGE 4

Tailor-made

He is 35 and with his half-Arab, half-Iranian striking good looks, could himself pass off for a model. But he would rather design wardrobes for women. That's Shahab Durazi for you, a brilliant designer on the Indian fashion front.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

A Hero for our Times



M. Karunanidhi returns to his first love: Tamil Literature. The Tamil Nadu CM is now busy making a teleserial, *Thenpandi Singam*, which will have him penning the story, script and lyrics.

PAGE 26

The Best

Surveying the *sari* market.

PAGE 30

First Person

Bachendri Pal goes for long treks and picnics during holidays.





For success: that's Shahab Durazi for you. **Sudipta Basu** meets the fashion designer

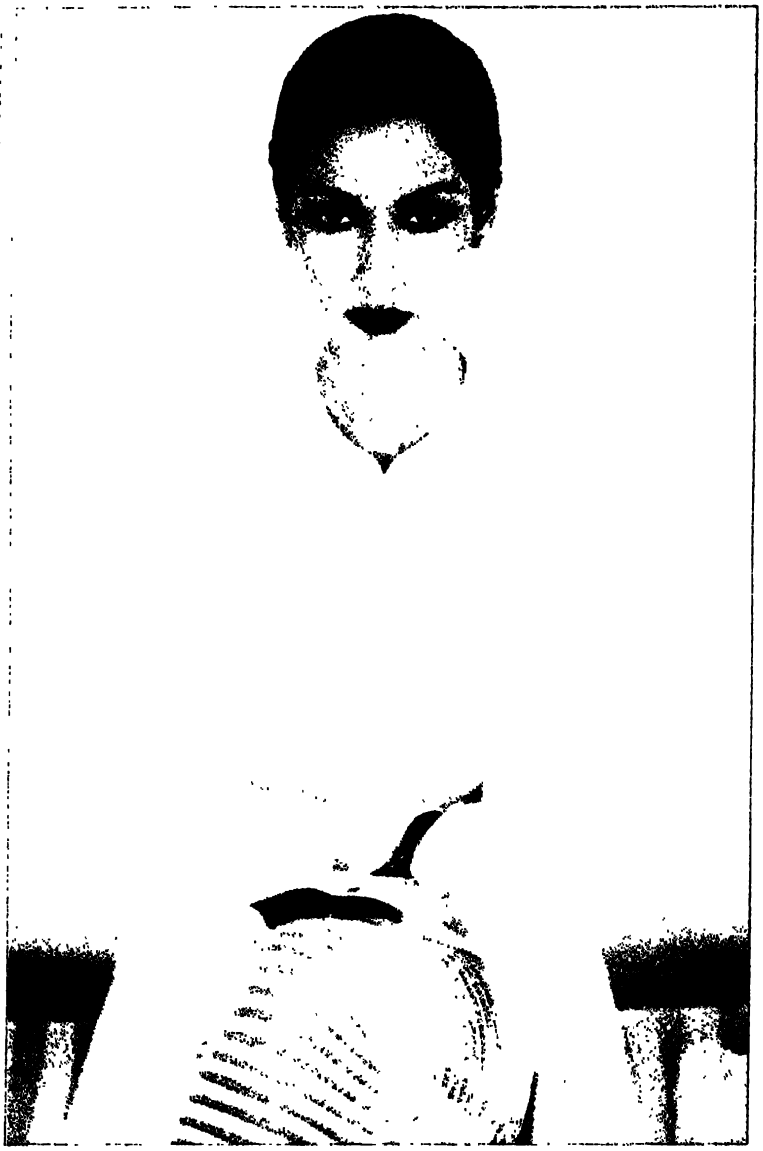
COVER STORY

r-made



Designing is second nature to Shahab Durazi. When he is not making outfits for the Beautiful People, he is tinkering around with cars, trying to incorporate special design features into the humble Maruti or the Cielo — which he now drives — or even Fords and Sedans.

But despite his undoubted creativity, which has helped propel him into the first division of India's fashion designers, it wasn't always easy for Durazi. When this half-Arab half-Iranian designer returned from a stint at NYU to his home in Mumbai a decade ago, he





'Eight-and-a-half years ago, the only thing that I wanted to do for the women's fashion industry was to bring about a change in the way they dressed', says Durazi

didn't really have a ready-made market waiting for him.

Quite the contrary, in fact. For just as he was about to throw himself into the thick of things here, he found that the industry was being ruled by devotees of "what they thought was ethnic chic". But Durazi was not one to go with the flow. He knew in his heart that women here needed to be given several options in dressing. "It was high time they were drawn out of their *salwar kameezes*," says Shahab today.

Durazi knew full well that this would be tricky. Familiarity with the stark Western look was yet to settle upon the *desi memsahibs*. One way to slip his agenda through was to push a subtle mix of the East and West. But while toying with that strategy, Shahab rather boldly pushed an experimental line of 14 garments in the tradition of Western classics way back in '89: the hallmark being the high-waisted georgette trouser and black jacket. The prices for that small line of 14 garments in '89, ranged from Rs 2,500 to Rs 4,000. (Today, a single man's shirt from Durazi sells for a minimum of Rs 4,500.)

The designer played the proverbial fly on the wall at this show, quietly gauging the women's sensibilities who strolled in to absently flick through the display. "'Looks good, but would I wear them,' were the vibes I got from them," says Shahab. "I also knew that while they were hesitant about considering those outfits for themselves now, they would eventually come back for them later." And they did return, with their friends.

"Eight-and-a-half years ago, the only thing that I wanted to do for the women's fashion industry was to bring about a change in the way they dressed," says Durazi. "Women dress according to the lives they lead. While a veritable change was settling in on the work front for the women, alternate methods of dressing were not available for them yet. It was important to provide that niche."

He feels that high fashion as it exists in India today gives clients an opportunity to express themselves, as an extension of the way they live. "Just as people are flooded with the innumerable options from the automobile and cosmetic industry, they should be able to pick up what suits them off the rack as well," feels Shahab.

And to make his designs more friendly, he puts out his clothes in such a manner that his clients are not forced to buy "a complete set". They could pick out a jacket or a vest or a skirt of their choice to mix and match with other items, or use all three and create their own set design." The difference between thrusting your creation on your client and letting them do a mish-mash of the same is also the difference between mere costume designing and high fashion," he insists. "The bottomline is to leave the mark of a signature style."



Unfortunately for Shahab, while he spends most of his time dressing others, he doesn't have much time to devote to his own clothes. "I own precisely two suits," he says ruefully. "But I wish I had more time for myself."

It was different in school and college, "when I took more interest in dressing up". Adds Durazi, "The emphasis though has always been on feeling good about wearing a certain kind of clothes. I've always had a penchant for simple and beautifully made clothes." Today, he wears his own creations. But when it comes to fashion in general, the Chanel suit, the Armani pant suit and the *saree* are all-time favourites with him.

Belonging to a large family of eight — "We are six siblings, who are removed from one another only by a year each. So it seemed as if a baby was being born all the time in the family, which actually made for a boisterous childhood for all of us" — he was the only one who took to fashion design. While his sisters are married and settled out of the country, the three sons of the family (barring Shahab) look after their father's export business.

They were not disappointed, though, when Shahab decided to opt out of the family business. "They saw it coming, for I have always been inclined towards the arts. But they possibly thought that I might drift into interior designing," says he. He confesses that had he not become a fashion designer, he would possibly have been furnishing habitable homes.

In fact, he and his wife Kavita, who is also a designer and assists him in his work, have moved three houses in five years, the interiors of which have been done by him. His present dwelling, an old stone bungalow in Cuffe Parade is clearly an extension of his design ethic. It is simple, spacious and airy, and most of all, looks completely liveable.

When Shahab is not drafting his designs in his office, he finds himself structuring cars — his favourites being Fords and Sedans, "and mostly saloon cars. I am not driven by sports cars and such other freaky four-wheelers," he says. "It is the very act of shaping, sculpting and moulding designs that gives me the greatest of pleasures."

Simplicity and wholesomeness trigger off his taste buds as well. He avoids heavy Indian cooking, lapping up home-cooked and mostly Italian food.

Like heavy Indian food, he has also spurned the bulky 'ethnic' embroidered stuff that Bollywood has made a favourite of sorts. And yet, he draws from traditional Indian designs and cleverly weaves them into his Western lines. "Designers from the West spend pots of money touring this country in search of inspiration. So why can't we research our past to come up with marketable fusions?" he asks.

The front pleated georgette trouser came upon him when he found his wife, Kavita,



Durazi avoids heavy Indian cooking, lapping up home-cooked and mostly Italian food. Like heavy Indian food, he has also spurned the bulky 'ethnic' embroidered stuff that Bollywood has made a favourite of sorts





Shahab's most elaborate and expensive design till date has been a long coat intricately embroidered and studded with glass that sold for Rs 79,000

struggling with the pleats of a *saree* one day. "Like many women, she would often complain that the *saree* stuck between her legs. Actually, like most women, she did not know how to drape the garment correctly," says he.

Thus evolved the front-pleated trouser, which encapsulated the elegance of the *saree* while at the same time being a convenient slip-on. "Similarly, the long embroidered coats for women are also variations of the *angarakhas* and *achkans* from the Mughal empire," says Durazi.

Fusion has become the pride of a Durazi trademark: "A buyer from Tokyo, Milan or New York should be struck by the same aspect of the design — its universal appeal that can never be copied — as their counterparts in Mumbai or Delhi," he says. "Not being able to imitate a design is the best form of flattery for me."

"Creativity is often equated with talent in this country. But they are not the same thing at all. For every individual is intellectually stimulated to do something. That is creativity," says he. "My ambition has been to reach out to more and more people and bring about a change in the way they dress. I have always wanted my clothes to sell off the rack. Or else it curtails the growth of a designer."

"Nobody wants to complicate their lives any longer. Similarly, people also want to simplify the process of dressing up. But at the same time, they need to dress well and be comfortable in the way they dress," feels Shahab. "It is one thing to pass off a certain clutter as design, and quite another to strike with simplicity. The latter is more difficult to achieve, since it is difficult to reach a high degree of flawlessness."

From a line of 14 outfits in '89, Shahab's latest '97-'98 winter collection, shown in Mumbai a couple of months ago, had 300 pieces covering a range of 120 styles. Four years ago he experimented with bright colours like canary, reds and blues. In the last couple of years he worked with beige, brown and peach. He then homed in on neutrals and muted colours. The latest collection has him adhering to contrasts in black, ivory, silver and grey.

The highlight of this collection was single piece clothing — the long dress, the cat suit and jump suit. "They are non-fussy, and casual, in keeping with the lifestyle of a busy woman today. I introduced the grey here for those who have little time on their hands, so they could slip into a dress that would carry them from the morning through afternoon to the evening, with a clever change of accessories or the perfect evening jacket," says Shahab. He has also drawn on Japanese geometrics and oriental florals in some of the outfits.

The most striking design in this collection was a black jacket in chiffon, nipped at the waist with Swarovsky crystals. Priced at Rs 28,000, this — along with the rest of the collection — sold out immediately.

Shahab's most elaborate and expensive design till date has been a long coat intricately embroidered and studded with glass that sold for Rs 79,000. But he hastens to add that he sells affordable stuff as well, for example, a pair of linen shorts at Rs 1,650 or blouses for Rs 3,000.

Durazi retails out of Ensemble in Mumbai and Ffolio in Bangalore. Over the years he has secured a band of loyal clients both in India and abroad. But it is ladies who walk up to him demanding an elaborate wedding trousseau who try his patience, "for I have no time for kitsch".

In less than 10 years in business, this 35-year-old can afford to ignore their persistent demands, just as he can the cloying smells of rich Indian food and the jarring combinations of wannabe designers. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



You will have to turn your attention, energies and time to the domestic scene in terms of home and hearth, family ties and concerns. Ganesha warns you not to stagger under this awesome double burden. This may trigger off an unfortunate tendency to ride roughshod over others. So be careful.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The prelude to the financial theme becomes a strong crescendo with the focus firmly on finance, money matters, personal belongings, funds and finance; all trends which affect your pocket so that you must develop the ability to handle finances. Possessions and investments are important.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Entertainment, amusement, games, hobbies, warm intersection with children, love and romance on moonlit nights. Alongside, there is also speculation and trying your hand at the luck of the draw.Don't be tempted either to be careless with important papers or be too trusting with friends.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The emphasis shifts to trade, travel issues and matters relating to spirituality, higher education, law, order and justice. The spiritual inclinations are really strong.Find ways to concretise achievements, improve property, acquire belongings. Do take time off to relax, pursue a hobby and cultivate friends.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Love and hate come to you in equal measure—this is definite. Paradoxically, even though the mood of introspection is strong, there is much gadding about, socialising and interaction, making you practically a party animal.Some kind of wish-fulfilment is a strong possibility. Take care of your health.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



The emphasis is on social service, work relationships with your boss, colleagues, subordinates and on helping others out. Besides relationships in general, there may be correspondence, trips, journeys to nearby places, watching over the interests of kin, neighbours, near and dear ones.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The three P's— power, pelf and position will be yours. You will merit the just rewards that you now earn.Those who matter --boss, in-laws, parents and elders— will cause you concern vis-a-vis their health. You should also guard against letting communications deteriorate or dealing harshly with people.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



The earlier emphasis on your mental capacity, social ties and on taking vital decisions has an add-on. There is great personal progress, but don't achieve it by displaying either too much egotism or submissiveness but strive for a fine balance, control, especially over your emotions and temper. Self-restraint plays a key role.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The scene shifts to land and property involving you with house, home, property, building, construction, land and family. You evince a strong desire for action and are keenly set on the advancement of your interests as well as your image in the eyes of others right through this month.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



The lunar cycle brings love, romance, passion and friendship to the fore. The other important areas of focus and interest will be trade, agency, partnerships, law courts, legal issues and a journey with a stop-over (whether business or pleasure, or a combination of both). Pay heed to new information.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Another strange phenomenon bringing both hard work and happy times. You win kudos and glory.Happiness and joy will be yours. But the health of officials, parents, in-laws and older people may give you some anxious moments along with the rewards. So a strong measure of caution is needed.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



The week finds you carrying on where you left off last week, namely, improving relationships with colleagues and co-workers, streamlining office procedures. You make money, share it, help others, start a new project, venture, enterprise, even business or just acquire a pet. The possibilities are infinite.

BIRTHDAYS

February 12: Moon opposition Saturn which means go slow till April/May and that the wind blows favourably in the direction of health, a touch of classy romance.

February 16: Moon trine Sun, Mercury favours lovers, salesmen, interviewers and publishers, those in government service and multinationals.

February 17: Moon trine Jupiter forecasts good fortune in the form of marriage and love smiles upon you and therefore take advantage of it.

February 18: Moon sextile Venus plus Mars conveys celebrations, festivity, love, happiness at entertainment, pleasant business, arts and crafts and the energy and enthusiasm to enjoy life should make you happy.

February 19: Moon's last quarter helps you to marshal your resources even though that will take some time and then really go after your goals and targets.

February 20: Moon trine Saturn, conjunction Pluto means energy and talent mix and match ideally and therefore your chances of success increase dramatically.

February 21: Moon square Mars warns you to stay away from sharp implements and evidently keep the kids away too. If driving, riding, a little precaution will help.

Triumph

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ENVIRONMENT

Dead Man's River

Sujit Dhar is appalled by the pollution of the Ganga

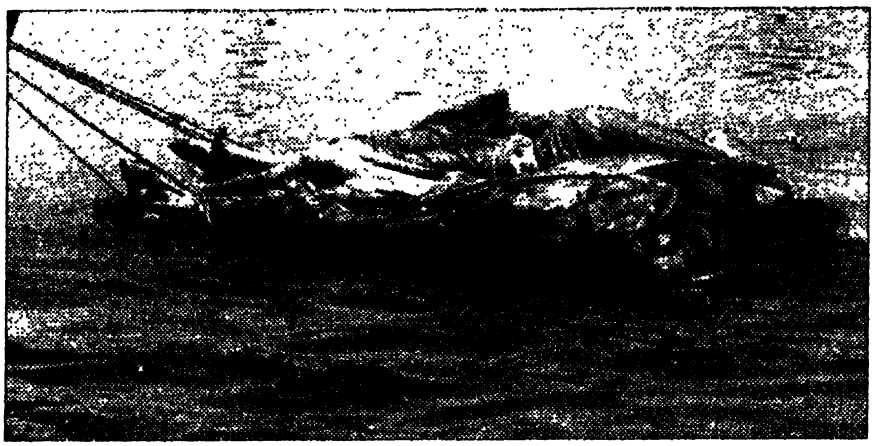
The wintry sun wakes up to the soft babble of the water. As the shadows take shape a posse of school children, warm in coarse wool, descend the few steps to the river side. The Ganges flows thick, as they let assorted stones go wheezing, bouncing over the water. Then one of them points to a carcass flowing down with the current, barely 30 yards off. There's nothing new about bloated, rotting carcasses in the Ganges that flows beside Kanpur. But this is a human carcass.

But these days bloated, rotting human carcasses — along with those of cattle — are common in the Ganges.

Meet the day at its very beginning and stroll down the holy river in Kanpur, and the last thing that comes to mind is a pious thought. The stench in the air, the turquoise green of toxic waste through nullahs, dead bodies in the water, a crumbling, grey embankment and thousands of those by the banks who will forever suffer. Come to tannery land. Come to the site of the destruction of a tradition of millennia, of the desecration of a river that is still worshipped.

The Ganges is a river of paradoxes. Supporting 400 million people down its 2,510 km course, from its source in Gangotri in the Himalayas to the huge Ganges-Brahmaputra delta at the Bay of Bengal, the water of the river in its early stages is said to be able to decompose organic waste 15 to 25 times faster that other rivers. The Ganga waters have a very high rate of absorption of atmospheric oxygen. Keep Ganga water in a bottle and it will stay fresh when waters from all other rivers have turned putrid.

That is, perhaps, one of the reasons why the river acquired its halo of holiness in ancient times. Beliefs are so strong that even today, after 29 cities, 70 towns and thousands of villages on its banks push in 1.3 billion litres of sewage every day and after hundreds of factories offload another 260 million litres of industrial waste



daily, millions think there is sense in drinking this water. It purifies, they say.

One cannot vouch for its effects on the spirit, but as for the flesh, the result has been predictable. Skin diseases, cholera, diarrhoea, viral hepatitis, typhoid and every manner of water-borne disease kill thousands. In the Gangetic region one person dies of diarrhoea every minute. But faith does not waver, the halo remains.

Despite such metropolises as Delhi and Calcutta that the river flows through, its waters are defiled most in Kanpur. That is because of the huge quantity of extremely toxic waste that goes into the waters from the 300-odd legal and illegal tanneries in this area.

It is also because of the absolute ignorance of those on the banks as to how not to die. The government's Ganga Action Plan Phase I, introduced with much fanfare in 1985 and with a huge inflow of foreign funds, has been a big flop. Pilfering of allocated funds, mismanagement, nepotism and a general attitude of abandon brought it to a grinding halt. The Plan's second phase faces a similar fate.

Rakesh Jaiswal runs one of the few non-government organisations in Kanpur that work for the resurrection of the Ganges. His Eco Friends is a small setup in his modest home in the dingy Lal Bangla locality in Kanpur's Jajmau area. Most of Kanpur's tanneries crowd Jajmau.

Eco Friends, established in 1993, has done stellar work in the area and has fought court battles against mighty odds. It is Jaiswal's dream to make the Ganges an election issue. He says he will work towards this at least "at the local level". "Elections have been contested in the past on issues like religion, caste, criminalisation of politics," he says. "So why not the Ganges?"

He does have a point, but without major league support all his good wishes could bite the dust. He has an ally, though, in the concurrence of the Ardha-Kumbha in Prayag (the Ganga-Yamuna-Saraswati confluence in Allahabad) with the elections.

His fight recently took him to the Allahabad High Court, which, on December 16 constituted a monitoring body to visit cities in Uttar Pradesh where the Ganga Action Plan work was carried out. The committee will report back to the court on the lapses in implementation of the Plan.

Jaiswal wears a smile, always. Perhaps that is what carries him through dark days. There was a Vishwa Hindu Parishad Ganga yatra and Jaiswal jumped at it. So is he a radical environmentalist? No, it was his "best opportunity to see the river's length from close".

Serious commitment comes with

serious hurdles. The VHP's Vasudevanand Saraswati, the Sankaracharya of Badrikashram, on the yatra from Varanasi to Mirzapur, had talked about the problem of dead body dumping in the Ganges and appealed to the public to discontinue this practice. "Back home in Allahabad," laments Jaiswal, "his guru, Swami Satyanand, was given jal-samadhi (a funeral where the holy body can only be consigned to the holy Ganges, not cremated) with much fanfare under his leadership."

On the other side of this town, of course, are its tanneries. Though nearly 65-70 per cent of all tanneries in the country are in Tamil Nadu, with the rest being shared by Kanpur and Calcutta, Kanpur's tradition beats all. Today, it also pollutes the most.

Life in the tanneries is tough. Watching Balak Ram, a Dalit, lay out his makki-ki-roti and egg bhujias and slowly munch down his lunch could give an impression of contentment. Nothing is further from the truth. The lime pits in the tanneries he works, corrode his skin, his lungs, his eyes.

And it is not just a Rs 60-odd shift of six to eight hours. With electricity in short supply, shifts often extend to 12 hours. He has to finish his quota of work for the day before he can get paid. It's not every day that he can enjoy his meal. Often, he just waits.

"*Aur bhi tannery mein kam kar lete hein,*" he says. When Mayawati became chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Balak Ram's family suddenly found itself with an extra acre of land, 'donated' by the Dalit leader. Soon, though, the bonus seemed to have vanished. Mayawati's largesse came off government property and it was illegal anyway.

Chhote Lal (36), unfortunately, cannot share Balak Ram's innocent grin. It, probably, is his fault that he earned a BA degree in political science, economics and military studies from Mahendragarh. He understands his predicament only too well. "*Aur kya kaam milenge aaj ke duniyan mein?*" he wonders.

Such is the level of poverty that it is difficult to teach cleanliness. It's absurd to point out how degradation of subsoil water in nearby Unnao district (also a tannery zone) has wiped out vegetation and even a huge rose plantation.

Roses, after all, are for the rich, and, maybe, for the politician. The politician, of course, is a different breed. On a charpoi in the backyard of his sprawling bungalow sits Deepak Kumar, MLA from the Samajwadi Party. Election fervour is building slowly, and Kumar sharpens his wits and his verbal arsenal. "It's the administration," he says. "The UP Pollution Control Board issued closure orders to 30 tanneries for flouting pollution control norms. Not one has stopped functioning. The front gates are closed, while work goes on inside."

Jaiswal's battle, however, gets intense. With his Eco Friends Jaiswal, "a chronic bachelor", is slowly but steadily pushing the mountain of thick slush out of harm's way. Out of the Ganges' way, that is. The first phase of the Ganga Plan was lost in mire ("not more than 40 per cent of funds ever reached their destination," Kumar confirms), but Jaiswal is determined to see the second phase bear fruit.

Climbing back up from the river bank, the kids come onto the road and, walking past the idle electric crematorium, they wonder which method will be better in the end.■

The Death Trail

* The first big dose of sewage comes at Rishikesh, with effluents from large pharmaceutical companies.

* Kanpur's contribution to the Ganges is about 400 million litres per day of highly toxic effluents.

* Just before Allahabad, the huge Indian Farmers Fertiliser Co-operative pumps into the Ganges huge amounts of nitrates and phosphorous.

* At Allahabad the river takes on a huge volume of water from the Yamuna and all the sewage the Yamuna has carried on its journey through New Delhi. That is an addition of 150 million litres per day.

* 150 km east of Allahabad the river is at Varanasi, source of more sewage. World Health Organisation standards for drinking water stipulate coliform bacteria levels of no more than 10 per 100 ml of water. At Varanasi, coliform counts are as high as 100,000 per 100ml.

Elsewhere in the river the range is 4,500 upstream to 120,000 downstream.

* Down to Patna, a major producer of agricultural chemicals, the river is defiled further with oily, slushy waste. Here, in 1995, a 2 km stretch of the river caught fire and burned for 16 hours.

* Into West Bengal, it branches into the Hooghly and into Calcutta/Howrah. Apart from the city sewage, about 150 large industrial plants on the banks contribute 30 per cent of the total industrial effluents reaching the mouths of the Ganges.

In the US the Environmental Protection Agency has set a standard for suspended solids at 100 particles per litre. The count in the Hooghly is about 6,000!



EXTRACT

Our Culture, their CULTURE

Extracts from India at 50: Bliss of Hope & Burden of Reality

Extracted from** India at 50 Bliss of Hope & Burden of Reality;* ***edited by V.N. Narayanan and Jyoti Sabharwal Published by Sterling Publishers Private Limited Price: Rs 750

The extent to which Western lifestyle has penetrated into the cultural stream of India or the degree to which our youth has undergone normative transformation can be analysed only in the perspective of the overall cultural and social changes that have taken place in our society during the past 50 years. The processes of empowerment of women can also be located within these societal and cultural fact of change. Yet, we could not objectively evaluate these processes without grounding our analysis on the foundation of social change ideology of India since Independence. No doubt, some intellectuals have expressed doubts as to whether India could evolve a coherent ideology of change, it is doubtful if any society can undergo changes and remain integrated if it is devoid of a meaningful ideology. The issues of ideology assume significance when we attempt to understand the manner in which the Western lifestyle has become pervasive in our society and among the youth, or if at all the road to empowerment of women in India has now been paved smooth and strong.

The two concepts which have been often counterposed in the debate on the ideology of social change are: Westernisation and modernisation. This debate runs through the entire gamut of the various movements for cultural renaissance of India since the beginning of the British rule. It permeates the values of our national leadership during the freedom movement. The contributions of Gandhi and Nehru reflect this process accepting that these two represented two different ideologies of modernisation. One may yet notice a fair measure of ambivalence towards Westernisation in the thinking of both, as both felt strongly that modernisation of our society does not imply our mindless imitation of the West or total rejection of our tradition. Of course, that part of tradition which has become obsolete or which militates against the spirit of humanism needs to be dropped, and all that is noble in it must be integrated in the modernisation paradigm of society. Their notion of tradition was not merely textual. It encompassed on the contrary the entire range of the living tradition of the Indian people (peasants, tribals, minorities, etc) as nurtured through centuries and as reflected in its art-forms, aesthetic traditions, folk culture, tribal culture, and other artistic expressions, etc. Nehru was particularly sensitive to protecting and preserving these traditions and in adaptively integrating them in our institutions and values as we proceed towards cultural and social modernisation. Gandhi's emphasis on

Growing charm of consumerism leads to growth of popular



decentralisation and communitarian self-rule had also implicitly recognised the pre-eminence of the local indigenous traditions.

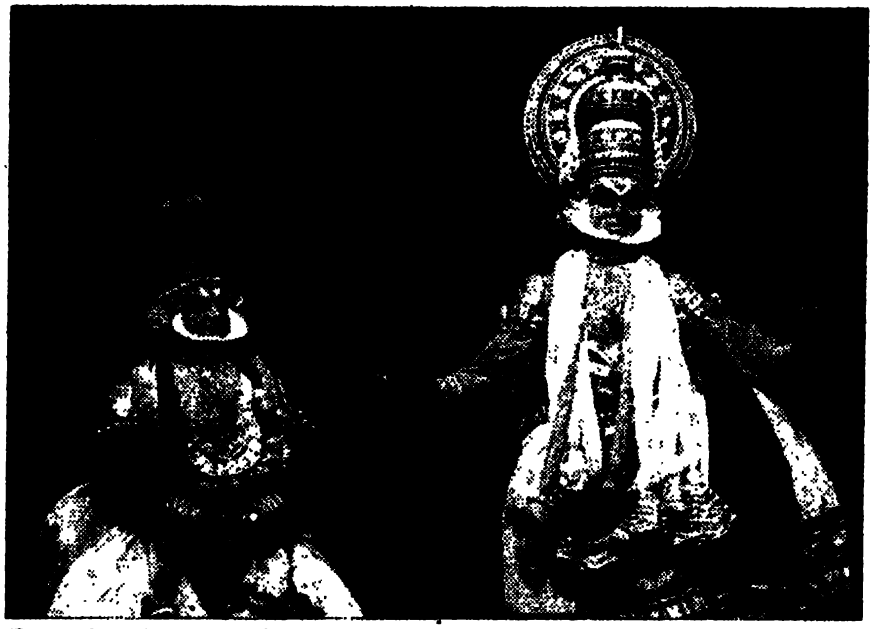
Is modernisation without Westernisation possible? In what sense are the two terms conceptually distinct? Could one outline concrete indicators of the two processes to measure differences? Social scientists in India have debated these points for several decades. Sometimes a distinction between modernisation and westernisation is made on the basis that Westernisation is an empirically observable phenomenon in the behaviour and lifestyle of the people whereas modernisation is an ideological concept. However, it is not easy to spell out the characteristics of modernisation as an ideology. Modernisation is a form of rationalisation through which introduction of a whole range of social and cultural changes in societies are legitimated. Social scientists have worked out empirical indicators of modernisation. These, too, however, remain in the realm of rationalisation since even tot his date no universally accepted sets of modernisation indicators exist. Now even the notion of modernity is being c challenged and seems to be on the retreat.

Continuity, Identity and Change

A significant quality of social change which relates to structures and

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Folk culture is constantly adapting and accommodating various trends

processes in societies is that of continuity and resilience of the traditional institutions and values. The processes of Westernisation and modernisation have both encountered this phenomenon in all societies. Why is it that despite the overwhelming changes in structures and institutions societies do preserve many elements of their cultural styles, modes of living and the normative and cognitive patterns of thinking? Why is it that despite radical legislative measures to bring about change, the norms of social hierarchy, degree of empowerment of women and the extent of religious and cultural tolerance remain confounded? Cultural changes only slowly and adaptively. Social anthropologists have variously explained it as being a result of the fact that a culture is always integratively constituted. Each culture has a basic theme or pattern or symbolic code which constitutes its core and all changes in it are mediated by it. The continuity of culture is also associated with the formation of identities in the basic personality structures of the members of society which are influenced by techno-economy, socialisation process in the family, particularly the role of the mother in socialisation of child and the nature of social differentiation in societies. These factors define the limits of ideology in bringing about social change, sponsored as well as self-generated.

As to the extent to which our youth in particular and people in general are tending to accept the Western lifestyle or the 'norms of modernity', these aspects of culture change become relavent. We have to be careful in distinguishing between the 'appearance' of change or its surface manifestations and the 'deeper' levels of change through accommodation or integration of cultural traits with the pre-existing cultural patterns. We have also to correlate it with the structure of identities of persons concerned who are members of different cultural and subcultural group. An important substantive problem here relates to the processes of differentiation within the cultural patterns. It largely corresponds with the evolution in its modes of production and the information technology in societies.

In the pre-industrial India dominated by the feudal mode of production there was differentiation in the cultural styles and forms between the folk and the elite cultures. The peasants and the workers belonged to the folk cultural tradition which was primarily oral, community— (caste-based) based and was carried through from generation to generation adapting itself and always accommodating new currents with spontaneity and creativity. Folk culture was, of course, in continual interaction with the elite cultural tradition which was textual, formal and systematic. There existed between the two a process of reciprocity in the adoption and adaptation of styles, themes and forms. For this reason, folk cultural tradition has also been described as "part-culture". This tradi-

tional mode of culture was entrenched into the organic bases of the traditional social structures such as the caste, tribe and community. The peasant and feudal economy, being relatively stable in respect of technology and social institutions, the folk-elite culture continued not only to integrate new cultures and styles of life within the established traditions but also protected it from erosion so long as the traditional economic and social structures persisted. It had enormous resilience to assimilate and integrate the alien cultural forms and styles

As the nature of the traditional agrarian-feudal economy undergoes capitalist, market-oriented transformation and as the traditional social structures which legitimised access to culture-forms, styles and roles in accordance with one's position in the class (peasant-worker) and caste hierarchy undergo changes due to politicisation and democratisation of the traditional communitarian structures of the villages and the cities, a new form of cultural differentiation takes place. This has been variously described as "popular culture" or "mass culture". Its emergence coincides with the revolutionary changes in the technology-base of communication and leads to the expansion of the mass media on one hand and on the other growth in transport and travel facilities. These technological innovations intensify the volume and velocity of the communication of people, cultures and styles of life. The popular culture unlike the folk-elite culture-form is not based on the communitarian social structures institutionalised by custom and tradition. It is not even territorially bounded. Its form, style and representation are not governed by pre-set traditional rules or customary definitions but by free-floating market forces.

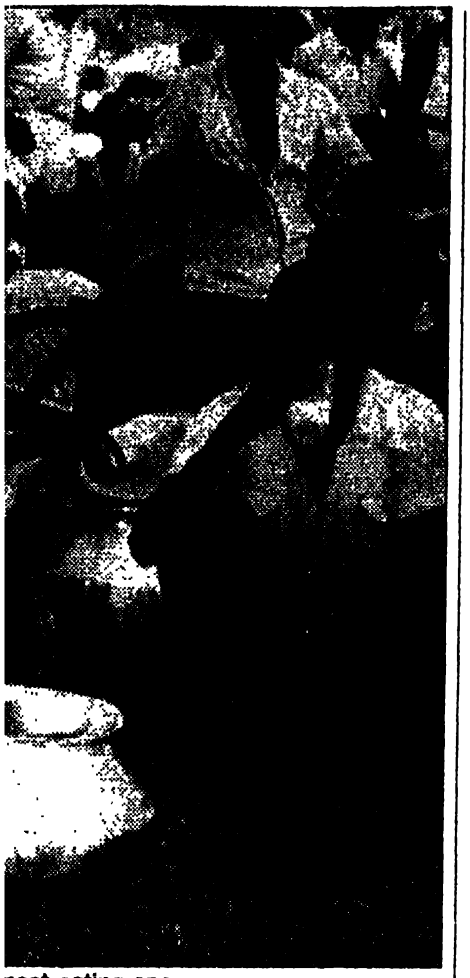


Anthropological surveys have proved that our populace is essentially a drinking,smokin

Popular culture derives its legitimation not from the conformity with the *shashtric* or formal norms or standards but from the impulse to manipulate or engineer people's motivations to augment the market forces for profit. Its aesthetics is essentially eclectic. It is, however, technologically unmatched in the power of self-augmentation, expansion and domination as it rides on the wings of the print and electronic media. For patronage, it does not have to depend upon solitary communities or other institutionalised social groups as all traditional cultural institutions did. It creates patrons on its own through a new social phenomenon called "audience" which is neither a community nor a group. Audience is a faceless agglomeration of individuals who for a certain moment of time share a commonality of viewership or audio-experience of mass media through their exposure to messages or symbols having 'cultural significance' in a broad sense. Forms of advertise-

Smoking is a common habit in our society





neat-eating one

ment, calendar art, popular cinema, telefilms, documentaries, etc., constitute its one aspect and the cultural programmes beamed through radio and television represent its other manifestation.

The growth of the popular culture coincides with deeper social transformation in society. The indicators of this change are: disenchantment with the traditional rural life, massive migration to the cities, growing charm for consumerism, tremendous expansion of the psychic and social mobility of people with corresponding weakening of the bonds within family, kin group and the local communities. Popular culture also coincides with the rise of individualism and the individuals' search for perpetual renewal of experiences. With the expansion of the power of market and the globalisation of media, the clout of popular culture eventually has a disruptive influence both upon the folk and elite forms of the traditional culture. Culture is then increasingly converted into commodity. Not its content but its packaging and marketability matter the most. It tends to become more alluring as it offers to the traditional artists enormous profit and publicity for their consent to be incorporated after having destroyed their traditional social base. Popular culture alienates the artist from his art forms and alienates art from its organic link with community. It abstracts culture for the media of work, fractures its aesthetic expressiveness, and distorts the dialectic of its sacred-secular world-view.

Obviously, these changes coincide with changes in the social structure ushered in by the march of industrialisation, urbanisation and the expansion of media and information in society. The two institutions which get deeply impacted by these changes are: family and community. The erosion of their influence upon the youth creates a situation in which discrepant choices of cultural norms and artifacts are rendered possible. The expanding role of the popular or mass culture further reinforces this process.

Serious questions in this context arise on the issues of cultural identity, continuity and change. The structural base of the traditional folk-elite pattern of culture which depended upon the traditional technology, mode of production and social hierarchy is turned upside down as it is impacted by the techno-ecomonic forces and institutions of a post-industrial information society in the making. The capacity of the traditional societies to assimilate the new elements of popular culture in their own pattern through adaptive capability is now rendered most difficult.

Traditional and Western Styles of Life

These chanes constitute he necessary backdrop for the analysis of the impact of the Western style upon our people, particularly the youth.

However, the image of the traditional Indian culture in contradiction to that of the West also needs to be corrected. A view popular both in India and the West is that the Indian culture is rooted in asceticism and other-worldliness, The Western culture, in contrast, is held to be entirely materialistic and this-wordly. Most Indians are supposed to be non-materialistic or engrossed in spiritual pursuits of one kind or another. The institutions of caste and the traditional social systems such as family and community are thought to be products entirely of moral legitimations totally unrelated to their principles of power and control over the material resources. Despite wider recognition of cultural pluralism in India or even the presence of a materialist tradition in the Hindu philosophy, the image of India being an ascetic and other-wordly nation has stuck as a stereotype in our analysis of Westernisation. Our assessment of the challenges that Westernisation or the expansion of the Western style of life



The 'I' generation fed on pop culture

poses to India is often unrealistic due to this stereotyped categorisation.

Partly this evaluation is a result of depending heavily on the textual sources of the Indian tradition for an insight into its culture and style of life. Now the regional studies and surveys of the villages and cities give us reliable insights into our people's culture traits, customs and lifestyle. Their findings contradict the stereotype about Indians' asceticism. A survey of the 4,634 communities, which cover all the communities lining in India completed by the Anthropological Survey of India has concluded:

Alcoholic beverages are consumed by men in the communities studied as follows: occasionally in 2,469 and regularly in 1,106. Women occasionally consume alcohol in 1,037 communities. Smoking is very common. Chewing of tobacco and the use of snuff are also widespread. Chewing of betel is used by people in large number of communities. We are, largely a drinking, smoking and meat-eating people. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0410	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2135	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7 *
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
KHARAGPUR					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

BIKANER					
RJ-185	1455	5	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-876	0425	7	KL 875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 5	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC 855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
BHUTAN					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG 092	0850	1, 5	BG 091	0810	1, 5
BG 092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG 091	1110	2, 3, 4, 5, 7
BG 092	1210	2			
IC 723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC 724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC 723	1430	6	IC 724	1700	6
IC 723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG 094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG 093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG 094	1815	5	BG 093	1710	5
BG 096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG 095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI 107	2040	6	BI 108	0715	7
BI 109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC 747	0945	6	IC 748	1310	6
RA 214	1525	2, 6	RA 213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BA 142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-536	2230	4	SU 537	1030	4
NEPAL					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI 109	2045	3
SQ 415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19 15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7 35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya Varanasi Dep Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr Tues., Wed. & Sat	16 15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed. & Sun; Arr Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4 40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep. & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat	11 35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep., Tues., Wed & Sat, Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	06 00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri.	4 15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18 10	3008
3039	21 00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11 55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6 15	Black Diamond Express	21 25	3318
3029	17 11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8 45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6 30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15 40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21 45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs... Arr. Mon., Thurs & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr Sun., Wed & Sat	7 55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri, Arr Tues	7 55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SAG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr Tues., Thurs & Sat	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6 55	6004
8002	19 20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12 25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20 30	Ahmedabad Express	5 40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14 00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7 50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17 30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6 50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20 10	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19 00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16 45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15 45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep. Sunday, Arr. Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10 40	2422
6322	03 50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03 50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22 35	Howrah-Trivandrum BI-Weekly Express Dep & Arr. Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City BI-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14 10	Bangalore City - Guwahati BI-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah BI-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival, Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/87.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am 20 years old and a college student. I am already finding life a burden to put up with. I do not feel any attraction for anybody and love to be left alone. I have friends but I find it terribly boring to be a part of the group. I have also grown very cynical about marriage and find it an inevitable ordeal that would result in (the much abhorred) loss of virginity. In fact, I pity every young girl who is married. Please suggest a way to get rid of my problem.***

R.D.Y., Calcutta

A. Indifference and cynicism are the cruellest things to afflict a young mind. I would say that your negative attitude arises from a lack of trust, both in yourself and your environment. You have obviously had some traumatic and painful experience which you have either suppressed or decided not to come to terms with. Isolation and depression sometimes begin to feed on each other. It is important to break out of the cycle to accept the challenge and discover the joy of daily life. In your case it is most important to look inwards and find the roots of your negative attitude. Try to maintain a diary or journal where you note down your feelings or reactions, and also pen down old memories from your childhood. Your strong feelings about sexuality and virginity suggest some suppressed feelings from childhood abuse. Try to understand why you do not trust — then look at everyday reactions and situations around you and see if your attitude is justified. Books are the greatest companions of solitude.

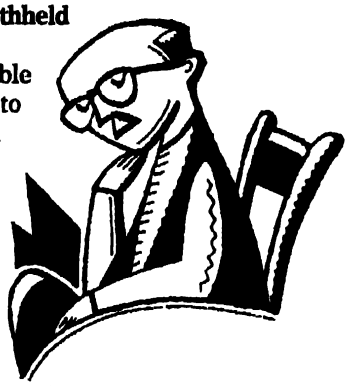


If you begin to read, you make some of the greatest minds in history your personal friends. There is a new world waiting to be discovered between the closed covers of the books in your local library. Perhaps that will open the windows of your mind.

Want to donate your body? You should first draw up a will with the help of your solicitor specifically stating your intention.... Then you should visit your local hospital and register yourself as a future donor

Q. ***I am in my mid-sixties and would like to donate my body after my death. I don't know whom to approach. My children are vehemently opposed to the idea. Therefore, whatever I have to do, I have to do quietly and by myself. Kindly help me if possible.***

Name Withheld



A. It is a noble thought to want to help others even after your own demise. I sincerely hope your letter will inspire other readers to similar acts. I frankly cannot understand why your family have reservations about what is indeed a laudable idea. You should first draw up a will with the help of your solicitor specifically stating your intention to donate your organs to be transplanted upon needy patients. Then you should visit your local hospital and register yourself as a future donor. They will conduct a series of medial tests upon you. Some organs may be suitable for the level of transplant opportunity at your local hospital and some may be put on a national register. Once again, my sincere appreciation for your magnanimous and courageous decision.

Q. ***I am a 19 year old girl. Two years back I fell in love with one of my classmates. When he came to know about my feelings, he told me to keep our relationship at a friendly level. I was hurt but I controlled myself. I was, however, never able to forget him and remained in touch, somehow. A few days ago, on my birthday, I received a heart-shaped gift from him and a card where a feeling of love was quoted. Though these do not directly indicate any feelings but they are confusing nonetheless. Do you think this boy has developed any feeling for me?***

Pinky Roy, Calcutta

A. It is always difficult to qualify human

feelings into cut and dried dimensions. I think this young man is a very affectionate and sensible person. When you quite trustingly made your romantic feelings clear, he did not rush to exploit them. He chose to keep quiet, to keep things at an appropriate level. This indicates a degree of responsibility and also shows that he respects you as a human being. Perhaps he was too young or too shy at that time; but his birthday gift certainly seems a sign of deep affection. I would suggest that you do not come on too heavy, or you may frighten him off again. Let him make the next move.

Q. ***I am a mother of a 20 year old girl. Needless to say, I love her too much and take an active interest in her activities — her friends, her education, likes and dislikes. All these years she has confined in me about everything she does, even including, meeting boys and I have always listened to her like a friend allowing her to air her thoughts and then gently advising her without sounding authoritative. But now I find a distinct change in our relationship. We are constantly clashing with each other's views and it seems she is hell bent on proving that I am wrong and she is right. Why is this happening?***

Swapna Chatterjee, Calcutta



A. It would be unnatural not to have this clash. The confrontation between two generations develops on issues of perspective: young hormones, young energies, react in untested, uncharted ways. It cannot be any other way as experience, learning and wisdom come only by making one's own mistakes. Only the recognition of one's own follies can sign post the way to better understanding. Those of us who are older tend to take our superior knowledge for granted, and this complacency infuriates the young.

I recommend that you treat this situation with a sense of humour and maintain a certain detachment in your relationship. In this phase she should be free to make her own mistake, feel her own feet and it is essential for you to stop being over-protective and give her all the space she needs for her unstifled growth. At the same time stand up for your own rights, and make sure that she continues to respect and extends the same courtesy to you as you are showing to her by treating her as an individual in her own right.

Mother and daughter clashes? Treat this situation with a sense of humour.... In this phase she should be free to make her own mistake, feel her own feet and it is essential for you to stop being over protective



Q. ***I am in a rather traumatic situation. My aunt who is 34 years old, is in love with me. I am 24. I warned her that I would disclose it to my uncle. In response she said she would then do something drastic. As you can make out I am going through terrible tension and fear. What do you suggest I do?***

D. Sharma, Chuchura, Howrah

A. Your aunt is obviously a hysterical woman who has to be dealt with firmly. She is trying to threaten and blackmail you into a relationship with her. I would suggest that you give your uncle a hint of what is happening, in a discreet and roundabout fashion. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned and it is possible that she may at some stage make false allegations against you. Keep scrupulously away from her and be totally polite and courteous in a distant way when you are forced to be in her company. Do not at any cost be drawn into any silly behaviour. You are sensible and grown up even if she is not, you don't need this unnecessary tension and drama in your life. She is courting on your youth and immaturity to bully you into acceding to her desires — if you behave in a firm and mature way she is bound to see reason.



Q. ***I am 23 years old, married, and much in love with my wife. She also loves me. But my wife has a tendency to threaten me with suicide over little tiffs. Tell me, how do I tackle this?***

P. Ghimeree, Calcutta

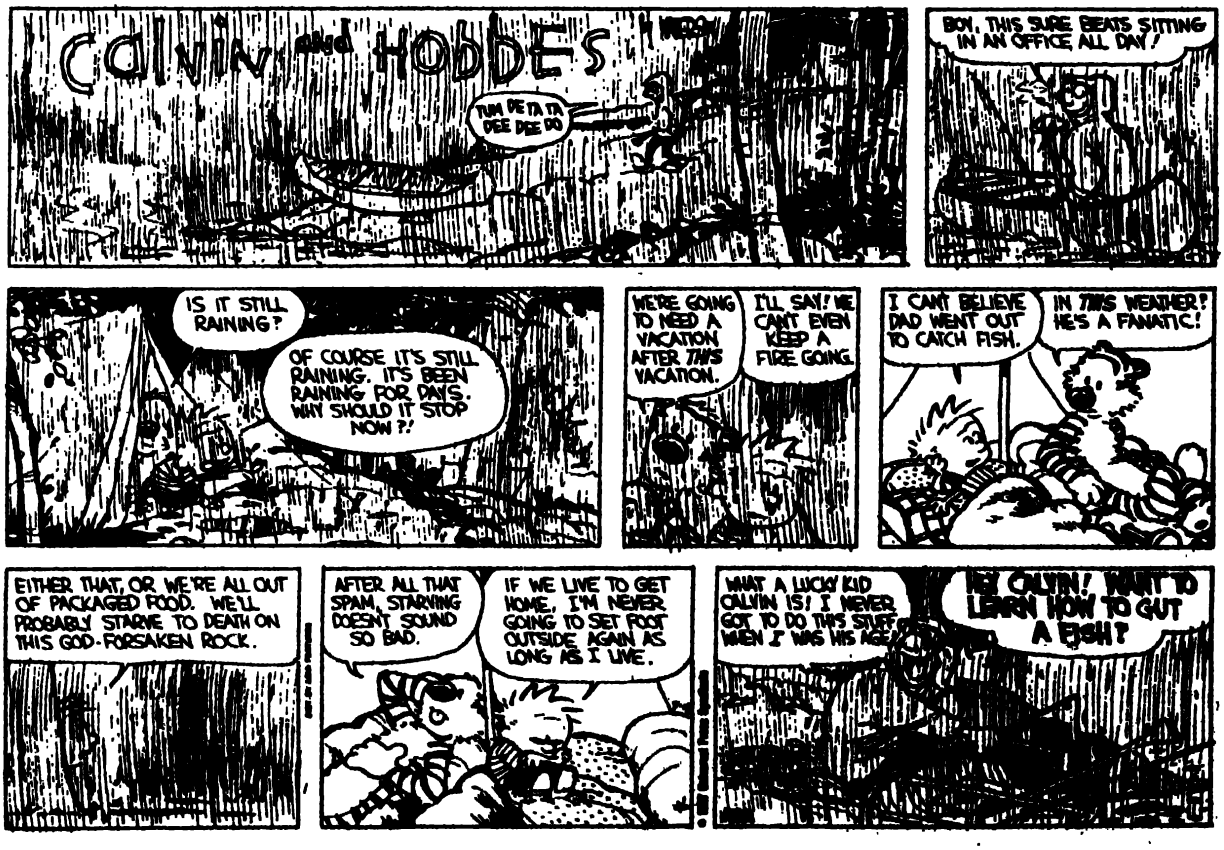
A. As you are only 23 it is likely that your wife is even younger than you are. I doubt if she understands the implications of her threats — it is probably more like a childish game to her. However, it is a dangerous and irresponsible sign to even joke about suicide in this manner. It leads to a habit of emotional blackmail which escalates into great personal tension for both partners. It is time you talked to her in a firm and forceful manner to make it absolutely clear that you disapprove of these idle threats. Explain to her that you are responsible partners in sharing your life together and that your disagreements have to be resolved in a reasonable and mature way.

Illustrations: Debasish Deb

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBES ■ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

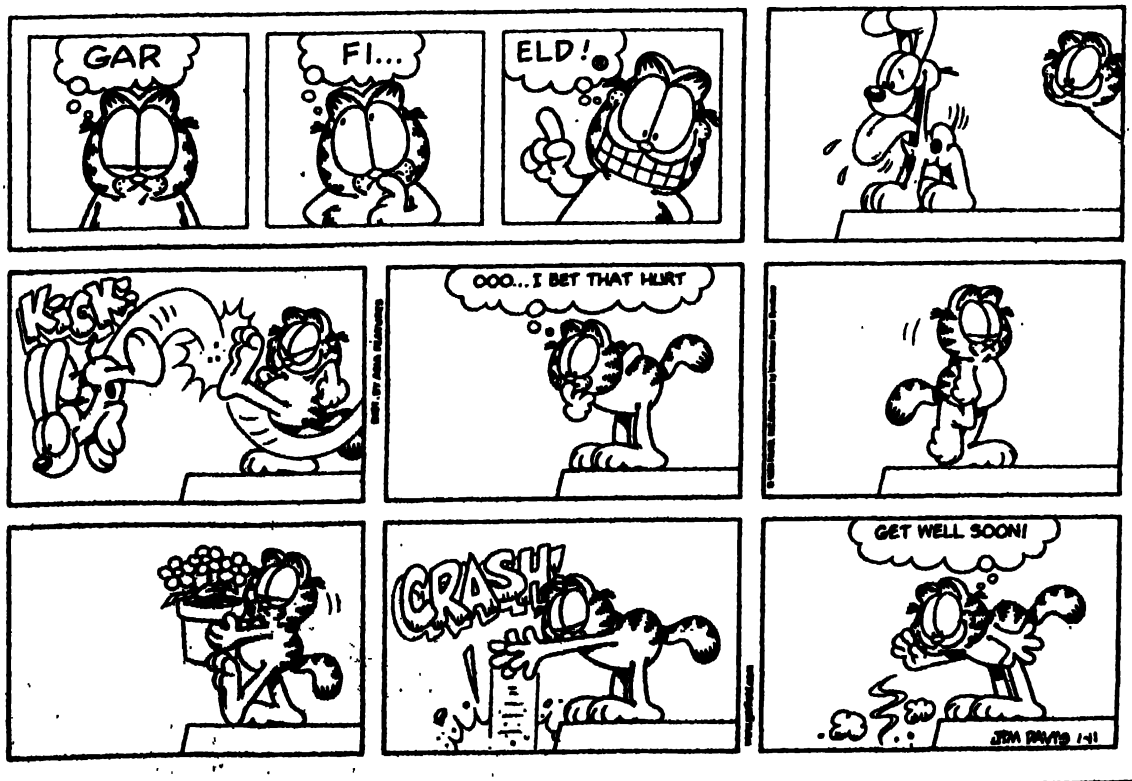








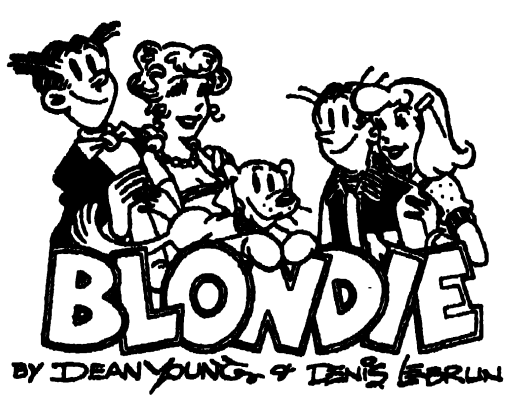
GARFIELD ■ JIM DAVIS

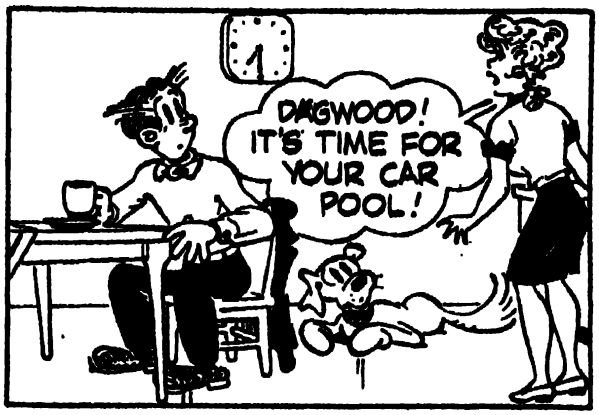


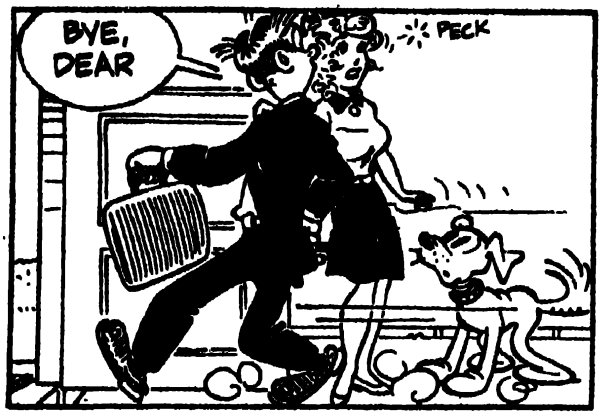
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



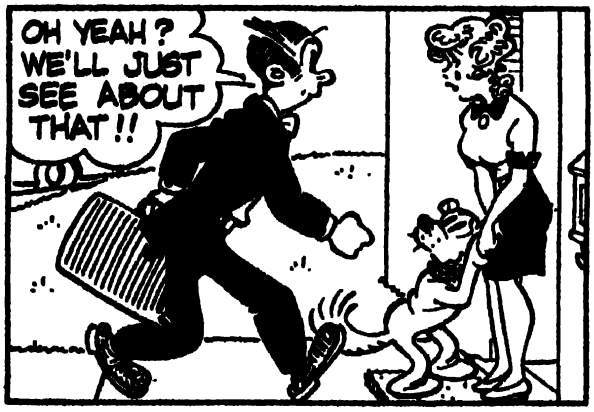
BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



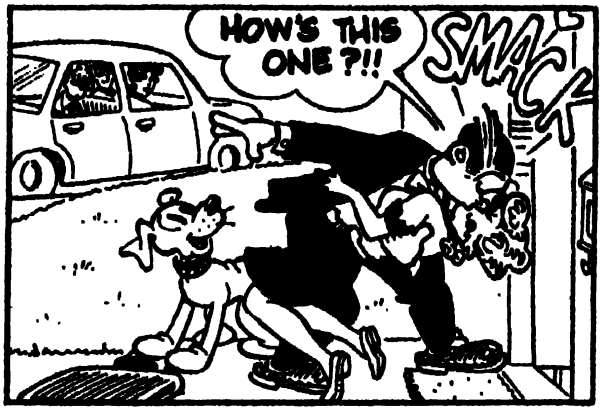


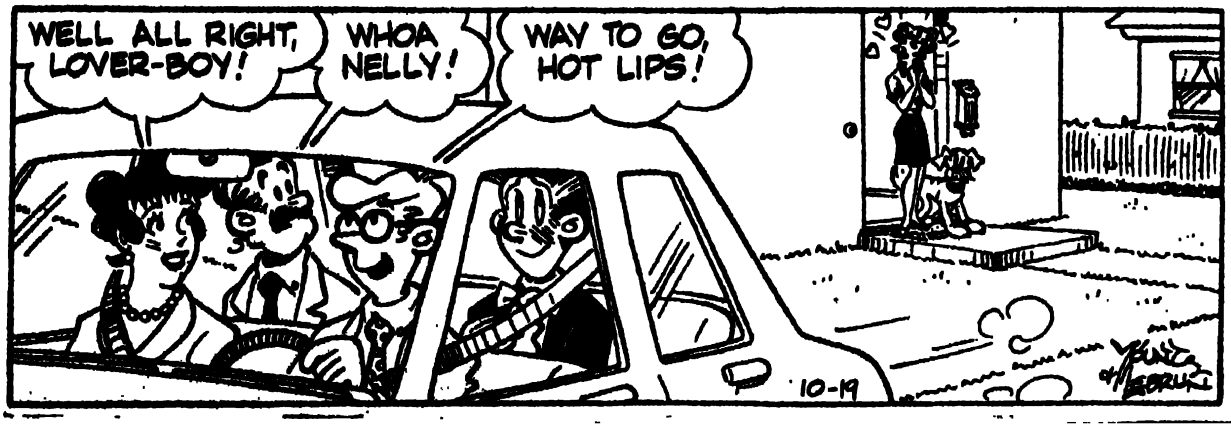






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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

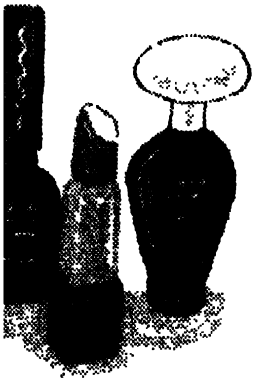


Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am 17 years old and a regular reader of your column. There are too many 'herbal' products in the market. Are they really herbal, or they, like any other cosmetic product, have chemicals in them? If so, are they just as harmful?*
Sonia Mukherjee, Puri, Orissa

A Many people have asked me this question and my answer is always the same. Any product which requires a long shelf life requires the addition of chemicals in it for preservation. Perhaps not as strong, but the effects are definitely there on the skin and hair. If you mix fullers earth, fresh cream and lemon juice and keep it on your shelf for more than a week it will get spoilt. So chemicals are there in these so called herbal products.

Anything that contains natural preservatives does not have a shelf life of more than two months and that, too, preferably kept in the refrigerator. The effects of these products is far greater and have no side-effects on the skin and hair. Anything that is natural is not only more expensive but also more effective. For example, if you buy a synthetic oil for your hair which is perfumed the effects will not be as positive as an oil which is pure but not so fancy smelling. For example, bhringraj oil is available in many brands but there are very few pure makes of bhringraj oil that have the desired effect. Similarly, pure almond oil is very rare. Our ancestors did not have off-the-shelf products but had better skin and more luxuriant hair! Going natural might mean harder work but its results are far reaching and much more powerful.



Q *I am 12 years old and will be a teenager soon. I have heard about the onset of pimples during the teens. Is there any way to prevent this?*
Susmita Sengupta, Calcutta

A The teens are meaningful years and I have seen many youngsters just let themselves go. The reason for this is the attitude of the parents who seem to think that these poor little souls should not concentrate on anything else other than their studies!

For god's sake, this part of your life will never come back and though it is important to concentrate on your studies, I feel it is more important to have a routine life that you have to work out individually. Lots of fun, fresh air, fruits, salads, lots of water, no colas, sweets, fried or junk food and a set studying and sleeping time will show on your face.

It is important to keep the skin scrupulously clean and I would advise you to wipe it with rose water several times a day. Keep your skin well moisturised with a light moisturiser. This has to be done daily. Many teenagers have very oily skin and it is important to go for deep cleansing at least once a week. Mix powder dried green peas, an egg, lemon juice and some turmeric. Apply this all over the face and neck and leave on till dry. Dab with milk and scrub off gently. Be sure that the peas have been powdered very finely otherwise you will peel your skin. Wash face with ice-cold water.

For anti-shave rashes

■

Rub alum on your skin after shaving and then massage your face with almond oil

Q *I am 28 years old and read your column regularly. I find your tips amazingly sensible and my wife follows them religiously. I suffer from anti-shave rashes and it became very embarrassing to go to the office with a red face. Please tell me if there is any remedy.*
Jatin Dasgupto, Lake Gardens, Calcutta



A Many men have this problem. I would advise you to rub alum on your skin after shaving and then massage your face with a little almond oil or you can use a little moisturiser. Now dab skin with a large cotton pad dipped in cold rose water, preferably one that has been kept in the fridge. This may seem a little tedious the first few times but you shall soon realise that it has become a part of your rou-



tine and it takes more than five minutes and believe me it is far better than going to the office all red faced!

Q ***I am 22 years old and have an extremely dry skin. I have felt it much more this winter as usually my skin is oily. I have been using a moisturiser but my skin still feels stretched. Someone advised me to put a little mustard oil but it seems to burn a lot. Please advise.***
Mamita Mukhopadhyaya, Darjeeling

A Our skins transform with time, conditions and lifestyles. I would ask you not to torture yourself with more mustard oil anymore. I personally feel it is often too harsh on the skin. Instead, use almond oil, just two drops are more than enough. Best applied at night when the skin can soak up its goodness without any dust or pollution. Also, a healthy diet plays an important role in what your skin looks like. Lots of dairy products, milk, cheese, butter, ghee, yoghurt, etc. are all essentials especially in winters. Dry fruits and lots of green veggies and fresh fruits are a must.

Q ***I am 25 years old and suffer from a lot of acne especially around the forehead area. I also have dandruff and many anti-dandruff shampoos and skin creams have already been tried but to no good. Please advise.***
Amrita Sen, Hooghly district

A Most probably the acne is being caused by dandruffs. Please understand that it is not the miracle of fancy products alone that will cure your dandruff or acne. Take a look at your lifestyle first — do you drink 10 glasses of water daily, do you sleep well, do you take out half-an-hour daily for exercise, do you eat a balanced diet, lots of green vegetables and salads?

Start with an internal curing first. Why not set out a time period for three weeks and see the results yourself. Oil your hair weekly with warm coconut oil followed with the application of the juice of one lemon and turban therapy.

Henna your hair once a week. Wipe clean your face with rose water, apply a pack that you can make at home. If you follow all these you will see a difference in no time at all!

Q ***I am 43 years old and have been using henna regularly. However, now my hair is becoming very grey and with the use of henna it becomes orange. What should I do, I henna my hair once a month.***
Sumita Das, Calcutta

A Greying hair is indeed quite a problem and hennaing your hair once a month is just not enough. Try to use a good quality henna and soak it in an iron vessel overnight. It is wiser to get a professional to apply henna and leave it on for a minimum of two hours.



Preferably, only rinse out the henna, do not shampoo and apply oil. Shampoo your hair the following day. Not only will the colour be much stronger but the hair will not dry out and look shiny and lustrous.

Q ***Most people say that smoking is injurious to health. Is it bad for the skin too?***
Aparna Roy, Calcutta

A Smoking is bad for the skin, too. Most women who smoke do so out of fashion initially and then out of habit. You will find the skin drying more and becoming prone to early lines and wrinkles. The skin is often ashen looking and dull. So you see that skin health is important, too, just as our body is and smoking is in no way recommended for either. Make a new year resolution and give up. In fact, a great way to resist is to pop an almond in your mouth and suck on it. Every time the temptation increases, chew it.



How to give up smoking

■

A great way to resist is to pop an almond in your mouth and chew it

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



Sunita Kunwar

YAMINI KRISHNAMURTHY
Dancer

'This royal purple temple sari is one of my favourites and is more precious to me than any piece of jewellery I own. When I first wore it, it created a sensation.'



Palee

UMA GAJAPATI RAJU SHARMA
Media personality

'This is my favourite sari because it becomes me. It was a Diwali gift from my mother and also it is in a colour — white — which is very uplifting for the soul.'

Spinning Dreams

The *sari* is what binds the various regions of India together, says **Sujata Pandey**

The three things that come to mind when India is mentioned are: the Taj Mahal, tandoori chicken, and the *sari*. Although there are as many styles of wearing this piece of un-stitched cloth as there are regions in this country, it is the modern, urbanised drape that the Western world recognises.

The tradition of the *sari* goes back thousands of years. Each state and region in India has its own indigenous weave, fabric, texture, yarn, special colours and design based on its culture, religious and social needs. But despite that, the *sa* is the common factor unifying India at its best.



Jagdish Yadav

Although Indian (and some ambitious international) designers tried to play around with the drape of the *sari*, the market — and more importantly, women — did not take to the new-fangled ideas paraded on the catwalks.

Among the finest textures in northern India are the Maheshwari and Chanderi saris of Madhya Pradesh. Weavers were settled in Maheshwar from Surat, Burhanpur and Banaras by Rani Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore, who supported the growth of handloom weaving.

The lustrous sheen of the Maheshwari comes from the Korean silk yarn used in the warp, with Bangalore or Kashmir silk in the weft. The border of this single or 'shot' coloured *sari* comes in contrasting colours with gold or coloured thread designs. It is also woven with thin stripes or tiny checks on the body. The *sari* gets its transparent and delicate appearance because of the single thread weaving process. Says classical vocalist Shubha Mudgal, "The *sari* that holds a lot of memories for me is a Maheshwari that belonged to my teacher Naina Devi. This *sari* was given to me by her daughter when she (Naina Devi) passed away."

RADHA REDDY
Dancer

'I treasure this Kancheepuram sari given to me by my brother just before he passed away in an accident. He was my dearest brother and this was the last present that he gave me.'

The Chanderi originated in Guna and is similar to the Maheshwari except that while silk thread is used in the warp, the weft is usually of cotton thread. This is now changing as

using silk in the weft is more profitable. The main body also has a repetitive motif copied from the border in either *zari* or thread of matching colours from the border.

Banaras, Bengal, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh became famous centres of weaving, known for the quality of their textiles and designs, between second century BC and seventh century AD. The Jamdani is woven in Tanda and Banaras in Uttar Pradesh. The design is produced by placing an extra weft in the same count as the warp and weft to get the desired embossed effect.

The same technique using gold threads and silk yarn produces the rich and intricate brocades of the Banarasi with floral, creeper, bird and medallion patterns. The silk used for Jamdani and Banarasi *saris* is soft and comes in pastel shades, white, cream and the rich deep tones come from using yarn from Karnataka and more recently from China.

Tissues and fine muslins are also woven in Uttar Pradesh and Bengal. The cotton and muslin *saris* of Uttar Pradesh are known for their fine thread work embroidery. To name a few — chiken, tapchi and zardozi. The texture of tissue *saris* is obtained by weaving silk and gold or silver yarn together. The tangail cottons of West Bengal are in the Jamdani technique where the opaque design stands out against a transparent background.

The cottons and tussars of Orissa come in a wide range of colours. The elaborate weaves combine borders of geometric and fish motifs, wide bands with ikat, checks and stripes in fine cotton yarn which are typical of Sambalpuri Vichitrapuri saris of Orissa. Traditional designs include Bolmala, Chandankora and Sachipar. Bihar and Kota are known for their fine white and cream cottons and muslins. The *saris* and textiles of southern India have their own distinctive flavour. In the Sangam classics — first century BC to the sixth century AD — there is reference made to the weaving of silk and cotton cloth. By the 16 century AD weavers were an important artisan group. Cotton *saris* are a recent addition to the repertoire of the south. Kanchee, Andhra, Venkatgiris, Mangalgiris, Madurai and Coimbatore are some of the cottons available in the market. Says media personality Mrinal Pande: "I prefer finely woven cottons especially Andhra cottons because they feel nicer on the skin."

White cotton is also woven in Palghat and Trivandrum in Kerala. The karalkudi *sari* comes in off-white, un-bleached cotton and has a thin or broad gold border. The chutti or arrow-like motif on the two corners of the *sari* is typical of the region.

In Tamil Nadu the main weaving centres are Coimbatore, Salem, Nagercoil, Madurai and Kancheepuram. These areas also specialise in weaving double warp borders known as korvai border. These *saris* come in stripes, checks and a variety of motifs.

Andhra is also emerging as a strong centre for silk *saris*. With ikat, telia rummals — meaning 'oily kerchief' — known as such because it involves the process of dipping the yarn in an oily solution before weaving — and Pochampalli to its credit. Karnataka is the mulberry silk centre. The Dharmavarams and Mysore crepe come in a variety of colours.

"The *saris* from the south are now more acceptable as special occasion wear. Nowadays you can see so many ladies wearing South silks," says Rita Kapur Chisti, author of *Saris of India*, "that's because Banaras does not produce the same quality as the south."

Says Sunita Kohli, interior designer: "I like traditional and hand woven *saris* like Banarasi, Kancheepuram, Jamdani, Patola, Paithanies, Maheshwaris. In summer, I wear mostly Maheshwari *saris*. In the winter I wear Kancheepuram *saris* on the whole because there is much more variety in these within the traditional framework."

The arrival of the East India Company in the 16 century spelt the doom for the Indian handloom tradition. The revival of the Indian weaver began in 1947 in the post independence period. Women such as Kamla Devi Chattopadhya, Pupul Jayakar and Rukmani Devi Arundel were instrumental in the revival of khadi and in recognising the immense potential that khadi possessed. The industry received a big boost when the women who had begun their work with the revival of khadi were in positions of power from where they could oversee the production and — more importantly — the marketing of the handloom *sari*.

According to Chisti, "The Paithan of Maharashtra, the Banaras *sari*, the ikat and telia rummals of Andhra, the jamdanis of Bengal, the Bomkai, Gopalpur, Jagatsinghpur and Korpad of Orissa and the bandhini of Gujarat were suffering. The telia rummals of Andhra were out of production." Now these *saris* are doing very well in the market and getting the price they command. ■



Atul S. Gupta

SUBHALAKSHMI KHAN

Wife of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan

■

'I am in love with all my *saris*. All my *saris* are my favourites.'



A Hero for our Times

Tamil Nadu chief minister M. Karunanidhi makes a tele-serial on a legendary Tamil hero. **Sudha G. Tilak** reports

Tamil Nadu chief minister, Muthuvel Karunanidhi, may be maintaining a stiff upper lip about the Jain Commission Report, and its indictment of his party. But there is one issue that he will not keep quiet about: the tarnishing of the good name of the entire Tamil race. And his way of doing this is by reaffirming his attachment to the Tamil language, his first love, and to the dictum '*Mozhi Patru*' (love of the language).

It comes as no surprise then that Karunanidhi has returned to his first love — Tamil literature. He has scripted, penned the dialogues and story and screenplay for *Thenpandi Singam*, his first ever tele-serial. The serial is based on a novel written by Karunanidhi, which was awarded the Rajarajan Trophy by the Thanjavur University. *Thenpandi Singam* will be telecast on Chennai Tholaikatchi (Chennai Doordarshan) from the Pongal season, on the prime-time slot



M. Karunanidhi: Poetic expression

of Sunday mornings, and will go on for 13 weeks.

Thenpandi Singam is based on a true story that took place, history tells us, nearly 200 years ago. It tells the tale of a petty chieftain, Valukku Vaeli of Baganeri, who fiercely opposed and fought the British a good two centuries ago. He was called Thenpandi Singam in many poetic compositions which simply translates as the Pandian lion of the South.

The story has a parallel plot in Vallathirayan, a friend and neighbouring chieftain of Valukku Vaeli and the perils that he faced as he went about his mission of resisting the Britishers and even his own kingdom's plotting and scheming ministers. Intrigue, romance and Tamil jingoism are aplenty in this serial. "The serial is a faithful adaptation of the award-winning novel," says actor Nasser who enacts the main role.

Karunanidhi had wanted to make a movie of his novel with thespian Sivaji Ganesan in the lead, but that plan came to naught. This time, however, top Tamil actor Nasser will play the lead as the maravar who fought against colonialism. The romantic interest of the movie comes in the

form of Geetha, a Devadasi, who falls in love with Valukku Vaeli. Of course, the serial director had problems convincing several Tamil starlets to play parts which required them to go 'blouseless' to ensure historical authenticity. Folk artistes from Koothupatarai have also acted in this serial.

True to Tamil film style, the serial will be an extravagantly produced one. Says S. Ramamurthy, media manager of Vision Time and marketeers for the serial, "Our budget is four times that of any average tele-serial and is thus the first of its kind". Music composer Illayaraja has broken his long absence from the music business for this serial. Karunanidhi himself has written the lyrics for the songs.

Given the romantic angle between Valukku Vaeli and Geetha, his sweetheart, Karunanidhi's most amorous verses will be on display, set to lilting musical notes.

Karunanidhi also has a volume of 'Sangam Tamil Songs' to his credit. Sangam Tamil songs are famed for their hyperbole, romantic content and richness in poetic expressions. Music composer Illayaraja has used some ancient instruments to give an authentic feel to the songs of the period. This is the first time that Illayaraja has composed music for a tele-serial; but that's not surprising, given the admiration he expresses for Karunanidhi.

As director Illayabharathi says, "It is a rich production", which has been in the making for almost two years now. The serial was initially shot at the Madurai Nayak Mahal and in Karaikudi, Ramanasamudram, and Fort Chengi, places of rich architectural monuments and relics that will serve as the authentic backdrop that Karunanidhi was so keen on.

Karunanidhi is not new to cinema. Like all Tamil Nadu politicians, he has always had one foot in filmdom. He was a precursor to the charismatic M.G. Ramachandran who used his screen power to sway the masses for his political gains for over three decades. But television is a new field for him; so he will be hoping and praying for success here. ■

A still from *Thenpandi Singam*



He Also Makes Films

Charting Karunanidhi's stint in the movie business

No other senior politician in the country could have the filmi profile that Tamil Nadu chief minister Mu Ka or M. Karunanidhi has. It's not surprising then that he is better known by the sobriquet 'Kalaigner' (the artiste). Says film statistician Anandhan, "Today no one possesses the versatility that Karunanidhi displayed during his days in the film industry."

In his film career, Karunanidhi has produced as many as 26 films. He has written the story, screenplay and dialogues for as many as 20 films; he has 33 film screenplays to his credit; and has worked as a lyricist for as many as 18 films. Karunanidhi's fervour for producing Tamil films was such that he and Union minister Murasoli Maaran floated many production companies.



Murasoli Maaran: Ghost writer?

Mu Ka has five film production companies under his belt. Film land gossip has it that Karunanidhi's nephew, Maaran, has even acted as ghost writer for Karunanidhi on many occasions.



Velupillai Prabhakaran: Screen hero

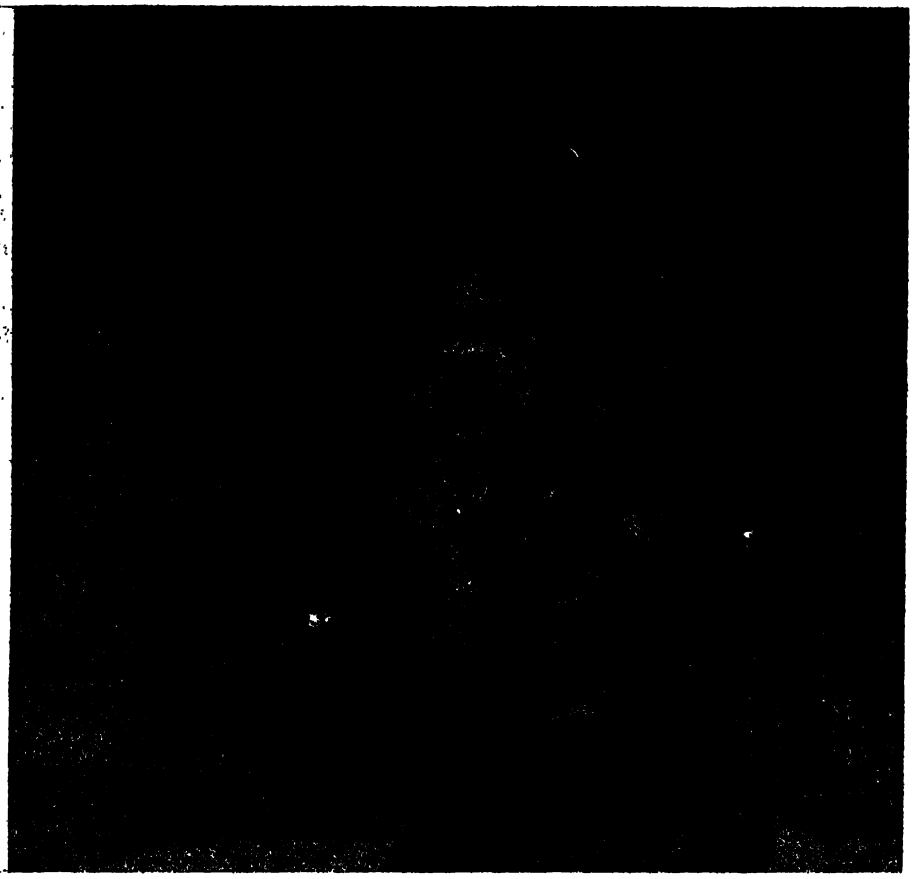
In 1947 came Karunanidhi's first film venture called *Rajakumari*. Ever since, he has been known in the Tamil film history as someone who consistently brought fiery speeches and dramatic acting to the silver screen. As a fallout of his long stage involvement, Karunanidhi also broke away from traditional mythologicals, which were the order of the day then.

Driven by his Dravidian principles he produced and scripted many films on Tamil heroes and kings. *Poompuhar* on the chaste Tamil heroine Kannagi, *Manohara*, Karunanidhi's Tamil version of *Hamlet*, the thriller *Nirumbipaar*, a steamy *Valiba Virundu* (Feast for the Young) and later, in 1987, *Veeran Velu Thambi* loosely inspired by LTTE supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Despite his Tamil affiliations, Karunanidhi has involved himself in Telugu cinema as well. From 1950 to 1980, he was involved in several Telugu productions and is known to be fluent in Telugu as well.

My Personal Style

That's how Bachendri Pal keeps herself busy during holidays



Long Treks and Picnics



SPIRITUAL FEELING

My first view of the snow-capped peak of Mount Everest cannot be truly put into words It is something which affected me spiritually. I have never been the same person since

I am so much of an outdoor person that whatever little time I get, I love to spend it quietly with my family members.

I do not do much partying at home. But, whenever I am at home, it is picnic time for all the children.

With nine kids in the house (four of a sherpa who died in an expedition while the others are all nephews and nieces) there is plenty of life all around the house.

I love to cook for them whenever I can find the time to do so. In winter, we take the food out into the garden and have a mini picnic.

I am fortunate that all the children love outdoor life. If the kids have holidays and I can arrange my schedule, you will surely find us trekking in the Dalma ranges. We spend the weekend at the guest house. This is just to be close to nature.

A drive down to the Dimna Lake nearby is also very much a part of our curriculum. Even as a little girl I used to spend most of my time in the fields, helping my father in farming.

When I grew a little older, we would go trekking all the way up to the snowline in the Gharwal ranges during our holidays. Even today, you just give me a chance to be close to nature and I will be ready with my kit. Mountains are something I have grown up amidst and they have become an inseparable part of my destiny.

Last year, the all-women's trans-Himalayan expedition was one great experience for me. Trekking through the Himalayas was a different kind of a thrill from the actual expedition I undertook in 1984.

I also love water. The great rafting expedition was another such experience. But nothing to beat the breathtaking beauty of the Himalayas though.

My first view of the snow-capped peak of Mount Everest cannot be truly put into words. It is something which affected me spiritually. I have never been the same person since.

As long I am alive my love affair with the Himalayas will continue.

As told to Sumit Mukherjee





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POST MORTEM

Land of Plenty

We can learn many things from Israelis ('A Land of Promise', January 11). They have, by devotion and hard work, transformed their land into a flourishing country. But the fact remains that Israel made the lives of Palestinians miserable, thousands of whom were turned out of their homes and are still living the life of refugees. Now Israelis are forcibly demolishing houses of Palestinians to expand their building programme. How sad that people who suffered humiliation are now making others suffer the same fate.

M.S. Quraishy, Calcutta



It was very nice of Israel to celebrate India's 50 years of Independence with a food festival, fashion show and other extravaganzas here. It would be a great idea to organise group packages so that Indians could get an opportunity to see Israel.

Sangeeta Burman, Calcutta

Israel was born in 1948 with the help of America, Russia, Britain and France.They sympathised with the Jews unlike the Germans.

In Israel and Palestine, Muslim, Christian and Jew saints were born who preached love for mankind. But we have not learnt any lessons from them.

Khayyam in *Rubbiyat-e-Omer-Khayyam* said — "*The temple and Ka'ba are both places of worship. The counch shell is sounded in His praise. The temple, the mosque, the church and synagogue they are all for Him.*"

Are Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Yasser Arafat, the PLO chief, listening?

Md Tanweer, Calcutta

Thank you for the cover story. Israel is a beautiful country and for the past five years India and Israel have been maintaining good relations with each other. Not only the government but also its people love India. I hope such good relations always exist.

Arvind Aggarwal, Calcutta

Israel has been portrayed in your cover story as a country which is on the right path and flourishing. But the fact remains that the Palestinians have suffered because of Israel. It is only with the help of superpowers like America that Israel has prospered.

Govind Biswas, Calcutta

The cover story dealt a lot with the history of Israel. It would have been interesting to know the future plans of Israel and how it was planning to cope with the problem of Palestine.

Shefali Mitra, Calcutta

The cover story did not give a perfect picture of Israel. We would like to know about the problems of poor Israelis. A country always looks beautiful from the outside but when we look closely cracks can be seen.

Dimple Dasgupta, Hoogly

More information on the Dead Sea and other places of tourist interest in Israel should have been given.

Arindam Sen, Calcutta

The Telegraph

22 FEBRUARY 1998



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Election Eves

With Sonia and Priyanka Gandhi deciding to campaign for the Congress, the general election this time doesn't appear to lack in glamour at least.

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Fashion

What's in this summer.

PAGE 16

The Best

Looking at the cosmetics industry

PAGE 22

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 26

Celebrity Cook-in

Here are some recipes from celebrities like fashion designer Bina Ramani, model Simar Dugal, and dancer Sonal Mansingh, which you could try out at home.

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First Person

Fashion designer J.J. Valaya likes the Indian look.


For beautiful eyes,
give special care

SYNERGIE

EYE CONTOUR - UNDER EYE GEL

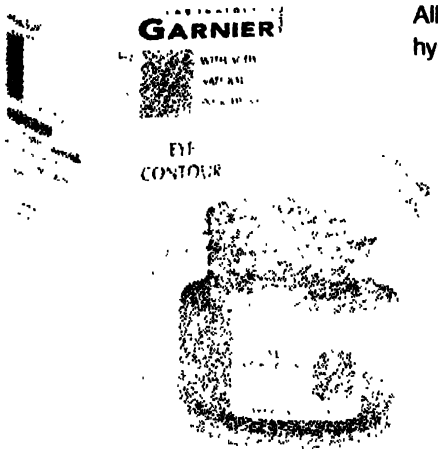
Delays wrinkles. Reduces dark circles. Controls puffiness

Fragile skin around the eye

The skin around the eyes, the eye contour, needs special care. Extremely fragile, it is up to 4 times thinner than the rest of your skin. Besides being subjected to UV rays, pollution and natural ageing, it is also constantly subjected to fatigue –10,000 blinks a day. Over time this leads to the formation of fine lines, wrinkles and dark circles. Synergie Eye Contour Gel formulated by Laboratoires Garnier Paris helps protect and repair the delicate skin around your eyes.

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This easy to apply gel is rich in extract of papaya, vegetal glycerol and vitamin E. Used regularly, it helps smooth away fine lines and reduce dark circles and puffiness. Synergie Eye Contour is fragrance-free and is opthalmologically tested for sensitive eyes and contact lens wearers. All Synergie products are hypoallergenic.



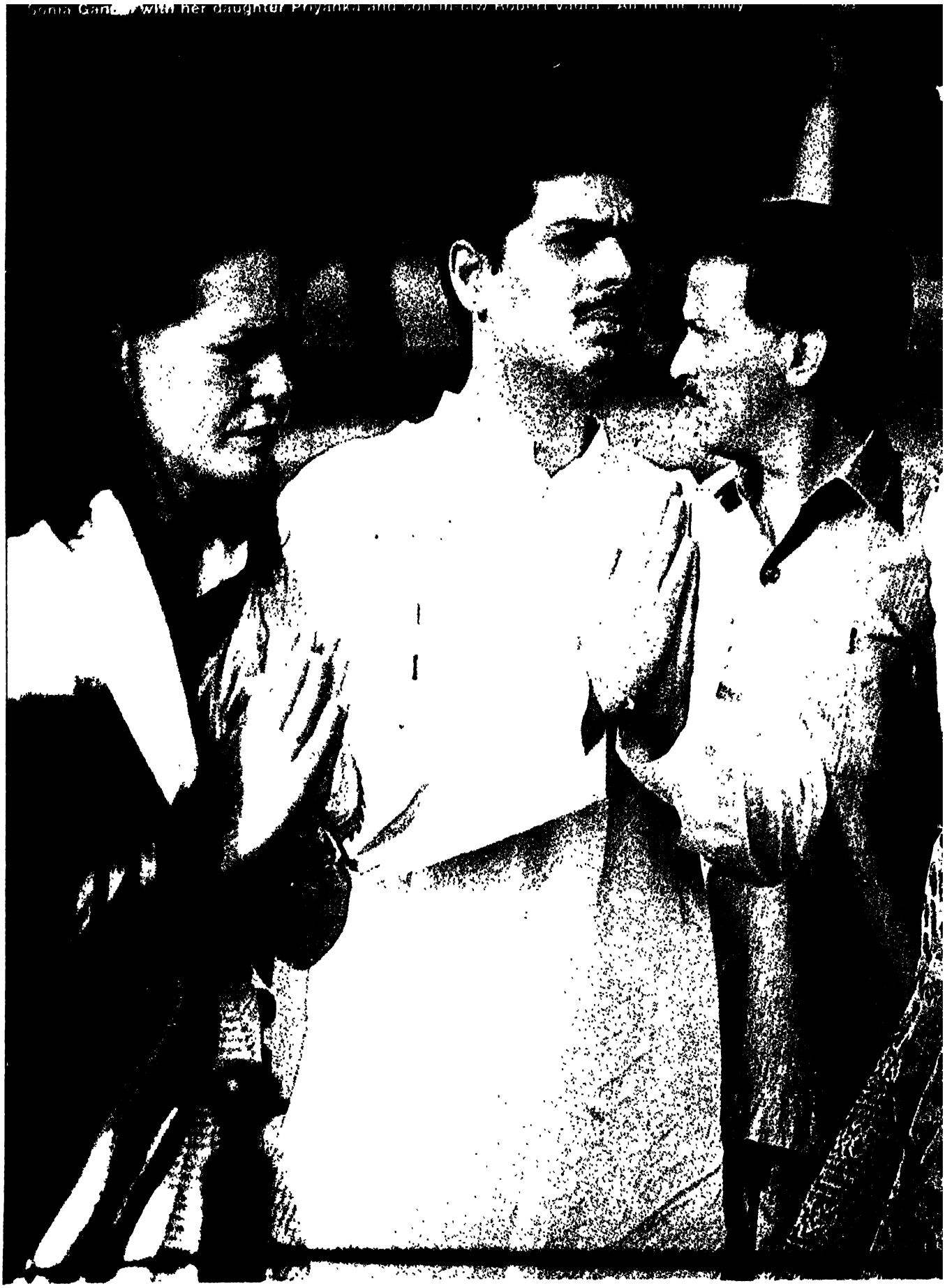
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Sonia Gandhi with her daughter Priyanka and son in law Robert Vadra - All in the family

Seema Goswami lists the women who have made a difference to the electoral process

ELECTION EVES









Sushma Swaraj, Mamata Banerjee and Renuka Chowdhury

SONIA GANDHI

The will-she-won't-she conundrum has finally been solved; Sonia Gandhi is in politics full-time. And she's set a scorching pace as she whizzes across the country, accompanied by assorted Congressmen and a member of her family (either Priyanka or Rahul, who has flown down from America to be by his mother's side), addressing rallies in as diverse locations as Sriperembudur and the Brigade Parade grounds in Calcutta.

What's far more impressive than Sonia's undoubted stamina and her near-flawless Hindi (well, okay, so she has a slight accent, but so what?) is the huge crowd that invariably turns up to hear her. The BJP may well insist that they are there out of curiosity, and that few — if any — will actually go out and vote for the Congress, but there is no denying that Sonia Gandhi has put the muscle back in the Congress campaign.

Any doubts on this score have been laid to rest by the vicious reaction of the BJP to Sonia's entry into politics. Not a day has passed when its leaders haven't made digs about her foreign birth, her links with Ottavio Quatrochhi, and the Congress' reliance on dynastic politics.
Sonia's reaction to this has been to ignore these comments, and concentrate on the key issues that she has made her

own: secularism and development, which were the twin dreams of her slain husband, Rajiv Gandhi. Result: she is the only leader who has emerged as a statesman-like figure in this campaign. And that will stand her in good stead in the years to come.

PRIYANKA GANDHI

V.N. Gadgil loves her body language. The party wants her to take over as Youth Congress president. And the crowds just love it when the lissom and lovely Priyanka talks to them in their local language and exhorts them to vote for the Congress.

But what about Priyanka herself? Is she a political animal, or is she just tagging along to support mummy?



Phoolan Devi

Is Priyanka Gandhi a political animal, or is she just tagging along to support mummy? Going by appearances alone, the First Daughter of the Congress loves the entire political process

Going by appearances alone, the First Daughter of the Congress loves the entire political process. You only have to look at her bounding up on to the dais, waving frantically to the crowds, a huge grin splitting her face, to realise that Priyanka thrives on the waves of affection emanating from the crowds. She takes care to dress in a sari that is typical of the region, rattles off a line or two in her boisterous style, and when the crowd gets its reaction right, praises them with a good-humoured 'Okay, fine' before zipping off to the next rally.

Given that she looks as if she is having the time of her life, why did Priyanka stop short of standing for election this time round? The rumour mill in Delhi has it that this may have something to do with the fact that she is in the family way.

But whatever the truth of that, there is no getting around the fact that Priyanka has put the glamour back into politics with her joint appearances with her mother. And even if she doesn't win too many votes for the Congress at the end of the day, her presence will have been worth it just in terms of the party morale, which had fallen to an all-time low in Sitaram Kesri's reign.

JAYALALITHA

Public memory has always been notoriously short; and when it comes to politics, it is even shorter. Nobody understands that better than AIADMK supremo, Jayalalitha.

She may have been turned out of office by an unforgiving electorate a few years ago. She may have been labelled the most corrupt politician of all time, after a series of raids conducted at her residence. And she may have been the subject of one vicious rumour after another. But that's all in the past now. And with the DMK suffering from the anti-incumbency syndrome, Jayalalitha is back in the reckoning. She is the star campaigner in Tamil Nadu these days, and given the Tamilian penchant for the underdog, looks all set to make a miraculous comeback.

MAMATA BANERJEE

Such was her belief in her grassroots appeal that she even named her party the Trinamool Congress. And certainly, Mamata has got the crowds going during her campaign in West Bengal. But despite her popular — some would say populist — appeal, Mamata's campaign will undoubtedly suffer from the fact that the Left Front is far too well-entrenched in this state. She may well make a difference in Calcutta and other urban centres, but the rural parts of the state will remain forever red. What Banerjee will succeed in doing is inflicting some damage to the Congress prospects. But then, that's probably what she is hoping for. That will, after all, give her more leverage when she finally decides to rejoin the parent party.

SUSHMA SWARAJ

Ever wondered why the BJP appointed Sushma Swaraj as the party spokesperson? Simple. Would anyone who listened to this English-speaking, sari-clad, archetypal middle-class housewife, ever believe that she held the brief for an obscurantist, bigoted party which owed its political and cultural philosophy to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)? No chance. At least, that was what the BJP hoped. Hence, in the run-up to the 1998 General Election, Sushmaji has been doing double duty for the BJP. First she tours her south Delhi constituency, whipping up support for the party. And after all that rabble-rousing stuff, she makes the rounds of the television studios, appearing on every current affairs programme of consequence to present the new, rational

And those who didn't

Or couldn't make a difference

RENUKA CHOWDHURY
Her Rajya Sabha term expires in a couple of months. So, Renuka was all set to stand for election to the Lok Sabha on a Telugu Desam ticket. After all, who could have a better claim on a party ticket than the woman who had done such a good job as Union health minister?

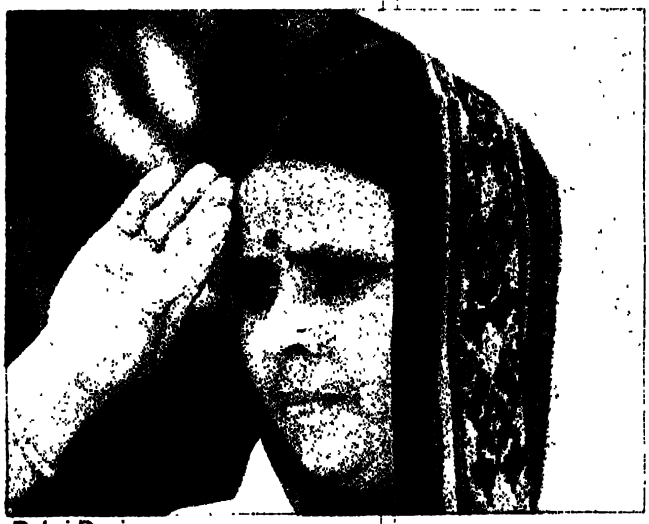
Nobody, right? Wrong. Well, at least TDP supremo and Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Chandrababu Naidu, didn't think so. So, the list of TDP candidates for this General Election didn't include Renuka's name, much to her chagrin.

But then, as they say, there's always a next time — and if she is lucky, even a by-election.

MANEKA GANDHI
There was a time when she was touted as a prospective Prime Minister of India — much as her sister-in-law Sonia Gandhi is today. But that was a long time ago. These days, Maneka Gandhi is not even a minor player in national politics. Instead, she is India's best-known animal activist, who is standing from Pilibhit her old constituency, with the BJP supporting her candidature — no doubt, for the message it sends out to Sonia.

RABRI DEVI
Now that her husband, Laloo Prasad Yadav, is back in the thick of electioneering, Rabri has obligingly taken the back seat to him. He has always been the *de facto* chief minister of the state (even when he was in custody), despite the fact that his wife was the official occupant of the post. And now he has become the public face of the party as well, it's only a matter of time before Rabri is sent back into a well-deserved retirement.


Maneka Gandhi


Rabri Devi

PHOOLAN DEVI
With everyone going on and on and on about the criminalisation of politics, it was only to be expected that the going would get tough for dacoit queen-turned-member of Parliament, Phoolan Devi. Not that her's would be a great loss; she hardly ever opened her mouth in Parliament, to begin with.

face of the BJP, the party that wants to be everything to everyone. And such is her control over the media, that she pulls it off on most occasions.

MAYAWATI
While Kanshi Ram was traversing the country in the hope of striking one incongruous alliance after another, Mayawati was gearing up to mop up the Dalit vote. And this she did with every weapon at her command: her stirring (and occasionally abusive) oratory; the holding out of blandishments; and attacking every other party in the fray as being anti-backward.

Whether or not she comes back as Uttar Pradesh chief minister ever again, there can be no denying the fact that she has changed the rules of electoral politics forever, and given the backward castes a voice of their own, thus making the election process more representative. ■

Mamata Banerjee may well make a difference in Calcutta and other urban centres, but the rural parts of the state will remain forever red

Beat the Heat

With the new spring-summer styles available on the high street, says **Samita Bhatia**

Street chic has always dictated what will be in vogue in the world of high fashion. Quiz Manju Mehta, managing director, Inter Craft and creator of the Fu's and Contempo brands, on what the street fashions in the Summer of 1998 will be and she'll fill you in. "In a nutshell," she explains, "slim-fit bodies, bare arms and shorts in just about any fabric. The V-neck marks a major presence, as tight-fitting denims and hip-huggers take over."

The "with-it" colours, she says, are neutrals like beige, navy, black, grey, chocolate brown and white; pastels like lilac, banana and sky blue; and bright shades like mango, papaya, chilli red, lime, electric and cobalt blue. For men, Madras checks are hot this summer.

In keeping with her forecast, international and Indian brands are poised to launch Spring-Summer 1998 collections that herald an attitude that's young and spells fun. Summer lines are aimed at anyone who really cares about what they look like, while the lines are 'fashionably casual'. And the price tags are pretty much the same as one saw last year.

The customer profile of labels like Netherlands-based Mexx and Italian clothier, Benetton, ColorPlus, Inter Shoppe's Fu's and Contempo ranges, Wearhouse and Weekender are pretty much the same. Their customers are clearly those who —as Mexx's Natraj Shetty, marketing manager puts it— feel comfortable in all major cities of the world. He adds, "They are cosmopolitan, self-confident and want to develop their own individual styles."

A look at the summer lines of fast-selling labels like Wearhouse and Weekender reveal the predominant styles and colours for summer. For starters, the fit is tight (read: really tight). Making a sweep are diagonal stripes, prints and checks; stretch pants with five pockets have gained in influence while checks and stripes are the hottest thing for casual pants.

This, while shirts, too, support a wide variety of checks and two-tone colours. Favourites are earth tones with an emphasis on brown and amber. At Weekender and Wearhouse you are informed that accents of red and blue with warmer tones are to appear in the latter half of the season.

Soft blue and deep red have already arrived at Mexx stores across the country. At Mexx, February and March see a lot of navy and khaki while the inspiration is Italian. Natraj Shetty adds, "Jacquards, pin-stripes, fine checks, linen and stretch have been introduced in a big way."

In April and May, Mexx rejuvenates the romanticism of the 70s with inspiration from the far east. The colours will be soft and styles will include mandarin collars,

Mexx's summer wear



tunic blouses and Chinese peasant (wide leg) pants. Fabrics are mostly linen, crisp and stretch cottons with Oriental flower and porcelain prints.

The hot Mexx colours of May give way to water shades of blue, grey and lots of white in viscose crepes and fine twills come June and July. The prints are to be soft and decorative with floral and pebble motifs. Off-shoulder tops, halter-necks, floppy pants, tunic blouses, and skirts with long slits are best to beat the summer heat. Prices vary between Rs 550—1,000.

Another brand which has cast off excess clutter and is sticking to basic lines is Benetton. While Benetton is all for streamlining the body, ColorPlus is a specialist in pre-washed casualwear. The styles for Summer '98 from ColorPlus have a new addition to its 100 per cent close-woven cottons, its wrinkle-free fabrics, khakhis, sand-washed cottons and linens. Also new on the list is ColorPlus' golf ball wash fabric.

Explains Janardanan M., manager, marketing, ColorPlus, "The golf ball wash process is unique to our company. We use special rubberised balls made from hi-tech compounds, in tandem with eco-friendly enzymes, which ensure an even and uniform softness in the fabric.The process ensures that the cotton fibres remain undamaged."

ColorPlus also brings micro-sand-washed and wrinkle-free trousers priced upwards of Rs 1,089. The Color Plus trousers for men and women come in varying styles like pleated front, plain front and elasticised waists. Shirts are priced upwards of Rs 649.

On the other hand, Benetton's hard sell this time is on skirts that are ankle length and A-line; dresses, mostly tunic-shaped, flow away from the body but keep to reduced proportions. Hipster trousers have lost their tucks and legs hang loose and straight. Polo shirts, T-shirts and tank tops, still gently contoured are cut off at the waist or just skim the hips. Fabrics range from poplin to gabardine, to cotton, lycra, jersey and crepe. You can hope to pick up the dresses and skirts from Rs 650 upwards while T-shirts come for Rs 350 to 550.



From Mexx: Bringing back the romanticism of the Seventies

There's more —two-piece suits comprising jacket and trousers are borrowed from the most traditional men's wardrobe. While trousers come without tucks and pleats, the jackets have two or three buttons and can be coordinated with vividly coloured plain lycra tops. Says a Benetton spokesperson, "The 'White Ladies' range focuses on whites that are shaded with pink and green, while the 'Dark Ladies' collection features black."

Benetton's 'Seaside' collection for women features white, red, blue and yellow on polo shirts, trousers, mini-skirts that are designed for a beach holiday.

From Benetton's spring-summer collection





"Classic, simple and straight styles in woven and knit fabrics will have little or no embellishments in the Contempo and Fu's ranges this summer," says Mehta of Inter Craft.

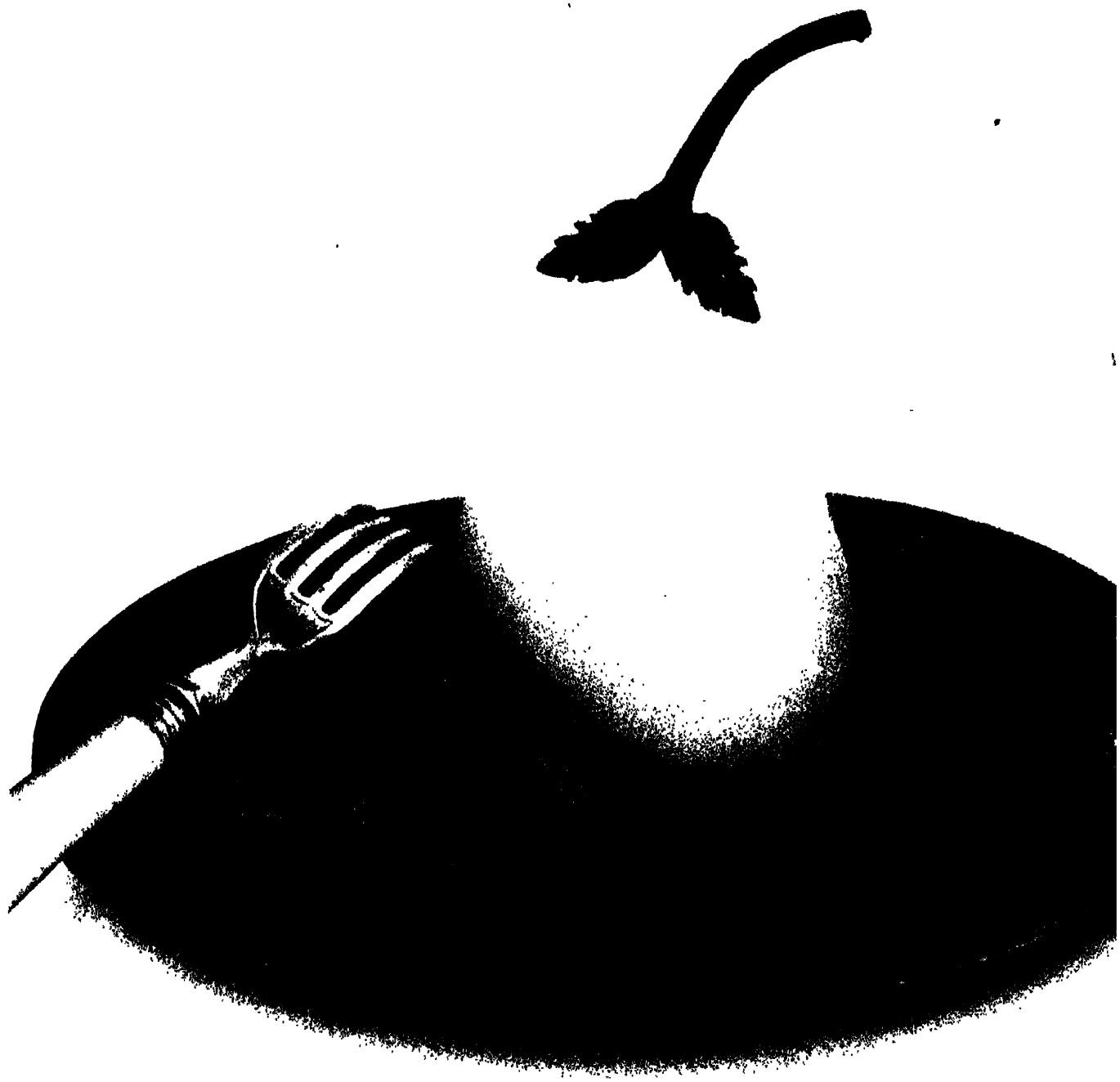
Contempo and Fu's has laid emphasis on the Madras (broad) check for men, so too brands like Allan Solly, Louis Philippe and Van Heusen. Latest from Van Heusen is the non-iron shirt priced at Rs 1,095.

The Mexx man will be dressed in beige checks on black, with an accent on burnt orange. Natraj Shetty of Mexx says, "The Mexx inspiration for the man is colonial, with styling details like double chest pockets with flaps and pants with military elements. Men will also see new collar shapes for T-shirts and shirts."

From Benetton, men can choose trousers with five pockets in khakhi, navy, black and olive green. For those who prefer icy white to pastel shades for a perfectly casual look, there will be the '50s style shirts in poplin and printed cotton shorts with turn ups. Traditional Oxfords for them come from ColorPlus in pastel shades. ColorPlus Oxfords are available in woven cottons dyed in bright colours.

The denims or Indigos from ColorPlus take on a new look. Says Janardanan, "We piece dye denim on light-weight twills — a process that's not available elsewhere in the country. The fabric takes on a smooth and enduring hue while enzyme washing it with special softeners gives it a lived-in look."

Whether the fits be tight or relaxed, the colours hot or cool, Summer '98 is going to be casual chic all the way. ■



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JATIN KOCHHAR

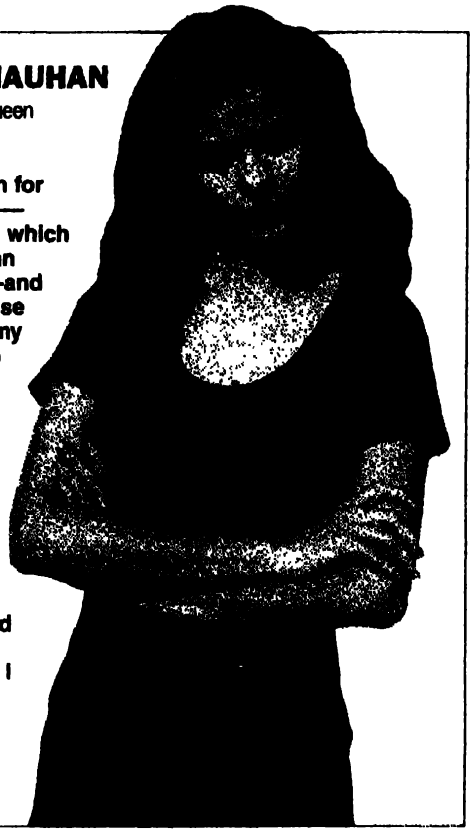
Fashion designer

I don't have any favourite cosmetics. I don't mind using a mudpack once in a while. But I am not particular about the brand—maybe I'd use a Blossom Kochar or a Shahnaz Hussain product. When imported, I get my stuff from Bodyshop. Other cosmetics that I use regularly would include a facewash, Neutrogena, which doesn't have any chemicals or scents.

DIVYA CHAUHAN

Beauty queen

I prefer Revlon for the lipsticks—usually brown which suits the Indian complexion—and nail polish. I use Chambor for my liquid makeup and Kryolan products for my face packs. When I go to work, I wear Chambor liquid makeup, a face powder Beige, followed by TV Brown blusher. When I am shooting, I use Kryolan pansticks and liquid pancake.



Making up is Easy

As the cosmetics market in India gets bigger and more diversified. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports

Who says beauty is skin deep? Certainly not today's woman. For her, the bottomline is beautification, come rain, hail or storm. Gone are the days when bindis and cold creams were the only cosmetics a woman used. Now she has a glut of products at her disposal. But the irony is that these days an overtly madeup face is passe. The emphasis is more on a no-make up look and a skilful blending of cosmetics to hide the slightest flaw.

Ever since liberlisation came knocking (or was it the Sushmitas and Aishwariyas who put Indian beauty on the world map?), the average Indian woman saw herself in a new light. Her status as a working woman with a disposable income gave her the confidence to dabble in a vast spectrum of cosmetics.

First, there were a handful of cosmetics to choose from—Lakme, Max Factor, Pond's and the odd Tips and Toes lipstick and nail polish. But changing lifestyles ensured a clutch of international names—Revlon, Biotique, Oriflame, Coty, Synergie: you name it they had it. Overnight, beauty counters mushroomed at retail outlets. Fortified by girls who were deployed by Revlon and Chambor, they updated the customer on the latest cosmetics ranges available.

MISHA GREWAL

Media personality/squash champion

I hardly use any makeup.I do not use any specific brand. Mostly, I opt for Bobbi Brown which I get from abroad. I feel their product has the right skin tone; more olives and browns which blend with my complexion.I use make-up very sparingly and hate it when it shows. My most preferred look is the completely nude/natural look.

The older brands were still in the reckoning not willing to relinquish the buyer's loyalty. They refurbished their image to look more foreign-chic. Lakme, for instance, realised the Indian consumer had become discerning, demanding skin care of a specific nature. And they came up with cleanser-toners, astringents, radiance moisturisers, replenishing night creams, revitalising scrubs and lotions. Lakme's portfolio was divided into Lakme Orchids for the exclusive

segment, Lakme Ultra for the upper-middle range and Elle 18 for the young with-it lot. In the lipstick segment you could choose between Lip Art (which allows the consumer to be an artist with the mix 'n' match shades), Powder Matts and the Wine collection.

So, does this mean that beauties are born not made? "I certainly believe that beauty can be acquired through regular skin care and good grooming," says Shahnaz Hussain who has been in the beauty business for over 25 years. Beauty, according to her, comes from internal health and external care.

In fact, the use of cosmetics to enhance the appearance is as old as time itself. The ancient civilizations in India, Egypt, and China used various plant extracts to beautify themselves. The Rig Veda contains references to the use of plant products for cosmetic care. Evidence of the use of kohl, red ochre and henna in ancient Egypt takes the history of cosmetics back 5,000 years.

Fast forward to the Nineties, and one realises today's Indian woman is in sync with the cosmetic heritage of yore. Her need for glorious hair, flawless skin, perfect nails and flattering makeup can get her to share the same brands used by the likes of Cindy Crawford, Claudia Schiffer, Brooke Sheilds or Oprah Winfrey, courtesy Modi-Revlon in India.

Gorging on fruits and salads and drinking jars of juices and water seem like the best recipe for glowing skin. But the beauty-conscious woman of today is flush with several choices given the instant effects forged through revitalising scrubs, face washes, cleansers and toners available in the market.

Men have joined her in this 'look good to feel good' motto with zest. Considering they have the same skin problems —acne, hair loss, ageing, dandruff, chiped nails and undernourished skin. Shahnaz Hussain has taken the plunge to cater to the male segment with Shazema, Sharose, Shaweeds or Shalocks eschewing the notion that cosmetics are only a woman's prerogative.

Hussain's Ayurvedic slant in cosmetics have spawned a wide range of beauty aids. "It is now part of the worldwide trend towards nature," says she. But warns Dr P.N. Behl, one of Delhi's leading dermatologists, "Herbal preparations can be as bad as chemical ones unless their components are well tested."



A safer option could be Synergie, since it attempts at maintaining a perfect alliance with science and nature. Apart from providing oil-free protective moisturisers, exfoliating face scrubs and masks, it has come up with an eye contour under-eye gel to iron out dark circles, puffiness, fine lines and wrinkles. Coty, too, cottoned on to the idea with their nourishing under eye cream, deep penetrating wrinkle treatment formula.

Hair colourants which are all the rage today, are no longer used to cover only grey hair; they are important fashion statements for a large number of media persons. Excellence Creme from L'Oreal launched eleven shades in India ranging from black, brown, copper, red, to mahogany and auburn to compliment the Indian woman. Besides a colour conditioning shampoo that washes off the excess colour that gives long lasting healthy looking hair ensuring 100 per cent 'grey' coverage.

A reactionary trend against the back-to-nature formula has been quietly gaining ground. Freya, from Torrel Cosmetics, whose products Freya Ceramide Complex and Care Cream for pimple-prone skin have developed strong customer franchises. Lakme has launched a range of skincare products with similar ingredients.

The quest for a fair complexion seems eternal though most prefer not to go public with it. Our mothers and grandmothers strongly advocated almonds and turmeric to lighten the colour of one's skin. Then came Vicco Ayurvedic Turmeric cream which proclaimed that it "wasn't a cosmetic" at all. Fair and Lovely, however, had no such pretensions.

Now, among many brands promising alabaster white complexions, one could try Freya's fairness formula which is packed with natural fairness enhancer and UV filters for sensitive skin. But there is Coty, too, beckoning with its fairness cream which controls pigmentation by lightening the skin from within while providing a natural sunscreen protection. Even Shahnaz Hussain has not been able to wish away the fascination——if one looks at her Shafair, a vitaminised whitening cream for lightening skin colour.

Last but not the least, if one had an oracle to ask for the best cosmetics, the answer would be: exercise your own discretion. When variety gets the better of the cosmetics industry, a woman should carry catalogues——of which there are whole tomes——in her makeup kit. It is the only way she can survive the slew of products flooding the market. ■



MEHAR BHASIN

Model

I use products from Revlon. As a model, I feel I can relate to it because of the quality and variety.I am a regular user of Revlon's liquid base which comes in handy during shows and shoots. Lipsticks would mean mixing and matching colours beginning with a lip liner followed by Revlon's Spicy Cider, Revlon Red or Suitably Ruby.

The Romance of Wine

India finally starts making world-class wines



It is a story that the Indian wine industry tells against itself — perhaps to indicate how much standards have improved over the last ten years.

The story dates back to the mid 1980s and concerns a group of French tourists who found themselves at a banquet to celebrate their last night in India. As no French banquet is complete without wine, the tourists asked if they could order the wine of the region. They were informed that their hotel could only manage a couple of bottles of Indian wine.

They agreed to sample whatever was available — only to spit it out after the first mouthful. "This is disgusting," they said. "How dare you call it wine?"

The hotel was unapologetic. Well, they said, this is Indian wine — take it or leave it. The French did take it. They took it all the way back to Paris and sent it to a laboratory to be tested.

It took only 24 hours for the lab report. It was unequivocal: "This cat is not pregnant."

The story is probably made up, but it does illustrate the view that prevailed about the quality of Indian wine some years ago. Fortunately, there has been an improvement in quality in recent years that is so remarkable that few would have thought it possible.



At present, Indian wine is probably far superior to the average bottle of table wine (usually given a French name but probably the produce of some dubious Algerian vineyard) that your neighbourhood smuggler sells. What's more, it's easily available and you're sure of quality; most smuggled wine is adulterated.

The trick has to do with grape varieties. Everybody knows that wine is made from grapes. What most people don't realise is that not all grapes make good wine. Earlier, Indian wine-makers would use what the trade calls 'non-wine grapes' to make their wine. That's why Indian wine was so disgusting.

Now, however, the Cabernet Sauvignon grape which is the staple of the great wines of the Medoc is cultivated in India and yields sensationally good results. The same is true of many white wine grapes. Moreover, Indian companies are now exhibiting a great deal of patience. The Indian champagne (called Marquis de Pompadour in India, but Omar Khayyam abroad) is made by the methode champagnoise, in which the wine is fomented in each individual bottle for several years. Small wonder then, that the sparkling wine consistently wins awards at international competitions.

There are many good reasons for drinking wine. White wine makes a wonderful aperitif, is a perfect complement to lunch on a hot summer's day, and brings out the flavour of fish. Red wine (serve it slightly chilled, room temperature in Paris is different from room temperature here) will elevate any meal. And no celebration is complete without champagne.

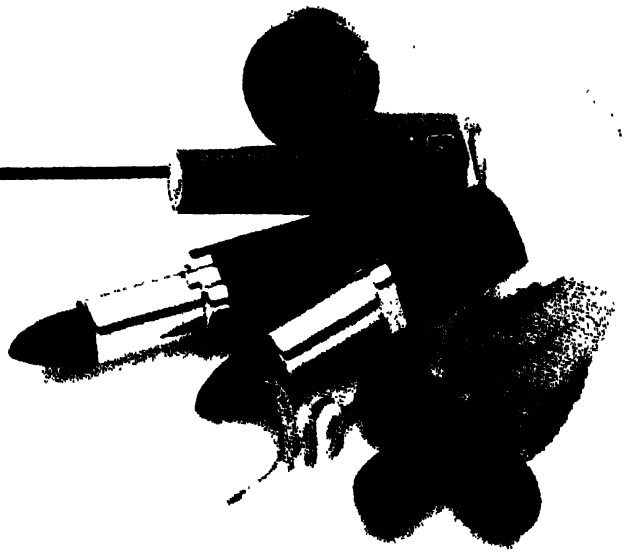
But, of course, there are two other excellent reasons. The first is that medical research has now proved that two glasses of red wine a day reduce levels of cholesterol in the body and help avoid heart attacks.

And the second is the only reason that really counts: drink wine because you'll get to like it. ■



PRESENTING
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A TOAST TO FASHION

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IPSTICKS AND NAIL ENAMELS: GRAPEVINE (WO1), PORT WINE (WO2), CHAMPAGNE FIZZ (WO3), VINTAGE WINE (WO4), SHERRY SLURR (WO5) BLUSHERS: VINTAGE WINE, SHERRY SLURR

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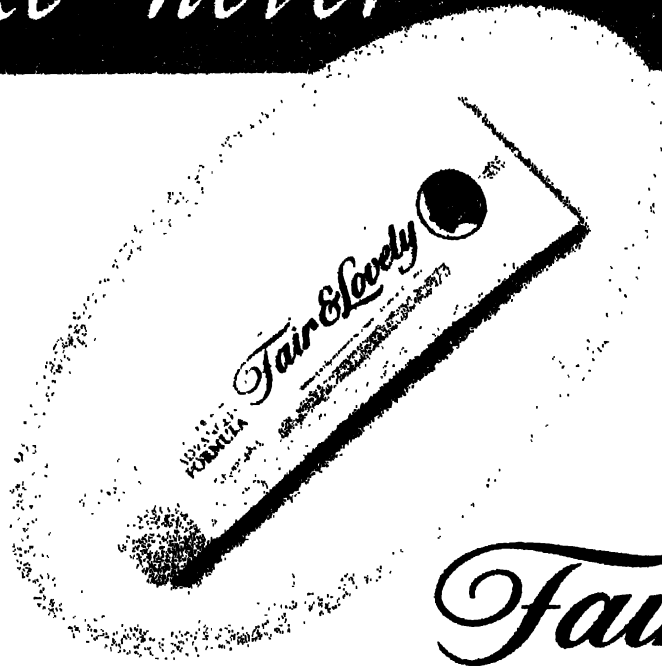
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Fair&Lovely

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Supama Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am a regular reader of your column and would like to know how to get rid of blemishes due to acne?*
Ruby Malhotra, Sarat Bose Road, Calcutta

A Many women suffer from this problem and unfortunately most of them either squeeze at the pimples or keep touching them. Believe me, touching your pimples constantly never really helps. They'll still be there! The most effective way to treat marks left by acne is to start a daily scrub. Massage gently with a light moisturiser or even two drops of almond oil or coconut oil and then apply the following pack—powdered rice, powdered lentil (*masoor*) gramflour, mixed with potato juice, lemon juice and cucumber juice. Apply a thick paste over the affected areas and let dry. When it is dry, dab with milk and scrub off in a rotating manner. Do take care of your diet and drink lots of water as this will improve the skin palour.

Q *I am a man who has to travel a lot for work. I have been facing a problem of hair loss and greying. Will magnetic brushes be of any help?*
Arindam Dutta, Calcutta



A I have not heard of greying hair decreasing because of magnetic brushes. Greying can be due to many reasons—hereditary, tension, stress, etc. I would suggest that in order to prevent hair loss, start to use a herbal pack for the hair. Oil your hair with bhringraj oil or a good amla oil. You could also start to henna your hair but remember that it is always wiser to invest in a good henna rather than a cheaper brand available all over. Eat healthy...believe me, it helps. If you are travelling regularly, perhaps you could go in for a mens salon for a professional oil massage and steaming that helps tremendously. Even the application of henna done by a professfonal has better results than done at home.

If you change your shampoo frequently:

■

Look for one that suits your hair type

Q *A friend of mine suggested that I change my shampoo at regular intervals. Should I opt for different types of shampoo or the brand? Is mustard oil suitable for the hair or should I use coconut oil?*
Rahul Malhotra, Calcutta



A Different brands often represent different qualities and in the end, it's the quality of a product that really matters. Hair just like the body and skin undergoes changes. I would suggest that you stick to a shampoo that suits your hair type. It is usually wiser to go in for a shampoo that is mild and preferably herbal and gentle to your hair. Coming to oil massage I strongly recommend pure unperfumed coconut oil that has been warmed a little. Preferably always follow with turban therapy. Oil should not be kept in the hair for too long. I have seen people soaking their scalps and roaming around in colleges and offices. I wonder if they are aware of the dust and grime that accumulate in their hair. Please shampoo after keeping oil in for about two hours.

Q *I am a 35-year-old woman and a regular reader of your column. Please suggest a way to cleanse, tone and moisturise my skin at home.*
Sucharita Chaudhuri, Agartala, Tripura

A If you were a loyal reader of my column the most important thing you should have written about was what your skin type is so that I could have prescribed a suitable skincare routine for you. At 35, you could be having a dry skin, an oily one or even a combina-

tion and each skin type has a separate skin care routine. So when you do realise that you are serious about your skin, at least identify your skin type first and then arm yourself with some amazingly powerful natural ingredients to make a more naturally beautiful You!



Q ***I want to use castor oil for my hair. But the oil available in the market is good for medicinal purposes. What is the method for applying it?***
Sona Mukherjee, Dhanbad, Bihar

A Castor oil is usually used for medicinal purposes and it is very thick. Part your hair in even partings and dip a cotton wool pad in warm castor oil and apply to the scalp. Massage gently. Never massage scalp rigorously. I have seen many salons massage the head as if it were being put through a washing machine. Treat yourself gently to slow, circulating movements and follow with steaming. Regular use of this will thicken the hair as well as prevent hair loss.

Q ***I am 21 years old and during winter my skin gets rough and dry with rashes around my lips and cheeks. Please suggest a remedy.***
Soumita Pyne, Hoogly, West Bengal

A Even oily skin types tend to get a dry skin during winter. Apply pure almond oil, just two or three drops is more than enough, massage all over the face and let your skin soak up its goodness. Preferably do this at night so that your skin is not prone to dirt and grime. It is important to keep your skin clean, so take up a cleansing routine daily alongwith a moisturising routine. I would also advise you to have a high protein diet with lots of dairy products, green vegetables and fresh fruits.

Q ***A new technique called hair weaving has been introduced to remove baldness, is the method effective?Are there any side effects?***
Somnath Das, Lake Gardens, Calcutta

A Let me make it clear that hair weaving is not a technique to remove baldness. It is a technique used rather to cover up baldness.

To apply castor oil:

■

Dip a cotton wool pad in warm oil and massage in gently



Hair weaving is a new method by which artificial hair is matched to your hair tone and weaved in to give your hair a natural look.It has no side effects and is totally safe but often a little cumbersome as the hair tends to get tangled. You could try it but make sure that the weaving that is used is also the colour of the hair and is woven intricately.

Q ***I have long black hair. My two sons who use two different brands of dandruff shampoo, want me to use a mixture of both. Would it be safe to try?***
Anupama Mondal, R.N.Das Road, Calcutta

A Please ask your sons to show their love and affection by buying you a shampoo that suits your hair type and not a blend of both of theirs. Why experiment with your hair? Try a shampoo that is mild and preferably amla based. Many times even the dandruff shampoos that you use are very strong. So use a mild herbal shampoo.



Q ***I am a 24-year-old working woman. My problem areas are my knees and elbows. I apply body oil but am unable to get rid of the dark patches on the above mentioned areas. Please help.***
Sonia Rawat, Bhilai, Orissa

A Using lemon on the affected areas should be the easiest and the best. Considering that lemon is used widely in a number of creams and cosmetics and is known to have lightening effects on the skin , why not apply it on your knees and elbows?
Scrub lemon halves on knees and elbows and rotate gently. Leave the juice on the skin for about an hour and then wash off. Also, use a loofah made of natural fibre to remove the dead skin in these stubborn areas.
But remember, that anything natural requires two important ingredients—patience and regularity.
But they definitely pay off in the long run—so start right away!

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The theme this week is money and what you can do with it. You can spend wisely, avoiding risky money transactions or careless spending. You will be plunged into shopping for the home and office, borrowing and lending, buying and selling — be it shares or goods, or even your own expertise

Taurus
April 21 -- May 20



The new moon brings in a phase of planning and preparation, of putting yourself in readiness for the work trend. This is going to be a recurrent refrain for major portions of the year. It is in the latter half that you will perceive the results of all that you are doing now. So gird your loins and get ready for action

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



There will also be communication and interpersonal relationships, warmth and good vibes. The emphasis this week will be on meets, conferences, collaborations and communicating with people; alongside a lot of soul-searching and a strong desire for self improvement. You will be strongly into research.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



You will be searching within, re-examining options, desiring change and generally a better quality of life. Love may catch you off-guard. Meeting people is a strong theme alongside — they may even be important personages or famous personalities. Health safeguards may also prove necessary.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



In the reaching out theme, there may be the three C's of contacts, contracts and communications — all present but in different proportions. Deeds and documents will hold your attention, but do find time to relax, accept invitations, live a little, give a lot. the right guy or gal may just turn up.

Virgo
August 22 -- September 22



Love and romance are in the air and there may even be the peal of wedding bells in the not-too-distant future. For those already in the state of matrimony, and even for those who are not, the trend will be strenuous blend of work and housekeeping which will tax and tire you. That's saying a lot.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The strongest indication is of partnerships which will almost certainly materialise in your work sector. It will get a fillip, a spurt. Contacts are important and will lead to professional boosts, desire for action and the expansion of the sphere of your own personal and professional interests.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Projects and ventures will take off smoothly and prove lucky, too. You will be full of daring and resolution, determined to overcome all obstacles, sail past all hurdles, take on all corners. Even marital harmony, family relationships should be tackled in a spirit of getting results, but a word of caution, pay heed to others, too.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The home and family once again take centrestage this week. Loved ones, parents, elders and in-laws all need your time and attention. You will need to lead and initiate dialogues which will go to the building up of happy, supportive relationships. With grooming, application and confidence, you will make it.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Professional and business and other associations will be the theme. Love will blossom as part of the theme of associations and bondings and so will romance but you will be waist-deep into accounts, insurances, joint finances, mutual funds and such. A truly hectic week. A trip is indicated.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



This week fires up with gusto and enthusiasm, full of life and verve. It's an exciting week for you socially — lots of action, lots of parties. Equally, there's a lot of action in connection with loans, legacies, legal matters and inheritance. Your natural ebullience makes you a winner with children and at meets

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



It is necessary to remind you that you will achieve much more by stressing teamwork and building up understanding with others — both at work and at play. Failure to co-operate (on your part) can lead to disappointing your mate or partner. It is not a good policy to be inconsiderate of people.

BIRTHDAYS

February 22: Mercury conjuncts Jupiter predicting that the possibility exists of all round improvement. Work and health and a slice of love and luck all seem to on.

February 23: Sun conjuncts Jupiter once again by solar-scope this is an exceptionally fortunate combination promising you literally the moon on a silver spoon.

February 24: Moon conjunction Uranus. No pluto-cophes that the hand of God is upon you in all your endeavours, so move with it behind the scene activity will help you

February 25: Moon sextile Saturn indicates that it would be best to consolidate slowly but surely. Contacts and contracts definitely help you. Yes, you will have much to do with relatives and neighbours.

February 26: The eclipse of the sun bodes ill for countries rather than individuals. Take care of family and finances, specially if you are in for a risky venture

February 27: Moon conjunction Mercury, sextile Venus forecasts health precautions. Otherwise, rest assured, success is certain. Astrologers, psychics and doctors have it made

February 28: Moon sextile Uranus, trine Pluto and Pluto means power, Uranus symbolises research and ingenuity, the moon stands for popularity and success.

Inspiration

22/22 Karat Gold Jewellery, Diamonds, Precious and Astrological Stones

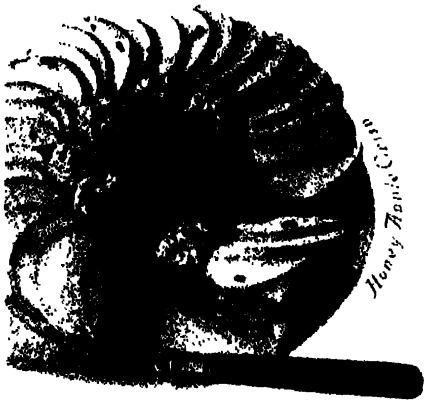


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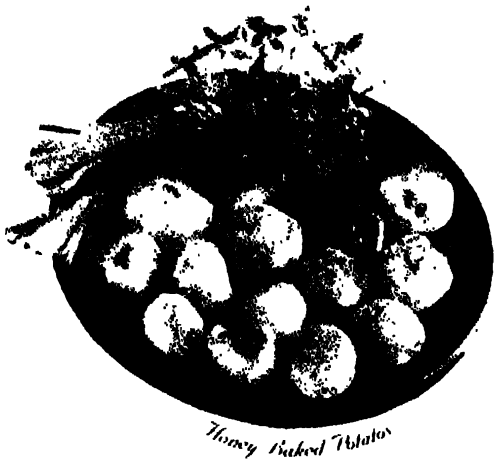
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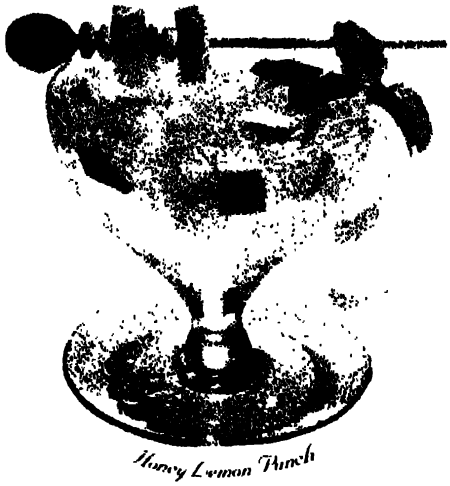


Honey Rose Cream

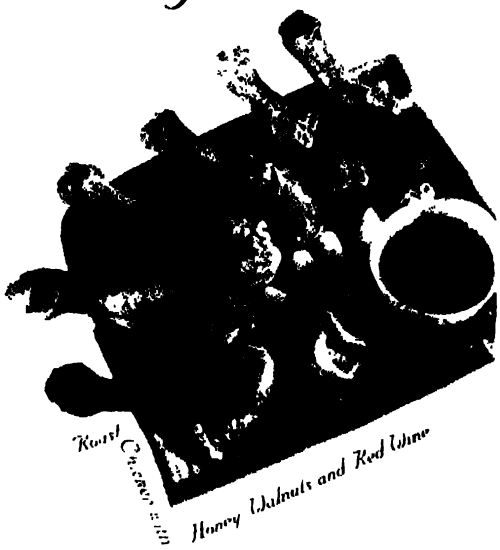


Honey Baked Potato

Four delicious ways to celebrate Women's Day.



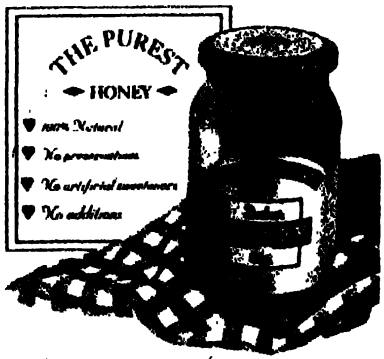
Honey Lemon Punch



Honey Walnuts and Red Wine

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FOOD

Celebrity Cook-in

These are a few of their favourite recipes

SIMAR DUGAL, model

I love sampling the local fare wherever I travel. Last week I enjoyed having Thai food during my stay in Bangkok. Whenever I go to America I have barbecues with honey because it is healthier than their steaks which have red meat in them. Back home, I find our North Indian tandooris absolutely mouth-watering.

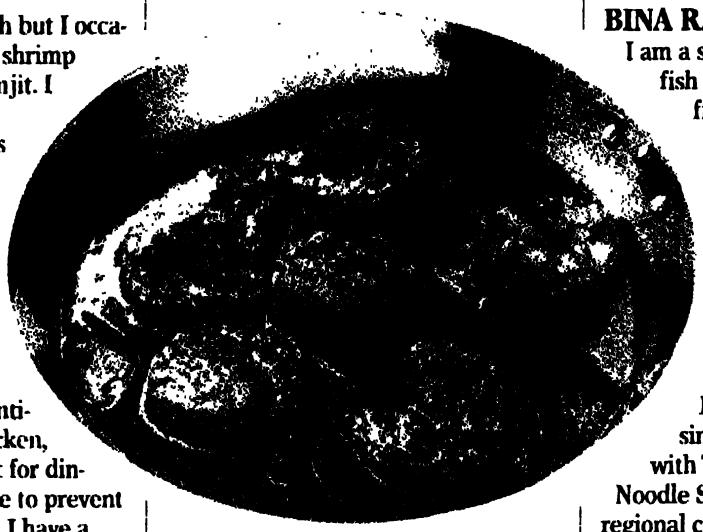
I don't really cook much but I occasionally try and do a Goan shrimp curry for my husband Premjit. I am not too fond of overcooked food. Maybe, that is why I have a lot of salads and seasonal fruits. In Bangkok, I tried out some large guavas which looked hard on the surface but were soft inside. In Delhi, I have a simple vegetarian lunch of subzi and roti while dinner is continental fare — roasted chicken, mostly. Even when I go out for dinner, I eat my meals at home to prevent myself from gormandising. I have a habit of nibbling every couple of hours which adds to about 3-4 meals a day. That is how I keep lean rather than overloading myself.

Goan prawn curry

Ingredients: 1 cup diced onions, 1 cup yoghurt, 2 tbs ginger paste, 2 tbs lemon juice, 2 tsp salt, 2 tsp turmeric powder, 1 tsp ground cumin, 1 tsp sugar, 1/2 tsp rushed red pepper, 4-5 large tomatoes with the skin, 2 large garlic cloves, 1 cup coconut milk.

Serves: 5-6

Cooking method: Take about a kilo of prawns. Shell and devein them and



boil in steaming hot salted water for 21/2 minutes. I don't fry them as the recipe demands cutting down the oil. Take the prawns and keep them aside. In a non-stick wok, add 1 teaspoon of oil and stir-fry one cup of minced onion. Put the remaining ingredients except the coconut milk in a mixie and blend it to a fine paste. Add the paste to the fried onion and keep heating till it starts boiling. Reduce to low heat, simmer until the gravy is of sauce consistency, add the coconut milk and the prawns and cook it for another 5 minutes. Serve hot with rice.

BINA RAMANI, designer

I am a seafood addict and like shell fish in particular. I cook more fish than chicken or mutton. That's where I get experimental. I like to use wine and beer in my cooking. I do innovative cooking most of the time depending on what is available in the refrigerator or in the kitchen closet.

I am also fond of fusion cuisine. My favourite is Thai food with Tom Ka Soup and Glass Noodle Salad. My preference for regional cuisine would include Bengali fish in mustard gravy and Hyderabadi Salans.

Prawn a la bina

Ingredients: 1kg of large deveined prawns, 200g fresh green onion, chopped, 1tbs freshly crushed red pepper, 2tbs honey, 2 tbs of lemon juice,



Have a nice day, Honey.

Honey Seoiyan

Ingredients

½ cup Dabur Honey

1 cup seoiyan (or short grain rice)

1½ cups fresh whole milk

A few drops of Dabur Instant Cardamom Extract

Method

Wash seoiyan and soak for ½ an hour in cold water. Bring milk to a boil and pour in drained seoiyan. Cover and simmer until seoiyan are completely soft. Add honey and continue cooking for 5 more minutes. Stir in cardamom extract. Serve hot or cold



Pure honey may crystallize and can be liquefied by placing in hot water or the sun

Write in for a fre

1tsp white sesame seeds, 1cup white wine, 1tsp ginger chopped/paste, 1tbs butter.
Serves: 4-6
Cooking: In 1 tablespoon of butter crisp the sesame seeds. Add the chopped fresh onion and ginger. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes on high flame. Put the red pepper and cook for 1 minute.Keep stirring constantly.Then add the honey and cook for 1 minute. Now put the prawns and cook for 2-3 minutes stirring rapidly till they turn pink. Pour in the white wine which will come to boil in 3 minutes. Add the lemon juice. Voila. The prawns are ready. It has to be served with creamed lettuce and cottage fry potatoes (which are boiled, cubed and quick fried on the outside in a frying pan to crisp it or serve it with coconut rice.)
Note: I never cook the same dish twice. This dish has been created on the spot.





Sonal Mansingh, Simar Dugal (right) and Bina Ramani (below)



SONAL MANSINGH, dancer

I like light food. At home, I have one good meal and another light meal, lots of salads, dahi (curd), roti and lighter daals. I also have homemade lentil soups and baked vegetables when the mood takes me. I have taught my cook to create dishes that are not too oily but have enough eye appeal. I always use fresh condiments for each dish — the spices are never dumped together. Being a Gujarati, I am particular about the spices in my cooking — for instance, each daal must have a separate chhaunk; in arhar, I use til tel, rai, hing, fresh curry leaves, cinnamon, cardamom and laung.

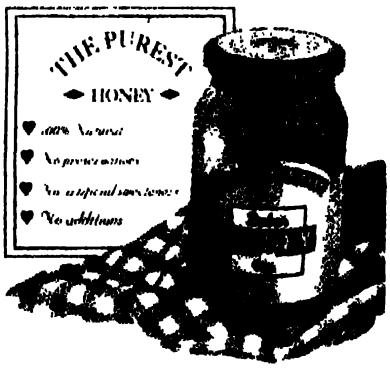
Earlier, when I was young, I had a sweet tooth. Now I like Bajra ka Rotla (thick rotis cooked over a wood fire) eaten with subzi or karhi. I love khichdi because it is light and nourishing. It is ideal for children and has more nutritional value than those instant noodles. In Gujarat, khichdi is often referred to as Sukhapawani (one that gives happiness). I believe in having a little ghee in my diet because it is good for the joints. We have been taught since childhood to chew our food properly. I detest fast food and can't stand while I am eating. I also like fish—well cooked or grilled. Authentic Chinese food tastes good but the Indian Chinese which is too spicy and sweet does not agree with me.

Khichdi

Preparation: Take equal quantities of dhula moong or green moong and rice. Wash them and soak in water for about half an hour. Steam them in the cooker with haldee, salt, 4-5 pepper corns, scraped ginger and a little bit of ghee. You can add vegetables like potatoes, beans, carrots according to your taste. In the second or third whistle, it is ready.

As told to **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

Sesame Coconut Sweeties
Ingredients
¾ cup Dabur Honey
½ cup desiccated coconut
½ or ¾ cup water
¼ cup sesame seeds (slightly roasted)
A few drops of Dabur Instant Cardamom Extract
Method
Moisten coconut slightly with water. Pour honey and water into a small saucepan and cook on low heat without stirring for one minute. Add moistened coconut and stir until the mixture is thick. Allow the mixture to cool, stir in cardamom extract and then roll into medium sized balls. Roll in sesame seeds and serve

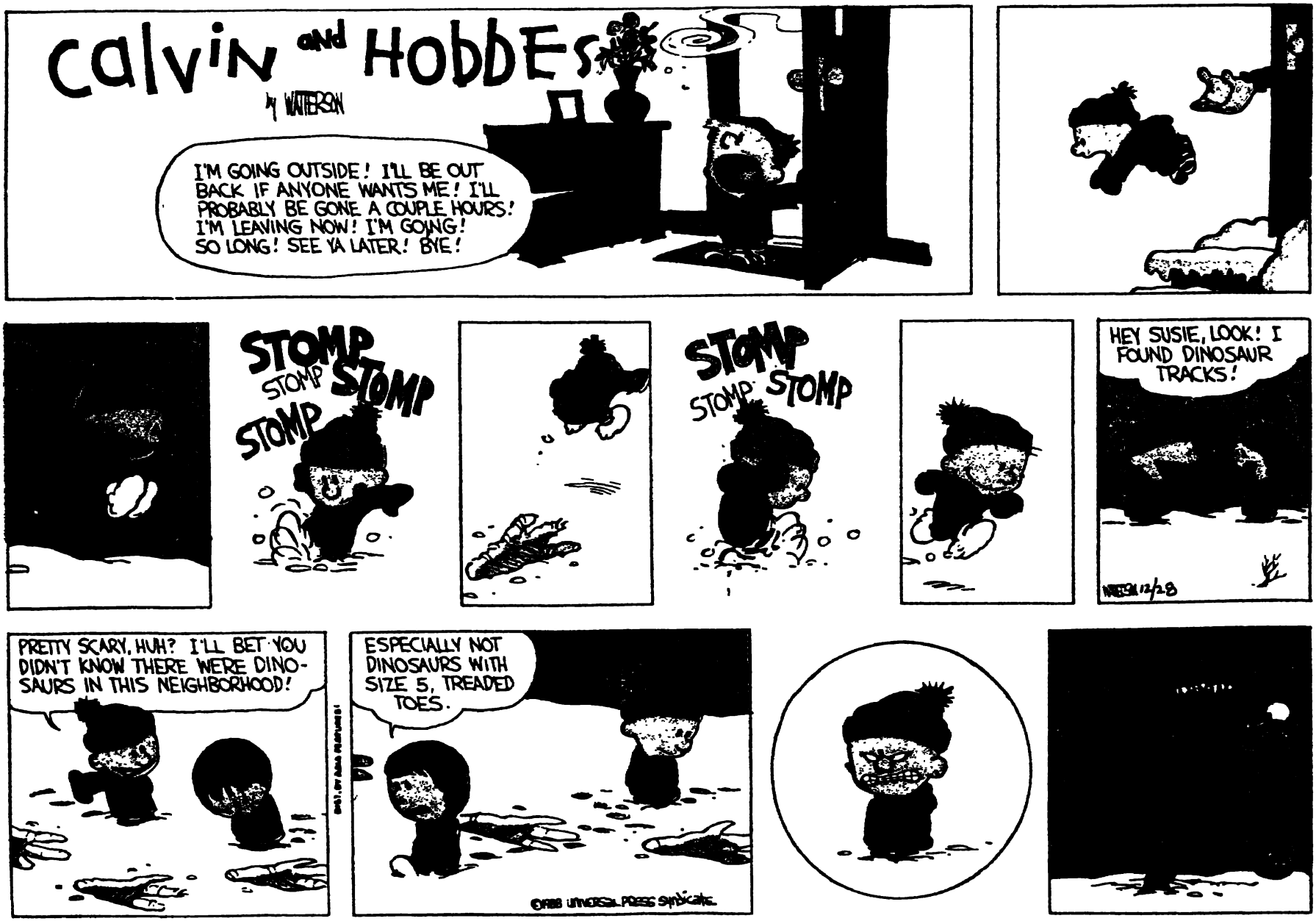


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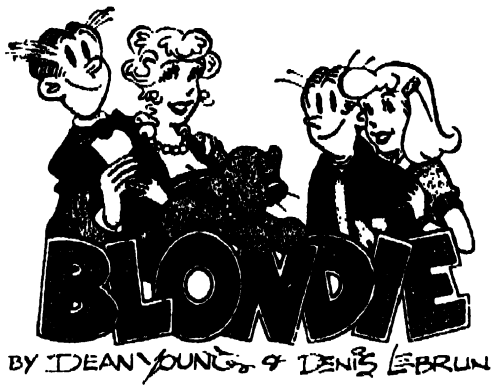
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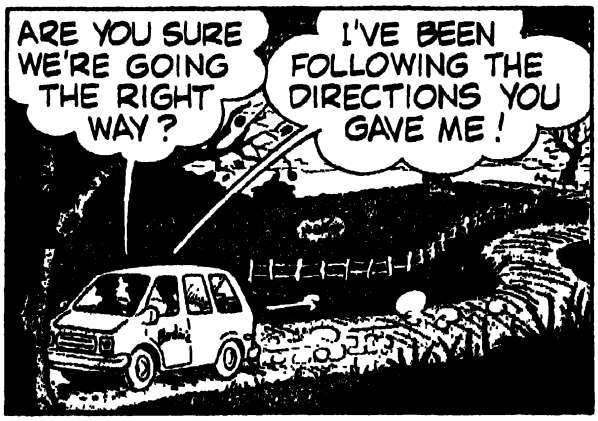

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by WATTERSON
I'M GOING OUTSIDE! I'LL BE OUT BACK IF ANYONE WANTS ME! I'LL PROBABLY BE GONE A COUPLE HOURS! I'M LEAVING NOW! I'M GOING! SO LONG! SEE YA LATER! BYE!
STOMP STOMP STOMP STOMP
STOMP STOMP STOMP
HEY SUSIE, LOOK! I FOUND DINOSAUR TRACKS!
WATT 12/28
PRETTY SCARY, HUH? I'LL BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW THERE WERE DINOSAURS IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD!
ESPECIALLY NOT DINOSAURS WITH SIZE 5, TREADED TOES.
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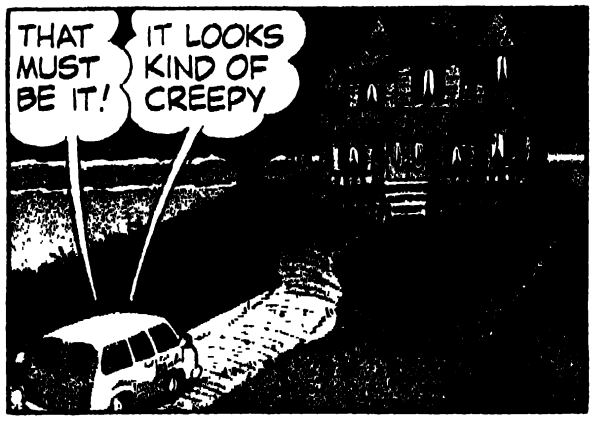
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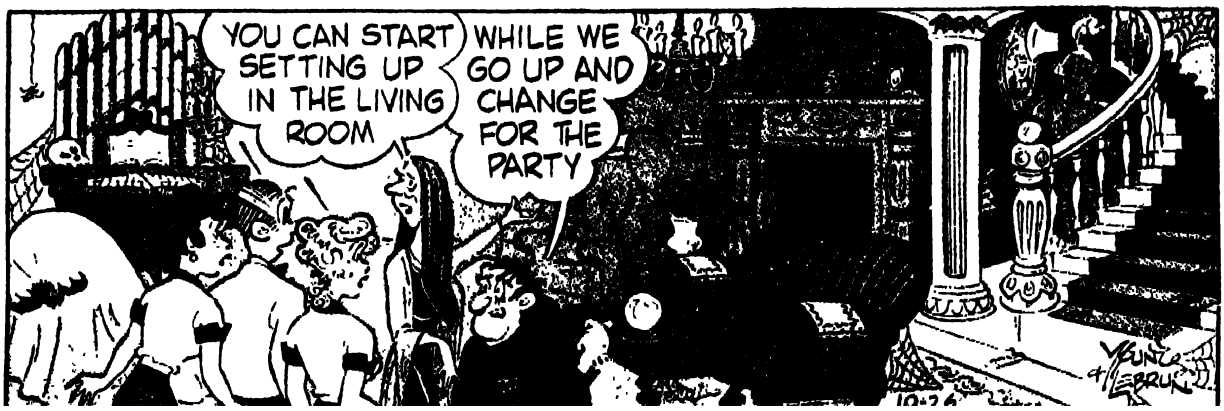






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Time Out

Peter Andre came visiting to promote his new album. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** caught up with the pop singer

He ate music, slept music and breathed music. The boy from Surfer's Paradise in Australia was obsessed. Every day after school, he would just practice, practice, practice. Stevie Wonder was rarely off his stereo, his playground impersonations were note perfect, and no one could touch him on the dance floor.

But then Peter Andre knew that he had something going for him. So, he started calling up the producers of a talent contest, crooning to them over the phone and begging for a chance to perform. His grit paid off when Peter sang a version of Bobby Brown's *Don't be Cruel* and stole the show. A record company head on the judging panel offered him a recording contract. Since then, the years have witnessed a series of highs and lows for this pop star, with one thing remaining constant: his need to succeed.

Success to the 24-year-old Andre came early. When *Mysterious Girl* was re-mixed and released, the single entered the single charts at Number 3. Ten weeks later the song became the summer anthem of 1996. Peter was presented with a platinum disc for the song which sold a whopping 7,00,000 copies in the UK alone and was climbing the charts all over Europe.

It got him an incredible fan following—teeny boppers, mostly, who would give their right arm to be able to tear at his shirt or ruffle his hair Hysterical fans would stand hours in the queue to get autographed albums, considered a major high. It was one such promotional tour which brought him to India this year.

From Mumbai's Rhythm House to Maurya Hotel's Ghungroo and Jazz Bar in Delhi, Andre unleashed *Time*, his latest album which seems to crystallise everything that he has been working for over the last seven years. Teaming up with some of the top song writers and artists in the world today,



Sunita Kanwar

Peter Andre: More of a performer than a singer

including Dianne Warren and Coolio, the collection showcases the more mature sound of an artist in transition.

"The songs are a progression from my last album. Like George Michael who left Wham and went solo. It was a difficult decision for Michael since all the kids loved him as Wham. This album is a little older than the way I sing," says Andre displaying 'more crunch than your average teen sensation groups'.

Life before *Mysterious Girl* was a song, "I was always wanting to achieve more but life was a happy one—it still is," says Andre. Born in Harrow, England, in 1973, Andre spent his formative years in Australia, his family having moved to Surfer's Paradise when he was only 10 years old. His father, formerly a barber "now designs beautiful houses while my mom who used to make dresses is just too much of a housewife."

The youngest in a family of four brothers and one sister, Andre was his mother's pet, an attachment which he acknowledges in Time's *Just for you*: "*Holding back the tears/Though the struggle stayed for years/You gave me inner strength/And I owe it all to you.*" He still clings to family values, pulling off those silver ear studs when he goes visiting his parents in Australia.

Music ran in his blood—his grandfather used to be a gospel singer."My father too could sing but in our family nobody knew what they wanted to do. When I realised I was blessed with a voice, I felt I had to use it," says Andre.

By the time he was 20, Andre was already the brightest star in Australia's singing firmament. He was asked to support both Bobby Brown and Madonna on their Australian tours and swept the board at The Australian

Music Awards winning Best New Act, Best New Dance Act and Highest Selling Single for '*Gimme Little Sign.*'

Not satisfied with his breakthrough *Down Under*, Peter moved to London to make it big in his home country. Unknown in the UK, he was adamant about starting from zilch without re-releasing his Australian singles. The first release *Turn it Up*, a swing/pop crossover won accolades from the British press but failed to make it within the top 40. Undaunted, Andre returned to the studio, breaking only to perform at a series of roadshows and put up personal appearance performances.

Mysterious Girl, the second British single from Peter fell short of the Top 40 mark initially but gave him the number one spot in New Zealand and a top 5 position in Australia till its re-release in the UK in 1996.

Andre, for his part, has not found his 'mysterious girl'—yet; the girl in the video album was his former girlfriend of two years, Champegne ("spelt with an 'e' because she was an expensive brand") who had broken up with him long before she was chosen for the shoot. That they met on the sets was a coincidence. Even then, it wasn't easy; she refused to get too close on the screen.

Andre's *Flava* entered the UK charts at number one in 1996 revealing his eclectic style that exemplifies the diverse influences at work in his songwriting. Personal experiences have often been the subject of Andre's songs. For example, when they were driving in Mumbai, he saw a lot of poverty in the way people lived. "The pain I saw through their eyes could move me to write a song," says Andre.

His first trip to India, for the Channel V Awards, got him the Breakthrough Award in the International category. He sang a duet, *Secret Garden*, with Anaida but thought Mehnaz was talented. Back here for a second time, he was not faking enthusiasm. "My father loves Indian music, so we grew up listening to a lot of Indian music and movies which were played at our house on Sundays. Our favourite was *Mother India*—someone just gave us a CD of the film."



For someone who must be raking in millions, Andre is surprisingly shy on the question of money. Maybe, he earns enough——"to pay for my room service this week". And then, "No, honestly, I am doing okay. When we do concerts they might give us a certain amount of money for the show but we do big shows where there are explosions and acrobats and sometimes we put more money on the concerts than they give us. I am coming for a concert in April where we are planning a whole lot of explosions and stage shows provided the government allows us."

But if he has a good voice to carry him through, why the need for stage gimmicks? "When you go to see Michael Jackson perform, what makes him so incredible is the way he dances. When you buy their records, it isn't the same thing," he says, making a distinction between a performer and singer.

"I think I am definitely more of a performer than just a singer. But Barbara Streisand and Whitney Houston are singers who can hold their own. You can just close your eyes and listen to their voices and say 'wow, she's good.' Some people can dance, so you would want to concentrate on the stage visuals as well," adds Andre.

His musical tastes include Anita Baker, Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston—a lot of the old Sixties and Seventies' stuff but his favourite singer will always be Stevie Wonder. Black singers Smoky Robinson or Marvin Gaye, too, are admired because they were influenced by "those intricate twists in Indian singing".

He thinks it safe to stick to contemporary pop and rhythm and blues which he knows will find an audience even in America. As for the future, it is grand. "My aim," he says, "is to conquer the whole world."■



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am 35 years old, married for the last seven years. We have a five-year-old daughter and live in a joint family. I have a younger unmarried brother and a married sister who is living away from Calcutta. I am aware that my parents are very fond of me but what I find extremely irritating is my parents' curiosity about my activities. They want to have advance knowledge about everything that I and my wife do or plan to do. The moment we protest they get hysterical and complain about how ungrateful and thoughtless we are to their sentiments. What do I do?*

Nirmal Chakrabarty, Calcutta



A. The Indian joint family can be quite insensitive to the need for individual privacy. While I fully sympathise with your situation, I think it should be quite possible to resolve it with tact and dignity. Talk to both your mother and your father separately — not together — and explain to them that you are now a grown up man and that you r authority over your wife and child is threatened by their inconsiderate and inappropriate behaviour. Explain very firmly that while you will keep them informed about any major development in your life, this unnecessary curiosity about every detail of your everyday life must be curbed, otherwise you will have no option but to make alternative arrangements. I have observed other cases of older people getting compulsively inquisitive about their children's lives and I feel that you must deal with it lovingly yet with absolute firmness.

Q. *I am 23 years old and have been in love with a girl for the last four years. We are very serious about our relationship and want to get married after I complete my MBBS. Our parents have also agreed to this. There is a small snag though. When my girlfriend was studying she gone around with a boy for about six months. In fact, the boy had come to me and shown me two photographs. When I had asked her to explain she had said she was young and quite infatuated with him. So, for the last four years, we have been constantly fighting over this issue. I cannot concentrate on my studies. My girlfriend and I also share a physical relationship. Is there any way I can continue with the relationship without all these problems?*



Rajesh, Agartala

Curious parents? Talk to both your mother and your father separately — not together — and explain to them that you are now a grown up man and that your authority over your wife and child is threatened by their inconsiderate and inappropriate behaviour

A. If you are serious about this relationship, as indeed you seem to be, you will have to make a fundamental shift from mistrust to trust. As this relationship, which is causing you so much aggravation was really before you came into the picture, I think your jealousy is both unfounded and unfair. However, I know that jealousy is one of the most unmanageable emotions and it is very difficult to deal with it rationally. Jealously feeds on itself and it can distort and destroy the most innocent and beautiful relationships. So, you will really have to have a long dialogue with yourself, and decide whether you know enough about this particular relationship to invest in forgiveness, forgetting and trust. Leave the past behind and look only at the present as a sound preparation for the future. Just concentrate on the positive aspects of your relationships and learn to be mutually supportive of each other. All the best!

Q. *I am a 23-year-old woman and am currently doing a professional course. When I was 18 years old, I had got married to the wrong guy and had a nightmarish seven-month-old marriage. I had then vowed never*



to take any relationship too seriously. But recently I have fallen in love with a man who is one-and-a-half years junior to me. We cannot live without each other. But my problem is that going by my past, his parents will never accept me. We tried to go our separate ways but only ended up being closer. I would not want him to be unhappy and be detached from his parents for my sake and at the same time I cannot afford to lose him. What should I do to convince his parents that we can all live happily together and I would like to be a part of their family?

P. Banerjee, Calcutta

A. Sincerity and conviction always speak for themselves. The fact remains, however, that your boyfriend is still very young. I feel it would be unfair of you to push him into marriage at such a young age: it would inevitably lead to resentments and tensions later on. The correct approach would be to not pressure him for marriage yet. Let a few years go by, let time pass for both of you to find your fact.

My advice may sound unexciting in the first flush of love, but believe me, it is much more important to build a base for your economic and professional life than to add to each other's responsibilities without a sound bottomline. With the passage of time his parents, too, are bound to appreciate your positive qualities and begin to accept you as a possible wife for their son.



Q. *I am a 23-year-old man with a handsome job in the Indian Air Force. From a very early age, I was distinguished as being 'very handsome' by my friends and relatives. I have always enjoyed attention from girls of all ages. But being too moody and scrupulous about a few things in life, never really engaged myself in any serious affairs. I find girls boring after some time. I secretly enjoy all the female attention but recently I am getting very demanding about it. I expect to get attention from each and every girl and feel depressed when it does not happen. Can you predict my future, specially my marital life with your tarot cards?*

Manish Bhamla, Calcutta

Mother throwing tantrums at home? Have a family conference where you, your father and other members of the family get together and decide quite firmly not to tolerate any more nonsense

A. I do not need my tarot cards to predict your married life. It will be happy, supportive and secure. My reasoning is something like this: you have already experienced and exhausted the more superficial aspects of love. I sense in your letter a longing for stability and commitment. When you encounter a stable and mature young lady, the one you have been waiting for all these years, you will settle down to a staid married life like duck to water. All the very best to you for a very happy and wonderful future.



Q. *I am a 17-year-old student. My problem revolves around my mother who is a peculiar woman. She has made my life and those of other members in our family quite miserable. She thinks everything/everyone is going against her; creates scenes and ugly rows and is always quarrelling with my innocent father. This is causing great emotional disturbance to me and I cannot find any concrete reason behind her behaviour. We tried to make her understand but it seems she does not want to. What shall I do?*

ABC, Jamshedpur

A. You mother sounds like one of those selfish people who get pleasure in inverse proportion to the pain they cause. She is somebody who has just not grown up, she has remained a spoilt and selfish brat all her life, and she gives expression to her feelings and reactions by means of these ugly tantrums. The first thing to do is to realise that you do not have to pussy foot around the issue just because she is your mother. All responsibility is mutual, and if she is making life difficult for everybody she must be corrected to whatever extent is possible. The way to do this is to have a family conference where you, your father and other members of the family get together and decide quite firmly not to tolerate any more nonsense. Next time she makes a scene do not react, just be indifferent. Your mutual support will help you resist the unpleasantness.
It may also be helpful to discreetly consult a psychiatrist in this matter. So many things are a matter of chemical and hormonal imbalance, and as such correctable with the right medication. ■

Illustrations: Debasish Deb

My Personal Style

That's fashion designer J.J. Valaya although he may seek inspiration from the West



He's an Indian



THE COMPLETE MAN:

While the clothes themselves may be basic, I accentuate the entire look by adding accessories such as shawls, watches, long wallets, elegant footwear and cuff links which are at times made in sterling silver with old stones embedded in them.

I wear only Indian clothes more out of choice and largely because Indian men look best in Indian apparel. Simplicity and comfort during the day is a must while evenings would mean wearing clothes that are imbued with an element of grandeur.

Season to season inspirations change though that is something I feel at a professional level. One's taste also develops through books, people and the works.

The fabrics that I wear are usually confined to cottons, linens and some polyviscose blends but that is not to say I don't fool around in my fashion collections. The colours I stick to wearing are cream, black and maybe a few shades of blue.

I am heavily into churidar kurtas with drapes. And when it comes to accessories, I am fond of Baume & Mercier for the evening and Brietling or Tag Heuer (watches) for the day.

Being a designer helps, because I can design my own clothes without so much as a bother. But I can't afford the other designers for my wardrobe.

Evenings see me wearing shawls or drapes made either by me or collected eclectically from all over.

I am particular about what I wear for both casual and formal occasions.The major change comes in the fabrics I choose—cottons are okay for the mornings but social dos in the evenings see me in silk-blended fabrics, polyviscose or linens. There would also be some diffferences in the styling.

I pay attention to minor details like buttons which could be intricate during the evening but have to be functional during the day. My churidars have normal kurta sleeves for daywear and in the evening I prefer churi fitted sleeves.I never wear a drape during the day.

Though my wife does not have much to do with my sense of style for obvious reasons, she is my best critic. She generally trusts me with my clothes.

While the clothes themselves may be basic, I accentuate the entire look by adding accessories such as shawls, watches, long wallets, elegant footwear and cuff links which are at times made in sterling silver with old stones embedded in them.

I wear Peshawaris—covered sandals—and mojhris or jutis for footwear.

While I think Indian men should go for Indian clothes, there are no hard and fast rules. A lot would depend on skin types, the 'feel' and the look of an Indian man which is very different from their Western counterparts. Besides, Indian men are most comfortable in Indian clothes which give them a regal aura. It all depends on who is wearing what and how is it cut or styled.

When it comes to matters of style, I am, one would say, a patron of the past.

As told to Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya

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POST MORTEM

In Fashion

One positive point that fashion designer Ashish Soni possesses, as compared to other contemporary fashion designers, is that most of his creations are practical and wearable ('The Face of Fashion,' January 18). I feel that a designer's creations should be judged by their practicability. Otherwise the creations become useless. A very imaginative idea may come to life under arc lights and music on the ramp but when it comes to wearing it as a working outfit or party one, patrons may not want to be so experimental.

Shalini Sharma, Calcutta



There is nothing like Indian embroidery to brighten up an ensemble. Thanks to our present brigade of fashion makers, certain dying art forms which our grandmothers were adept at, have been revived and popularised globally.

Sudipta Sarkar, Calcutta

The cover story on Ashish Soni was very informative. It helps celebrities shed their god-like images. The hardships that Soni went through to reach the pinnacle of success is amply evident. Such pieces will also help aspiring fashion designers to sketch their career graphs.

Gautam Adhikari, Calcutta

Fashion designing has reached such a level of excellence in India that we are getting to see some very creative people in the trade. And real good looking designers like Ritu Beri, Shahab Durazi and Ashish Soni have emerged who could themselves pass off for models.

Siddhartha Bhattacharjee, Howrah

It is these glossy stories on fashion and celebrities that have brought in the Western trendy look to Indian cities. They not only have a negative impact on the young generation, but also destroy a country's national heritage in the long run.

Even the so-called Indian clothes designed by Ashish Soni seem to be inspired by the West. Has the Indian dressing sense come to such a pass that we have to ape the West?

Soumitra Dasgupta, Calcutta

We have so many fashion designers flooding the market with each one spelling a different class of appeal. If one specialises in Westernwear, the other in Indian ethnic lines. And so much effort goes in creating a single outfit. Visualising it, hunting for the right textiles that will best display the idea, going into days of detailed embellishment works. But in the end who wears it? High fashion ladies who can throw away Rs 20,000 on a salwar ensemble. And they are in such minuscule numbers.

Pinaki Banerjee, Calcutta

Despite the growth of an indigenous fashion industry, it is quite ironical that an average Indian is very poorly attired in comparison to his European or American counterparts. First of all there is no colour coordination in their outfits and no harmony in the total look. Clothes for them hold little aesthetic value save fulfilling functional needs.

Sangeeta Nair, Calcutta

The Telegraph

1 MARCH 1998



PAGE 4

Encore!

She is 65 and always moving with the times. She's got 12,000 songs to her credit and is at ease singing any number: be it Western or Eastern. She is Asha Bhosle, the evergreen singer!

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

Black and White Bridalwear?



Krishna Mehta is setting new trends in the concept of bridalwear by introducing an off-beat collection of sarees and lehnga cholis in uncommon colours like white and black!

PAGE 26

The Best

Indian women will always be in love with gold.

PAGE 30

First Person

Mehar Bhasin loves travelling when she is not working.

Cover : Gautam Rajadhyaksh

COVER STORY

Asha Bhosle relaunches herself in a new avatar. **Sudipta Basu** meets the evergreen singer

Forty eight years and over 12,000 film songs (she's stopped counting the non-film ones) later, the closest that Asha Bhosle came to setting trends was with ace designer James Perreria. The swish white saree with gossamer centre pleats that fanned out with her walk, as Milind Soman and Helen Brodie cooed in the background, was her idea put into fabric by the designer. Now 65 years young, the new rash of Hindi pop singers are no threat to her, but Ashatai leaves no stone unturned to keep the fountain of youth flowing. Of course, she does go a trifle overboard some times. While she was among the first Indian singers to record in the West —



Gautam Rajadhyaksha





Vikas Khot

Asha Bhosle was among the first Indian singers to record in the West

with Boy George for Bow Down Mister and Stephen Luscombe for Ava Maria — her latest experiment with the British band Code Red, has left music buffs cringing. While her tiresome quest for the correct accent is smattered right through the sequence of *I've Been Waiting*, the prolonged *aalap* at the end of the song comes as the proverbial last straw.

As Akhtar Fazel, DJ and promotion manager of 1900s, a discotheque at Mumbai's Taj Mahal Hotel, points out: "There are fervent requests for Daler Mehndi here, but no takers for Asha Bhosle, despite her popularity."

There are several ways to tell the Asha story. In the beginning, there were two sisters, both adept at music. (Of the four Mangeshkar sisters, the other two have remained in the periphery). The younger, the more gregarious one chose to marry young and became a mother at 16. Despite her talent, all she craved was home sweet home. Marriage and children bring their lot of responsibilities and Asha was forced into playback singing to keep the kitchen fires burning.

Being thrown in the same profession, it wasn't long before a legendary rivalry developed between *didi* and Bhosle. It is believed that the sisters were not on talking terms for years. (Today, Bhosle points to a door towards the right of her living room in her Pedder Road apartment in downtown Mumbai, saying that it connects her house with *didi*'s. "After all, we are a family," says she.)

Her experiences with men have been just as bitter. While her marriage to Ganpatrao Bhosle, a rationing inspector, resulted in a divorce, there followed a long relationship with music director O. P. Nayyar that bore no fruit either. Her second marriage with R. D. Burman, also reportedly soured towards the end. (Again, all she will say now is that it was Ganpatrao, and later Burman who brought out the best in her as a singer. "Burman *saab* and I met on the common platform of music. If that wasn't there, we would never perhaps have married," she smiles.)

Today, another controversy dogs her. Asha is caught in a duel over a property dispute with Ganpatrao's wife Ashabai over the sale and division of the three-storey bungalow, Sangeeta, owned by Ganpatrao, who died nearly 32 years ago. The value of the 9,750 sq ft property in suburban Santa Cruz is slated at around Rs 7 crore.

The closest that Bhosle comes to defending herself is, "*Mere saath bahut anayay hue hain* (I have been severely wronged against). When I turned 60 people sang paeans for me; and soon after, when Burman *saab* died the same people grew fangs and actually demanded our



Despite her talent, all that Asha Bhosle craved was home sweet home



Asha performs with Code Red at the 1997 Channel [V] music awards and (below) receiving the Freddie Mercury award from Jaaved Jaaferi



marriage certificate?"

Recently, she also lashed out at the Maharashtra government saying that she has been denied her dues and was always pitted against the Mangeshkars. For now, all she will say is that every day she sits down for three hours to pen her autobiography. She has been at it for a couple of years now, and it will take her another two years to complete, she says.

Will it bear any resemblance to the Sai Paranjpee film, *Saaz?* "People will always feed on gossip for that dash of pungency in their films," says she.

If Asha Bhosle's private life has been a subject of much speculation, her career wafts out a different note; although there exists a symbiotic relationship between the two: "The immense pain and the trials and tribulations of one's own life expresses itself in music," says



'When I turned 60 people sang paeans for me; and soon after, when Burman *saab* died the same people grew fangs and actually demanded our marriage certificate?'



With Ali Akbar Khan : Their music album was even nominated for a Grammy



After living in the industry for close to 50 years, Asha Bhosle's voice still contains the zing of a chirpy 16-year-old

she. "Then again, it also helps one keep control over oneself, success then does not go to your head."

After living in the industry for close to 50 years, her voice still contains the zing of a chirpy 16-year-old; and what's more, the lady actually wins such popular awards as the MTV Viewer's Choice award for *Janam Samjha Karo* and the MTV video music award for *O Mere Sona Re*, to add to a stupendous eight Filmfare and two National awards.

Says Sudhir Pahdke, a Marathi music director, who gave Asha Bhosle her first break in playback singing in '49 for a film titled *Rurdcha Paul*: "She did not have the perfect voice, but I thought she was a good singer anyway. Later I found she was willing to put in a lot of hard work. She would submit to her composer completely."

On the second phase of her career, Shobha De, who knew Bhosle when she was editing *Stardust*, says: "The Asha magic constitutes having her fingers on the pulse of the people. She is shrewd about marketing herself. A woman of rare intelligence, she is not trapped by her image of herself. When I watch her, I find that she is constantly repackaging herself. She has been breaking some of the rules that her contemporaries have not dared to break, and thus she has stayed above them."

Leslie Lewis, who composed the album *Rahul and I*, would agree with De. "She has stayed above everyone else by virtue of her killer instinct."

Video filmmaker Ken Ghosh, who directed *O mere sona re* and *Piya tu*, found her slipping into the mood of the video very easily, by virtue of her youthfulness. "She is unique and no one can touch her. I simply let her be, for she herself steps back and lets the visual character take over," says Ghosh. "Next to being a good singer, she'd be a fantastic mimic artist. She can mould her voice to suit the voice of the actress she is singing for."

"Asha Bhosle was already slotted in a certain style of singing when *Umrao Jaan* came to her. It was the early Hindi pop, which was skillfully exploited by Nayyar and Burman. But *Umrao Jaan* marked a change for her," says Khyyam, who composed the music for the film that fetched her the National award. *Dil Cheez* was rather demanding of her, but Khyyam would not let her have it easy. He demanded that she understand the core quality of the poetess-courtesan Umrao, and distill in her music Jaan's qualities as a singer before she could lend her voice to the lady who enthralled the maharajahs 150 years ago.

"When she heard the recorded song much later, she went into a trance. 'Is it my voice,' she asked," says Khayyam. The next national award came with *Mera kuch suman*, in Gulzar's

Izzaat.

Gautam Rajadhyaksha, a close associate of 20 years, recalls a time when even Lata Mangeshkar was forced to sit up and take notice of Asha's capacity for hard work. "If Lata was ever in ill health, she would cancel a performance, not so with Ashatai, as *didi* was herself astonished to find once," says Rajadhyaksha. "Asha was down with a severe cold and was advised rest after medication. But she wouldn't have any of it, she saw to it that she was ready for a recording soon after popping a few pills."



Asha with her family

Awards still fire up Asha. "Especially the MTV music award at the Radio City Hall in New York, which is a Mecca for musicians. There were a smattering of Indians in the crowd there, but I am the only Indian to have received an award there," says Bhosle. "Just as the Channel [V] award was chosen by children. That filled me with such joy, for now I know that my popularity will exist for a long time."

She is all afire with the possibilities of remixing old hits for the original tunes are not tampered with here. "Burman *saab* would definitely have approved, and he would have done it better," says she. She admits that she is not too comfortable with singing in English, "but their songs are easier to sing than ours. Yet, through the new age music I have gained a new fan club."

She clubs herself and 71-year-old Majhrooh Sultanpuri, who penned *Janam samjha karo* to state that age is no barrier, if the spirit is willing. "The human mind has astonishing capacities, even though no one can become complete, only strive for it," says she. Bhosle feels that the Asha Magic is God's gift to her. "I know I am God's favourite, or I would not have survived so long," she says. And this is evident when you chart her career from her first break in Hindi film music in *Chunariya* in '47 to the techno *Piya tu* to *Legacy*, her album with Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, which was also nominated for a Grammy. And yet, she says, "I wanted to keep house, and sing for pleasure, but since then it has come down like a rope around my neck, and has become a part of my life."

How does she react to rumours of the rivalry that existed between Lata and her? "If you run through RD's book on music you will find that he has got *didi* to sing more than he did me," she insists. "But it was my songs that did well."

"While *didi* was given the classical numbers, I melded very well with RD's style of popular music. In fact I feel that I haven't sung at all, I was only a small instrument in Burman's orchestra," she says. And the magic hasn't worn off — from the seductive *Piya tu* for Helen to the bouncy *Hoja rangeela re* for the lissome Urmila to a coquettish *Aaj main khush houn* for Manisha to a sporty *Kabhi na kabhi* for Pooja Bhatt.

"When God designs to give, no one can steal from you," she says. "I have learnt not to be sorry for the past, and only live to make the present better." She has always found great inspiration in Ashapurna Devi and Sharad Chandra Chattopadhyay's novels. "Particularly, *Pather Dabi* and *Nauka Dubi*. They offer perfect examples of how life is to be lived," she says.

She draws the last couple of sips of her tepid tea, before turning to guests who have been waiting for her for a while. Food smells emanate from the kitchen. There are people to look after the domestic front, but the matriarch of the house makes sure that she cooks for the family whenever she is in town. Biryani and kebabs are her speciality, she says, but she has learnt many different cuisines owing to her children's varied tastes.

The tastes of the masses have also been diverse dowa the ages. But Asha Bhosle has managed to appeal to everyone across the board. She will keep taking English language classes, wear sequinned sarees, frosty nail colour and designer jewellery, and launch herself in a fresh avatar, if the occasion so demands. After all, the show must go on; *janam samjha karo.*



'When God designs to give, no one can steal from you,' says Asha. 'I have learnt not to be sorry for the past, and only live to make the present better'

Channel Surfing

Farrukh Dhondy has tried his hand at everything from short stories to novels to television programming. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** meets the man of many trades

This is one man who does not suffer his enemies gladly. Be it those who accused him of scripting Jinnah's film as part of a RAW deal or the 'Bongs' who thought he had commissioned Christopher Hitchens to malign Mother Teresa. But when he wants to, Farrukh Dhondy, writer and columnist, can be incredibly charming, keeping those claws firmly sheathed.

Over the years, Dhondy has earned the reputation of being a migrant writer in Britain. But that's not a reputation he is happy with.

References to Rushdie's sense of alienation are dismissed with, "I don't know what sentiments poor Salman has, but I don't feel like a migrant writer at all. I feel like an Indian who lives part of his time in England."

Considering his large corpus of writing that centres round the Blacks in Britain, what is his take on the racial tensions in Britain.

Says Dhondy, "My sincere feeling is, Britain is relatively the least racist country in the world. The racial tensions in a Caribbean island between the Indians and the Blacks are greater than those between the Blacks and the Whites in Britain. Look at a place like India. It is riddled by prejudices and reserved privileges between castes and regions; between dark skinned people and light skinned

'India is riddled by prejudices and reserved privileges between castes and regions; between dark skinned people and light skinned people; between the Dravidians and Northerners. India, in that sense, is a richly racist country'



people; between the Dravidians and Northerners. India, in that sense, is a richly racist country."

Dhondy's view of Britain seems to be a little rose-tinted. "The Tory party, the Labour party, the laws say no discriminations are allowed. If the landlady tells you that you can't live here because you are Black, you can take her to court and she will be forced to keep you."

But, of course, things were not half as good in the Seventies. "There was a total lack of self-confidence among the Blacks and joining an organisation which is what I did — I was first a member of the Indian Workers' Association because Indian workers were imported into Britain to do the menial jobs at a time when Britain was lumbering with its 1890s' machineries — was the only way the Blacks could demand better working conditions and more dignity."

Over the last 20 years, England has seen a vast growth in the confidence of the immigrant population. "The Bangladeshis in the East End might still get beaten up or, there might be tacit discrimination at the highest rungs of the medical or television services. But Amartya Sen has just been appointed Master of Trinity which is like being the Queen of England. That was unheard of 30 years ago," he says, with something bordering on awe.

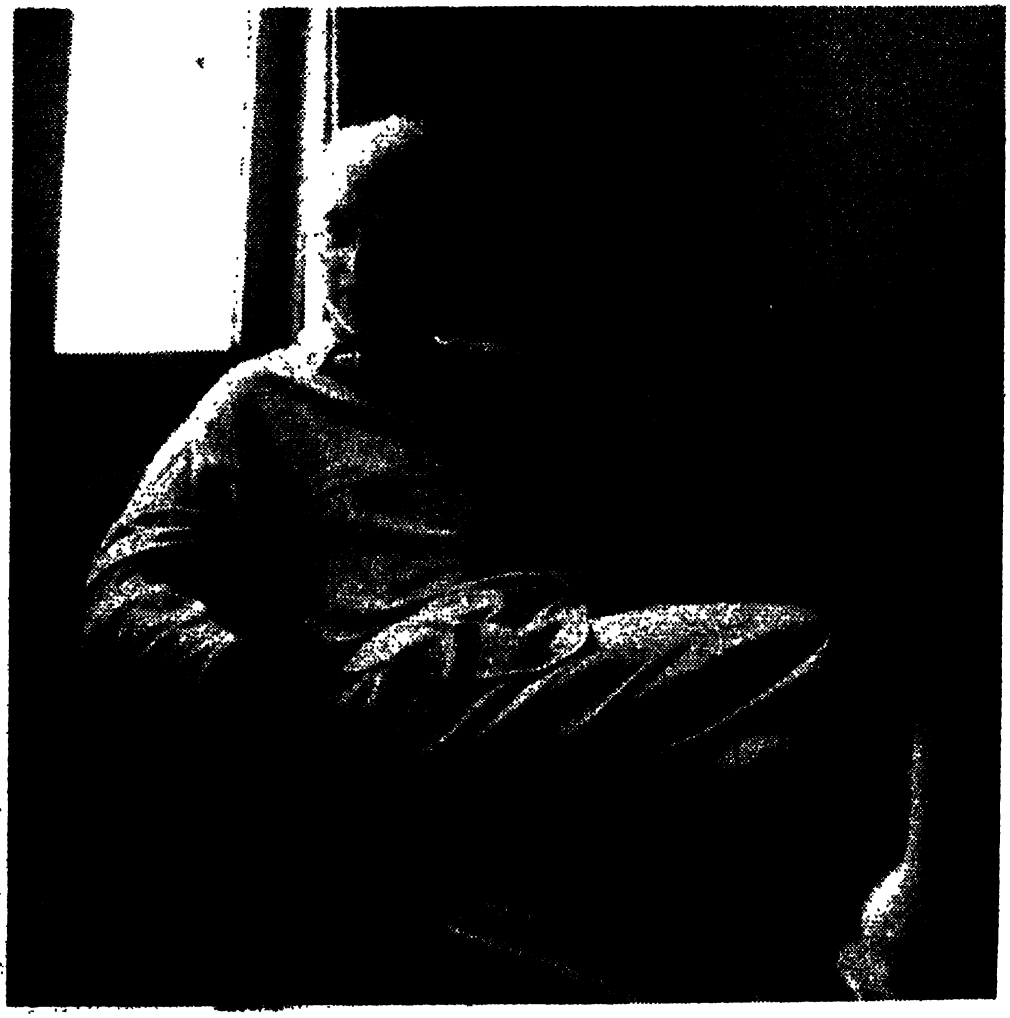
Unlike the US, where Blacks and Whites would not see each other as friends, Britain has a richer racial harmony. "I know it is not a popular view," he says, "because in a way we all like to say we are embattled and fighting."

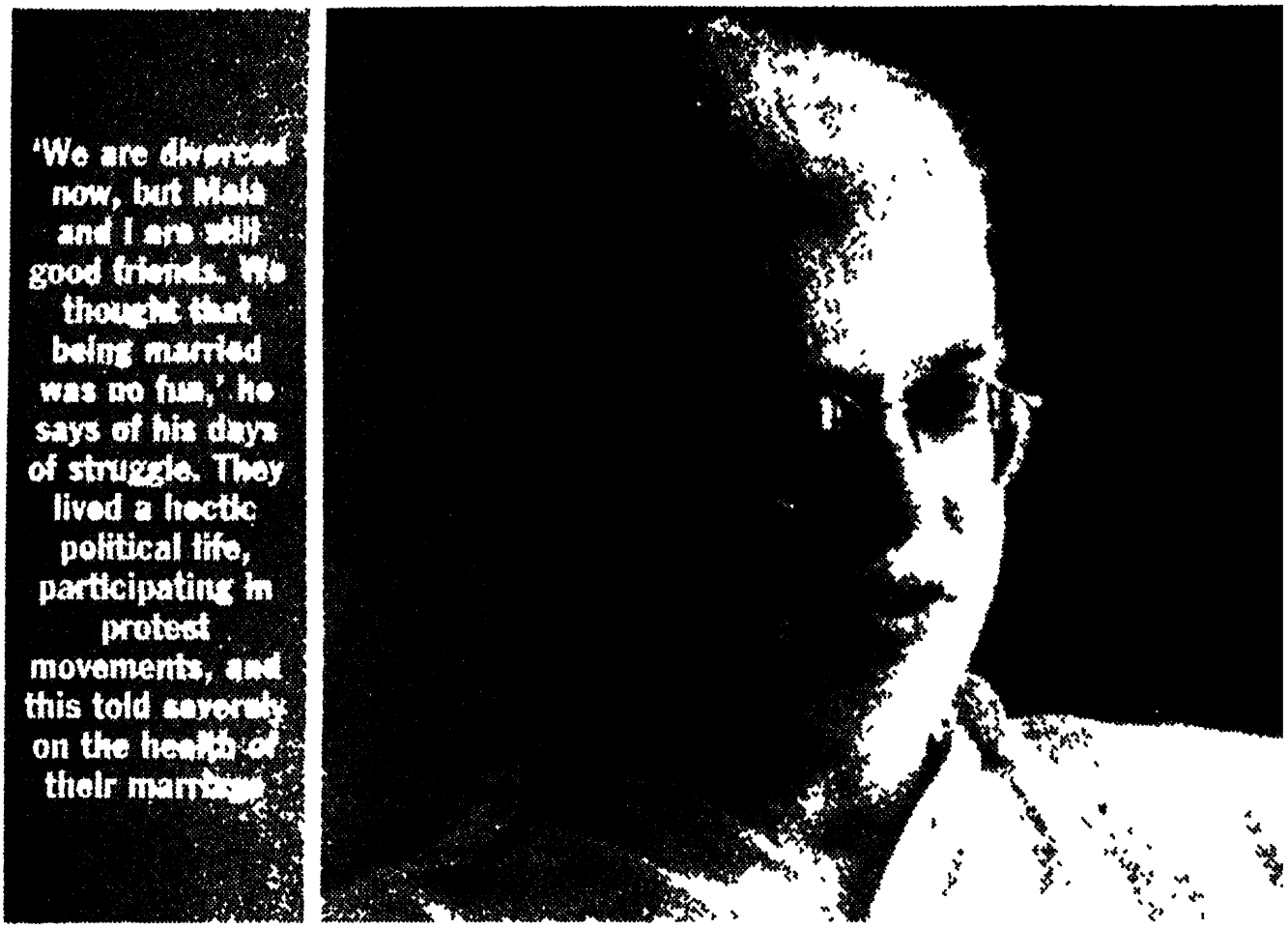
His own writing charts the progress of this confidence among the Blacks. *Free Dinners* (a White boy's description of a coloured girl's transition from self-controlled first former to aggressive fifth year to go-go dancer to prostitute) and *Two Kinda Truth* (which contrasts a young English teacher with a love for great poetry and a Black pupil who makes a success from propagandist verse) drawn from his collection of short stories, *Come to Mecca*, are about feeling one's way forward, about growing up.

For one who is so committed to the rights of the Asian Blacks, Farrukh Dhondy is proud of his Indian roots. He was born in Poona in 1944, the son of a Parsi army officer. Dhondy's childhood was spent all over India but it wasn't fun moving from school to school. But Poona, where his mother's family lived, was fortunately his base. He evokes the mood of his childhood in *Poona Company*, a marvellously evocative collection of stories, inspired by V. S. Naipaul's *Miguel Street* where the author transports his neighbourhood into fiction.

Dhondy is frank enough to confess that he failed to get a degree in chemical technology. Thereafter he moved to science. "I was happy to lose a year because I did a lot of reading during that phase — poems, pavement books, Russian propaganda, novels, a lot of indiscriminate reading, thrillers, real rubbish and some good literature that comprised the works of D.H.

'Bangladeshis in the East End might still get beaten up or there may be discrimination in the highest rungs.... But Amartya Sen has just been appointed Master of Trinity which is like being the Queen of England. That was unheard of 30 years ago'





Lawrence, Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad." He was 16-17 years then

Being attracted to Physics, Dhondy completed his BSc before going off to Cambridge on a scholarship. "I told myself that I might get stuck doing research, or at best, work in some factory at Pimpri," he says.

As a scientist he could have got himself a house if he liked, accumulated some money, bought himself a Fiat, and in due course, married a nice Parsi girl with whom he could have had two children. Not a bad idea that, but it was hardly the kind of life he envisaged for himself

Besides, he thought he had to get out of India, being totally depressed by the poverty around him. His impressions have changed now though, and he says that the country looks "to have opened up to the world".

Once at Cambridge he was filled with the dread of exile. "I missed not being surrounded by a gang of admirers and friends," he says. In college, studies and love wakes one up. "I had left a girlfriend behind and wrote her long love letters. After two years she came to Britain, worked in London and later on we got married" Only, this love story didn't have a happy ending.

The wife in question was Mala Sen, the writer of India's Bandit Queen. "We are divorced now, but Mala and I are still good friends. We thought that being married was no fun," he says of his days of struggle. They lived a hectic political life, participating in protest movements, and this told severely on the health of their marriage.

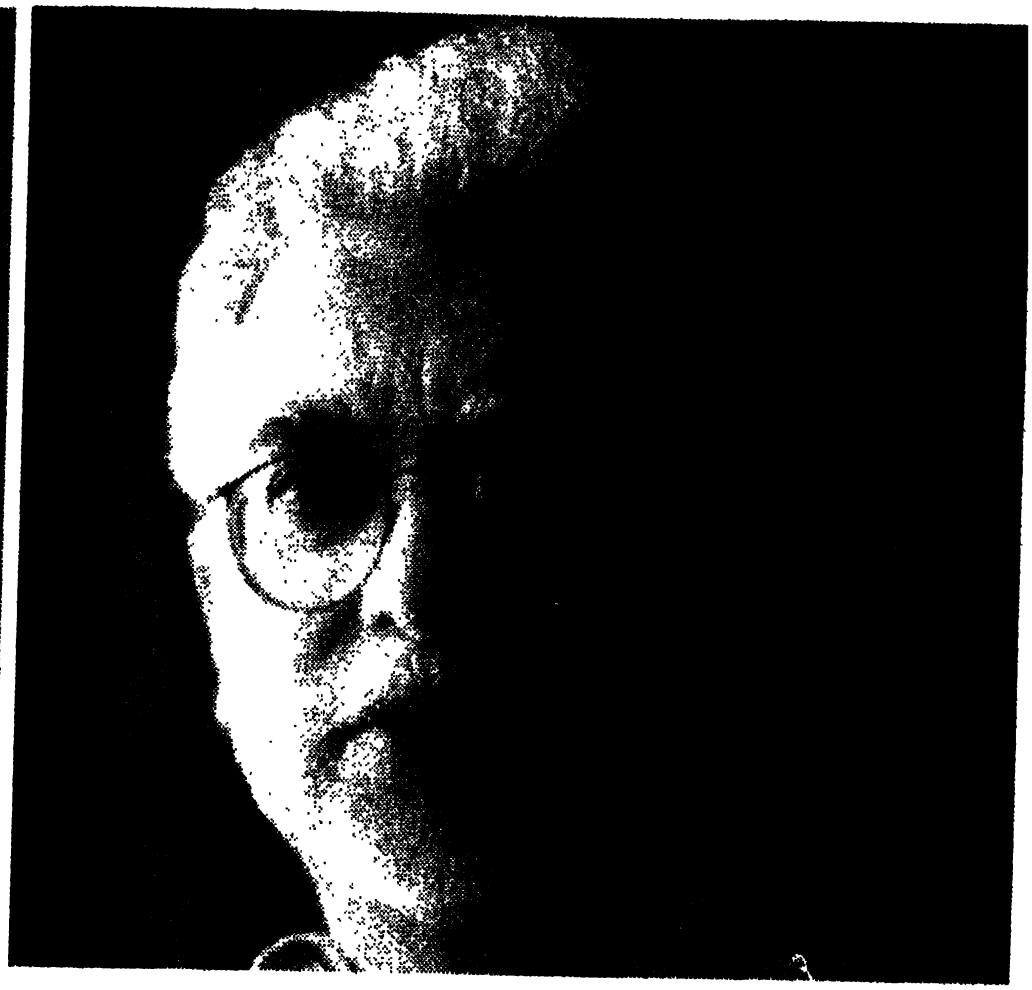
He used to teach at school and she used to work at Air India, and between work and political involvement, it was extremely difficult to have any kind of partnership of a romantic nature. "If one couldn't manage that, what was the point of being married?" he asks, almost as if he were looking for approval.

Cambridge gave him a BA degree in first Physics and then English. He followed it up with an MA moving to Leicester where he was interested in researching Rudyard Kipling, modern English and American literature. "I was studying the Indian influences in the works of Rudyard Kipling and fathomed that so much of his myth and fable came from old Indian sources; his talking animals were drawn from the *Ramayana* and the *Punchatantra.*"

What he liked in the West was trigonometry and medicine. He earned the reputation of being a professional student when he went on to a third university, at York. But that was when he was already a school teacher. Dhondy took a year's sabbatical to do some research on Black kids in schools. "The London educational authority gave me my full wages, which was very nice because all the other students were poor and I had a teacher's salary so I was rich and could drink as much beer as I wanted. Between Leicester and York, I did all kinds of odd jobs—painting houses and polishing people's doors. I still do a lot of my own work," he adds.

A large part of his nine-year teaching career was spent as head

'At school, I dealt with all kinds of boys, some of whom were thieves — well, initially,' says Dhondy, a trifle hesitatingly. 'First they said, 'My God, we have got a Paki Head of English. Later they got to know me and moved from calling me Sir to Dhondy,' he says



of English at an ILEA — Inner London Educational Authority — comprehensive (school). Not surprisingly, most his early writings came out of his closeness to kids who were growing up — *East End at your Feet, Come to Mecca* and the novel, *Siege of Babylon*, were fallouts of this phase.

The latter was based on a real-life incident involving Weslie, a boy who had quit the Black Panther movement of which Dhondy was a part, on the grounds that it was too moderate. Looking for some action the boy laid siege to Spagetti House, the headquarters of an Italian chain of restaurant at Knightsbridge, with guns. "That is what got me working on the story," says Dhondy.

"At school, I dealt with all kinds of boys, some of whom were thieves— well, initially," says Dhondy, a trifle hesitatingly. "First they said, 'My God, we have got a Paki Head of English. Later they got to know me and moved from calling me Sir to Dhondy," he says. Dhondy's years as a teacher, though fulfilling, ended when he took up the post of commissioning editor of the Multicultural section of Channel 4. It lasted for a little over 12 years. "I was recruited by the chief of the channel to bring the minorities into British television. That was a great challenge," he says, "in the sense that I commissioned programmes on current affairs, chat shows, feature films — *Salaam Bombay* and *Bandit Queen* — and situation comedies."

But didn't these programmes reinforce the idea that Blacks were different from Whites? No, says Dhondy, since these shows were integrated into the rest of the channel and shown at different times of the week with all the other White programmes. "I ran several seasons of Satyajit Ray's film. Obviously, more Indians would watch the programmes but the general public would watch it too." He continued to write novels — *Bombay Duck* (1990) — and plays while at the channel, as well as two sitcoms, including the popular Tandoori Nights.

But he quit around 1996 deciding to devote himself to full time writing. "They asked me to finish the India half-centenary celebrations," he says, and that got him working on the 'Indian Summer' till September 1997 which included a feature film, *Train to Pakistan*, four concerts by three Pakistani singers and Lata Mangeshkar. "They even did a docu-feature on British architecture in India entitled, *The Stones of the Raj* — Jyoti Basu and Writers' Buildings was filmed by Dev Benegal; Aradhna Seth, Vikram Seth's sister, did Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi; Chris Spencer did Lahore railway station and the fourth phalanx was on La Martinere college in Lucknow." It was an impressive swansong, perhaps the most substantial project in his years with the channel.

Currently, Dhondy is adapting V. S. Naipaul's *A House for Mr Biswas* for British television. But despite his involvement with the more lucrative world of television, writing still remains a passion that refuses to fade away. ■

Photographs : Sunita Kunwar

LIFESTYLE

Fragrant Times

The Indian market is awash with perfumes, both new and old, foreign and Indian, says **Samita Bhatia**

Any good fragrance, say sophisticates, is one that has a top note, a heart and a base. It could be fruity and floral, or mysterious and seductive. And, of course, the fragrance comes in a bottle that is inspired by colour, dynamism and fun, sculpted by legendary designers and dramatised by an equally stylised stopper. Thus, also adhering to the perfumers' mandate of a perfume being a work of art.

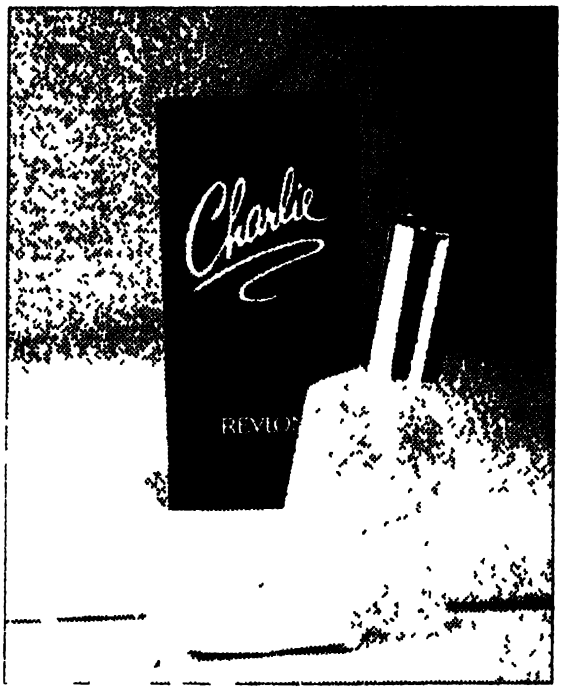
With the liberalisation of imports into the country, premium international brands of fragrances have flooded Indian stores. You no longer have to travel overseas to bring back your prized bottle.

The market for fragrances in India stands at Rs 75 crore and continues to grow at a steady 10 per cent every year. And that's not including the grey market, which is impossible to estimate, though observers feel that it could be as huge as Rs 20 crore.

The House of Baccarose was the first to initiate the distribution of international fragrances and cosmetics in India — all duty-paid and above board. No more sidling past the customs' guy with a bagful of expensive perfumes, for you could buy them at the nearest store.

Baccarose arrived with the Guy Laroche and Drakkar Noir range of products thus setting the ball rolling in the field of retailing international fragrances. In '96, Baccarose expanded its distribution of fragrances by launching fine fragrances from several perfumery houses like Nina Ricci, Jacques Bogart, Balenciaga and Chevignon.

From Nina Ricci came five fragrances — Deci Dela, a delectably feminine fragrance that 'refreshes ideas and explodes with life'; Nina, a sophisticated, artistic and creative perfume; L'Air de Temps, 'a mysterious seductor'; Ricci-Club a sweet and sour fragrance and Signoricci, a resolutely classic men's line. More French fragrances that exude sophistication came from Balenciaga which launched Le Dix, Rumba and Prelude.



"With a host of international products already in India it was high time that world class fragrances also become available," says a Baccarose spokesperson. These launches were followed by Burberrys of London and Week end (for men and women) from Burberrys, which are everyday fragrances.

With flowery notes for the feminine version and woodier notes for men, the perfumes are available in sizes of 30 ml, 50 ml, and 100 ml, and range between Rs 435 to 2,290.

More recent entrants to the market include The Secret de Venus, which offers a blend of smooth freshness of exotic fruits in its eau de perfume and deodorant and costs between Rs 435-1,650. Mumbai and Banglore have already been treated to Gucci Envy from Tiara Distributors, a fragrance that's all about confidence and a sexy image while the prices for 100 ml, 50 ml and 30 ml bottles range from Rs 2,700, Rs 2,000 and Rs 1,500 respectively. Closer home Lakme added Mischief and Spark to its Elle 18 portfolio after the success of Orchids. Also catching on are unisex fragrances from Benetton, relaxing eau de toilette from the Hot range and refreshing eau de toilette from the Cold range. The fragrances come with the Benetton philosophy and spirit and tags of Rs 1,399 for a 50 ml and Rs 1,699 for 100 ml. "The emphasis is on youth and the vision of a world exempt from prejudices — spiritual but not religious, racial but not racist)," say Benetton representatives.

The first effort to introduce men to a range of foreign fragrances came courtesy Benckiser's Indian offshoot. Benckiser India was formed as a subsidiary of Joh A. Benckiser GmbH of Germany which has such prestigious brands under its banner as Margaret Astor, Coty, Jil Sander, Aspen, Joop and Lancaster.

Says Prem Kumar, president, Benckiser India, "It is our aim to provide Indian consumers with original fragrances that are a rage internationally."

So, amongst the top five best-selling fragrances in America, Jovan Musk for men was launched in the country with an aftershave (Rs 325), a cologne spray (Rs 245) and a

deodorant spray (Rs 255). The universal appeal of Jovan Musk is attributed to the fact that it mixes with the body's natural chemistry creating a distinctive impact.

Jovan Musk doesn't ignore women, either. Inspired by the white mallow plant, the Jovan White Musk fragrance is light and delicate that the company says has been "created specially for the modern and independent-minded woman." The range includes a cologne spray (Rs 240) and a deo-cologne spray (Rs 145).

Fragrances for women too have stormed the market. The recent launch of five fragrances for women from Coty is explained by Kumar, president, Coty India, "There was not enough variety available for the Indian woman. With purchasing power on the increase and more women stepping out of home and into an office, the market for fragrances grew."

Coty's Exclamation, Longing, Masumi, Emeraude and Vanilla Fields are drawing women. 'A light innocent fragrance like a gentle breeze,' describes Masumi that's been created especially for the women just out of her teens. 'Make a man remember' is the line taken by Longing. The perfume is a blend of violet, rose and sandalwood essences.

'Born in 1923, the emerald coloured fragrance is so sensual even the French were shocked....' or so goes the brand story behind Emeraude, Coty's 'daring' perfume. The sprays and perfumes are priced between Rs 115 to Rs 275.

Amethyst, Margaretha Ley and Acte2 also from the House of Baccarose, seek young, liberated and independent women who are proud of their femininity. Says Varsha Dalal, executive director, Baccarose, "The powerful fragrances portray the feminine charm of today's multi-faceted Indian woman who is making her presence felt in every walk of life." The Amethyst eau de perfume spray comes at Rs 250.

Avon, which has a long-standing tradition of recognising the needs of a woman, is poised to launch it's latest fragrance in the country. Far Away, which was intended to inspire a brief moment of calm in a woman's otherwise hectic schedule, is soon to hit store shelves.

freesia, jasmine and violet leaf comprises the Far Away top note. This while the vanilla bean, sandalwood and musk make up the finishing undertones. The eau de spray has been priced in the international market at $ 18.50 while the perfume comes at $ 45.

With Moon from Oriflame, priced at Rs 250 for 30 ml, women can bask in the romance of the moonlight with a fruity blend of linden, bergamot and cyclamen. At the heart of Moon is rose and jasmine and while the base note is of iris and musk. A sister fragrance, Star, combines vanilla notes with bergamot, amber and patchouli.

Another company to have made its presence felt was Revlon that launched Charlie cologne spray in India end-'95 and more recently, added 'Fire & Ice' to its list. While the first is positioned at the top end of the mass segment, Fire & Ice is positioned for consumers in the premium segment.



But how close do these perfumes come to those you might buy from a duty free shop? Says Kumar, "Both the packaging and product quality are truly international with imported alcohol and fragrance used in their manufacture."

Most international brands have contract manufacturers who are licensed to fabricate the products for their Indian counterparts. The companies say almost in one voice: "The perfumes are the same as available internationally in our portfolios."

For Ditto Aspen, amongst the 10 best selling American fragrances, the fragrance, oil and alcohol, which are its key ingredients, are imported to maintain the original fragrance and quality. The perfume owes its inspiration to the exclusive ski resort, Aspen at Colorado, USA, and captures in its essence its cool, natural and romantic setting.

Companies maintain that prices of the brands sold here have been standardised with international prices. Says U.K. Modi, chairman, vice-president and CEO`1, Modi-Revlon, "The Revlon range of perfumes are competitively priced vis-à-vis international prices for the same units." If Charlie (38.4 ml) sells for Rs 250 in India, consumers have to pay $16 (approximately Rs 640) for the same bottle abroad. While Charlie Red and Charlie White cost Rs 275 in India you'll have to pay another $16 for it in the international market. Fire & Ice sells for Rs 625 here, the same 50 ml bottle can be bought for $ 28 (approximately Rs 1,120) abroad.

Though the market burgeons, there are problems aplenty. Says U.K. Modi of Modi Revlon, "There is a low penetration and usage of fragrances which in the larger perspective translates into a small-sized market. The excise duty on alcohol-based products is 100 per cent which is very high." This, says Modi, results in significantly higher retail prices of fragrances which put them beyond the reach of a large segment of consumers.

And it doesn't end there. Unavailability of good quality raw materials and packaging components pose further problems. "The cost of entering the market and establishing new brands is steep as well," says Modi. Another irritant that international brands must live with are the fakes that litter the market. Explains Modi, "This derives from weak patent laws and their implementation."

However, the premium brands continue to make inroads and buyers reel with every new whiff that

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1120	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BANGALORE					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC 772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUJ					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHANDIGARH					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W 911	1925	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
GUWAHATI					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
HYDERABAD					
IC-703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

BANGKOK					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0845	4
COLOMBO					
KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
KATHMANDU					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SINGAPORE					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0650	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun; Arr: Tues. & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep. & Arr: Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Rasaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santhiliatan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Tarka-Toofan Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	9-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kalimpur Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lucknow) Express	10-25	3104
5695	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Barakpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Wed., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5696

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12 25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21 00	2022
8034	20 30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10 45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16 20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5 30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15 30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4 15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday, Arr Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14 10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03 30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am 30 years old and working in a reputed company. One of my colleagues proposed to me but my problem is that I have already passed through menopause stage about one year ago. Is it possible for me to undergo a hormone transplant therapy?*



A. Roy, Orissa

A. Menopause at the age of 30 sounds very unlikely to me. Have you had yourself diagnosed by a reputed gynaecologist? If necessary, go to the nearest convenient metropolis hospital with a range of referral and diagnostic facilities and get a complete check up. As I am not a doctor it would not be ethical for me to advise you on this matter, but it is my understanding that it is possible to correct or rectify the condition. In any case procreation is not the only function of a marriage. We have far too many children in our country anyway and it is always possible to adopt one and give a helpless infant a new start in life. Marriage is about companionship, mutual support and shared growth. All my good wishes for a happy married life together.

Q. *I would like to have your opinion about my problem. Do you think that difference in academic standards (though very marginal) can pose a barrier as far as love is concerned? Is it possible to love a classmate in college who is a better student than I am and has topped in many examinations? Though I am confident about being more than just an average student, what is your advice?*



Dipankar Ghosh, Calcutta

A. Intelligence is measured in many different ways. Academic performance is only one of the criteria. Factors like personality, depth, maturity all contribute to the totality of a human being. It is only because you are both still in college that you are reacting in the way you are. In the big bad world outside, academic success is just one factor among many others. So my advice is go ahead and woo this wonderful girl. Don't let your marksheet come between you!

In love with a rich boy and neglecting studies? I sense this is more in the nature of a romantic infatuation. This has nothing to do with middle class or rich but at your age first love is rarely grounded in reality

Q. *I am an 18-year-old girl studying in XII. I am in love with a boy 6 years senior to me. Even though I am deeply in love, I am unable to confess my true feelings to him because he belongs to a rich family and I come from a middle class one. Getting his love is a dream for me and I end up dreaming day and night about nonsensical things which have no relationship to reality. As long as I am in my dream world, I am cheerful and happy but when I stop dreaming, I feel lonely and sad. This is hampering my studies as I am not able to concentrate. I cannot understand what to do and how to study. I feel very confused and helpless.*



Ipsita, Orissa

A. You have just described all the classic symptoms of romantic love. This kind of dreamy idolatry is a very normal phenomenon at your age. However, common sense dictates that this is the time to concentrate on your academic life. I know how difficult it is to concentrate when one is in love.

However, one way to effectively sidestep the problem and trick your psyche into obedience is as follows: tell yourself that you are really studying for his sake, to make yourself worthier of him. Weave your dreams into your duties in a deliberate way, then study

in a determined and methodical fashion. Take a romantic coffee-break every now and then to break the monotony and then back to your books! You will be surprised by the effectiveness of this ploy.

As far as the seriousness of your love goes, I sense that this is more in the nature of a romantic infatuation or crush. This has nothing to do with middle class or rich but at your age and in your situation first love is rarely grounded in reality. Have fun and see if my prescription works!



Q. *I am 21 year old studying mechanical engineering in a reputed college. Presently I am in the 5th semester (3rd year). For the last one year I cannot concentrate in my studies. I understand I have to study well as my parents expect a lot from me, still I fail to open my books and concentrate. But while I am doing something else like watching a movie or going to sleep I feel guilty for not studying and make up my mind to start the next day, but sadly the next day does not come. Throughout my academic career I have done well. But from the 3rd semester I have started getting a number of back papers. Even during exams I fail to motivate myself. I take exams very coolly. In our college we are given four chances to clear a paper because of this I have developed the tendency to skip the examinations during the first attempt. While doing so I always make up my mind to study well and appear next time, but the same never happens, when the 2nd attempt comes I end up pending it for the 3rd time.*

I fail to understand my problem. Do I need psychological help? Kindly advise. If professional help is needed, suggest somebody in Rourkela.

Name and address withheld

A. You have been stricken by the form of inertia that comes from a lack of stimulus. Perhaps you are not finding your course of study demanding enough. Twenty one is the age when the whole world should be opening out to you. Your life should be full of opportunity and challenge. Yet the only activity apart from mechanical engineering that you mention in your letter is sleeping or watching films. It is my impression that you are becoming increasingly passive in your approach and that your attitude to situations is reactive rather than pro-active. I would suggest that you give yourself an attitude-lift by diversifying the range of your activities.

Forget about films and sleeping, start reading, learning a new language or skill, make new friends, take up a new sport or some form of outdoor activity. It is a strange but incontrovertible fact that the busier you are, the more you can fit into a day and conversely inactivity can stretch itself over infinity. Once you have sharpened and toned yourself, once you are vigorously challenging your faculties, your attitude to your studies too will inevitably change. Your absorption, retention and focus will also improve, and everything will fall into perspective. Go ahead, take on the challenge!

Girl opposed to marriage because she has asthma? Asthma can be controlled to a large extent by attitude, diet and effective medication. If you are truly in love with her, try to win her trust, and explain to her that you are on her side in the battle of life

Q. *I am a 23-year-old boy in love with a 21 year old. I want to marry her. She has been suffering from asthma from 1980 and so is opposed to the marriage. I have told her that I won't marry anyone else and if she wants to break my heart she can marry anyone. What should I do now?*

Kamal Krishna Das, Howrah

A. Asthma is a disease which has many emotional and psychological triggers. Asthma patients are often insecure in some front, and this is only aggravated by the frightening and utterly frustrating nature of the disease. I don't think that your present attitude is the most appropriate one for the situation. Pestering her will only trigger off a further stress situation. What you need to do is to make her feel safe, secure and utterly confident in your love. You are both still young and there is no pressing hurry to get married.



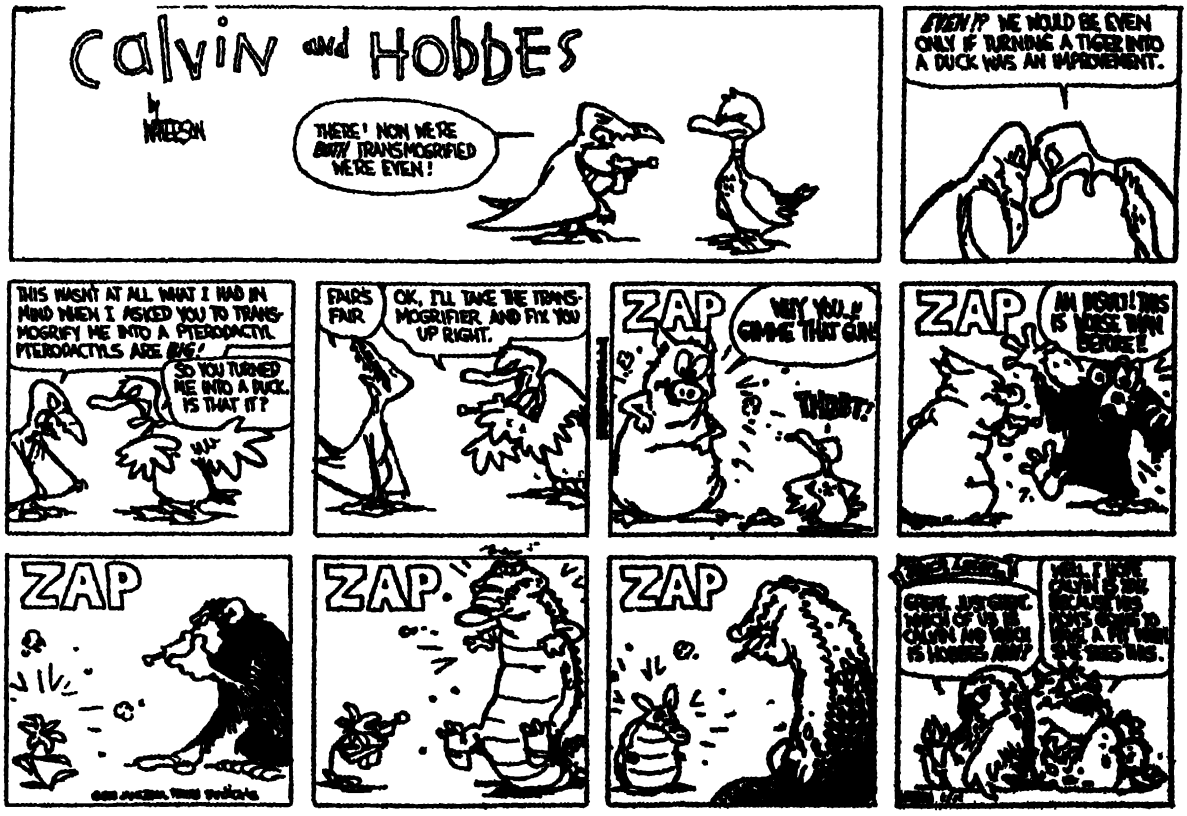
I know from experience that asthma can be controlled to a large extent by attitude, diet and effective medication. If you are truly in love with her, try to win her trust, and explain to her that you are on her side in the battle of life. Patience and perseverance have a habit of paying off in the long run. Time will tell the difference! ■

Illustrations: Debasish Deb

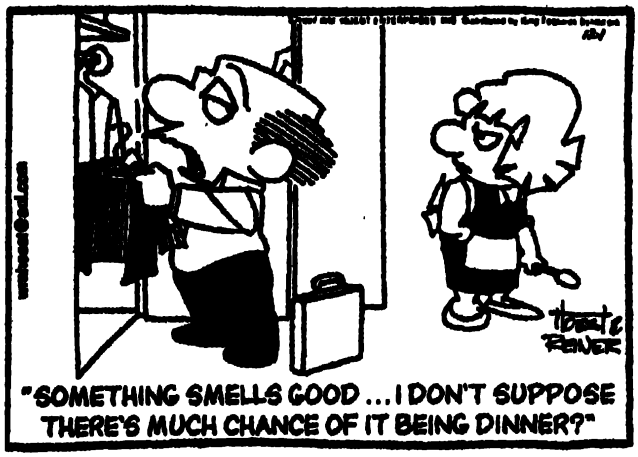
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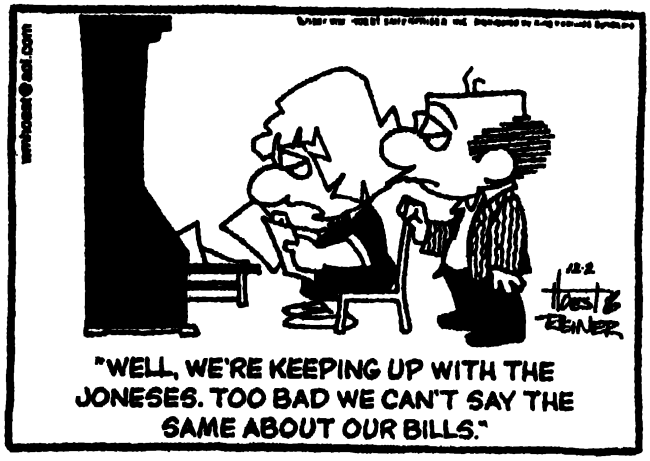


CALVIN AND HOBBES : WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

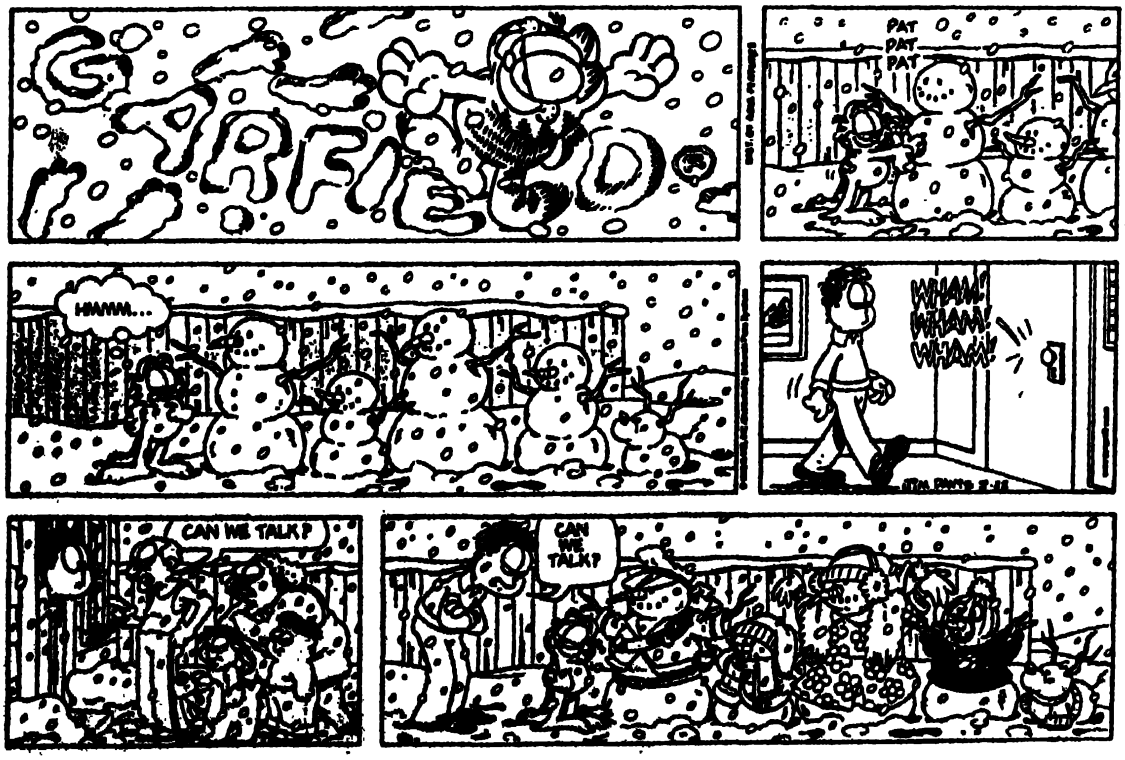








GARFIELD ▒ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Home is where the heart is. Ganesha also includes matters pertaining to property, real estate and land. Family matters take up your time and attention this week, too, much more than career or buisness concerns and also personal issues. You will have to resolve your personal complexes and anxieties.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The new moon stresses for you the importance of both professional and personal relationships and also, of partnerships, you will feel the need to re-evaluate your attitudes and perceptions so that you can fulfil the need to build harmony at work and at home. You have actually been working towards this.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



A shift of focus—love and romance and the good times that can be had, attract you strongly and bring you joys as well. You will be much more sociable and fun loving. In fact, you have a whale of a time at parties, get togethers, social gatherings and also, indulge and pamper yourself.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The trend is the two F"s of family and finances. Both keep you almost equally occupied and can encompass marital funds and accounts, expenses, mutual profits and/or tax or estate problems that need to be sorted out. It might be a good idea to keep your own counsel; and not involve too many people.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Be amiable, tap the right sources and your work will be done. But ensure that you do your homework before you take the plunge, be it a new project, a new script or a new business venture. Also, take time off for your near and dear ones as work may tend to bog you down. Take care of your health.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Beware of complacency and over confidence. If you have no other rivals in your immediate sphere of work, try to improve your own performance. There will be friends and associates to help you with knotty matters but there would be some spoil sports to sour relationships or issues.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Diplomacy is the key, dear Librans. And considering the fact that it comes naturally to you all, try to be at your charming best. This will be a rather hectic week involving buying, selling, decoration, renovation and new programmes. Try to fuse business with pleasure as both will take up your time.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Time to move, travel, undertake long journeys and in short, be on the move. Things will happen very rapidly and you will have to keep pace with the whirlwind changes. But once you get accustomed to your new lifestyle, you will begin to enjoy and even look forward to it. A great week for socialising and partying.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The strong focal point will defintely be the job and work sector, wherein you'll find yourself going great guns, building on existing achievements and lookig for fresh new worlds to conquer, as did Alexander the Great. What is the add-on, the bonus is the pursuit of pleasure.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Venus brings in adventure, romance, love and the glory of being alive. Travel will be successful and fruitful, full of pleasure and profit. There may be a tie-up of a different kind. It might involve an engagement that is made official,with social and family sanction and which may soon lead you to the altar.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Once again, hectic communication and activity are in store for you this week. Computers, info-tech, electronic media are all pressed into active service. In addition, you are in an adventurous and bold frame of mind that has you making giant strides in achievement. Success is ensured for you.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Having soared to new heights of success you are content to take a breather. Home and house and family keep you occupied and also so matters pertaining to property, family holdings, shares and trust funds. Your concern about relatives, children, local and domestic affairs will keep you busy.

BIRTHDAYS

Triumph

22/22 Karat Gold Jewellery, Diamonds, Precious and Astrological Stones

P. C. CHANDRA JEWELLERS

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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q *My hair is quite unmanageable and limp. It lacks shine and bounce. Please suggest a remedy to make it lustrous.*
Sandhya Kurkarni, Calcutta

A Yes, one feels miserable when there's absolutely no bounce left in the hair Ever heard of a beer bouncer? You can easily get the bounce and shine back to dull hair with a relaxing oil massage followed with steaming. Then after shampooing, use a glass of beer to rinse out the hair This can be done every time you shampoo your hair Not only will it set better but also come to life and look bouncy and shiny It is important to understand that a healthy constitution leads to healthy hair A balanced diet with lean meats, dairy products, raw food and lots of fruits is essential and there's no way you can achieve a stunning complexion and hair without doing this So start now!

Q *I am 16-year-old boy I have pimples on my face and nose The anti-pimple cream I had used was not very useful. Please suggest a permanent remedy.*
Biswajit Saha, Dainhat, West Bengal

A There should have been no cream used in the first place as you seem to have an oily skin Acne and pimples mostly arise due to the excess secretion of oil glands A permanent remedy you have asked for is a regular skin care routine. Your face has to feel squeaky clean and also a well balanced diet without any sweets, colas, fried foods and heavy gravy dishes will help. Wipe your face at least thrice with cold rose water and apply the following face pack. fullers earth, ground mint and neem paste and lemon juice. This should be applied everyday for about two weeks Alongwith this, you have to keep a





Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To counter the ill effects of bleaching:

■ Massage face with honey or almond oil

check on water intake. It should be at least 12 glasses a day. ..even if you are not thirsty, take it as a medicine. You must also be careful that you have a clean stomach at all times. Avoid constipation at all cost If you are serious about your skin, I am sure you will waste no time in following these simple but effective steps to get a glowing, clear complexion.

Q *I am 20 years old having a fair complexion and a very oily skin. I have acne which has caused black spots on my face. I want to use henna to treat them but do not know the actual method. Please help.*
Piyali Ghosh, Circular Road, Burnpur

A There is no point in having a fair complexion if it is not a healthy one. I have never heard of treating acne with henna for this herb is mostly and primarily for the hair. You skin will turn reddish in colour if you apply it to your skin. For God's sake, don't experiment with yourself!
First and foremost, avoid all junk food and substitute them with raw foods like carrots, cabbage, spinach, tomatoes, cucumbers, etc. You really would not know how good they taste until you try them. Have lots of fruits and plenty of water for a beautiful complexion. Clean your face with cold rose water or a camphor based tonic water. Apply the following on the face: gramflour, 10 powdered ground cloves, mint paste, neem paste, lemon juice and powdered rice. Leave on until totally dry. Now dab with milk and scrub off in a rotating motion very gently. Be sure that the pimples do not have pus or are infected In that case, avoid adding the rice and scrubbing off. This should be done daily for a month and you will definitely see a difference in the spots.

Q *I am a 25-year-old college student and have been taking strong medicines. I have two queries: Are the natural scrubs you have been prescribing for whiteheads are effective without cleaning the clogged pores first? Secondly, how can one counter the bad effects of bleach on the face when bleaching once a month is*

compulsory for the patient concerned?
Jyotika Srivastava, C.I.T. Road, Calcutta

A To answer your first query, scrubs are prescribed to clean out the skin completely and for different skin types there are different scrubs as no two skin types are identical. In case, you have very deeply clogged pores, it is advisable to get your skin cleaned out by a professional first and then start a daily routine of keeping the skin scrupulously clean. Bleaching does have harmful effects but done once a month and followed with the application of a honey massage or almond oil massage will definitely help even the oiliest of skin types. With its strong content of chemicals, bleach tends to rob the skin of its natural oils and it is always wiser to keep the skin well nourished for that glowing skin.

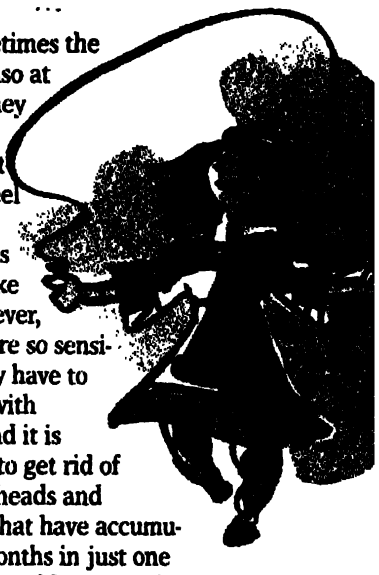
Q ***I am 19 years old and have recently had an accident which left a scar on my right foot. The skin there has turned pink. My complexion is fair. So how do I remove the scar and regain my natural complexion on the affected area?***
Priyanka Gupta, Dhanbad, Bihar

A I am afraid if it is a very deep scar then the marks shall remain but will become lighter with time. The pinkish colour that you have mentioned means that it is healing. Mix together half a cup each of almond oil and coconut oil and apply all over the scar massaging very gently until all the skin has been absorbed. This should be done twice a day for about four to six weeks for results. Don't worry, it will fade but I am afraid will not disappear completely.



Q ***I am 22 years old and was suffering from an acute problem of whiteheads and blackheads. I went to a reputed beauty parlour for an ozone facial after extracting the whiteheads and blackheads. But this has left prominent marks on my face making me look uglier than ever. I have applied sandalwood powder, multani mitti and chokker pack daily. Can you help me please?***
Name Withheld, Calcutta

A It's sad that some of the best beauticians sometimes treat the facial like a wrestling match. Sometimes the clients are also at fault for if they are asked to take a few sittings, they feel that that the beauticians is trying to make money. However, some skins are so sensitive that they have to be handled with great care and it is not possible to get rid of all the blackheads and whiteheads that have accumulated over months in just one treatment. I would suggest that you just leave your skin for a few days and massage it very gently with two drops of coconut oil. Leave on for about ten minutes and then wipe away with a moist cotton wool pad. After this, take one teaspoon of chokker, one teaspoon of sandalwood powder and teaspoon curd. Make a thick *lep* and apply all over face. Leave on for about 10 minutes and wash off with refrigerated cold milk and then water. Do this daily for a week until your skin starts to feel normal again.



To have long and thick hair:

■

Drink at least two glasses of milk and apply bhringraj oil

Q ***I am 10 years old and read your column along with my mother and father. I would like to have long and thick hair. Can I start now?***
Amrita Shah, Calcutta

A I am glad to know that I have the entire family reading my column. After all, there is no rule or age that says you cannot try to look after yourself naturally. In fact personally, I feel that the younger one starts, the better it is as it goes a long way in making you look and feel good. This does not mean that you spend hours in front of the mirror every day scrutinising yourself but only a 10 minute-routine daily will help you go a long way from today. At your age, it is important that you eat a nutritious diet and balance lots of exercise and fresh air with a regular study time and eating time. Milk is important for you and besides two glasses a day, you should also take lots of curd, cottage cheese and processed cheese. Oil your hair once or twice a week with coconut oil and keep it for about two or three hours before shampooing. Also bhringraj oil is excellent for you. Take a teaspoon of pure almond oil in your milk daily once.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

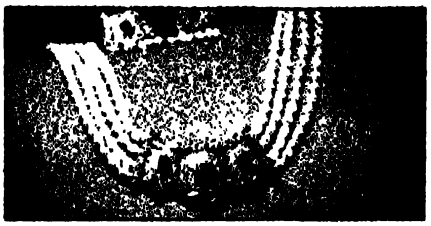


SONAL MANSINGH

Danseuse

■

My favourite is my recent acquisition— a garnet necklace with a ruby pendant set in a rather modern design. I just saw it at a shop and it was love at first sight!





RITU KUMAR

Fashion designer

■

I particularly like antique jewellery and my favourite is this old enamel piece of Mughal jewellery. It is actually a Kundan set in uncut stones with Meenakari work in the reverse. I like it because it has a subtle yet rich elegance.



The Gold Rush

The lure of this yellow metal is eternal, says **Geeta Sharma**

Over the ages, no other metal has so fascinated mankind as has gold. The love of gold is so much a part of of the human psyche that it is near impossible to fight it. So, it's not surprising that it has inspired some of the world's most brilliant and intricate craftsmanship.

And among the best instances of creativity and design in the world is Indian jewellery and design. The very name of India conjures up images of colour, beauty and sparkle, both in terms of everyday life and the arts. But jewellery here is not just a means of adornment; it is a kind of treasure or valuable investment.

The jewellery trade in India is steeped in tradition and antiquity and has emerged with one of the fastest growth rates over the last decade. If market research by the World Gold Council (WGC) is any indicator, India is the world's largest consumer of gold, followed by the USA, China and Saudi Arabia. WGC figures indicate that India consumed 508 tonnes of gold in 1996 as against 345 tonnes by the USA, 248 tonnes by China and 185 tonnes by Saudi Arabia.

MANJIT BAWA

Artist

■

My favourite is a set of bracelet, pendant and earrings of the Mughal period which are among the few jewels I have kept for my daughter Bhawana. I like them because of the excellent craftsmanship that has created little masterpieces of gold, stones and pearls.

Indian jewellery dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization (3000 B.C.) from which a bronze figure of a dancer adorned with jewels survives to this day. The importance of metals such as gold can also be assessed from ancient Indian texts. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*, written in the third century B.C. mentions the various alloys of gold and the norms to be followed by the goldsmiths. Kalidasa, the fifth century poet, not only gives us the description of jewels but also the way they should be worn.

It was not until the Mughals that the golden age of art and craft again came into being and one of the most opulent eras of Indian history was established. The Persian influence brought in by them was responsible for the infusion of a new life in Indian craftsmanship.

Their greatest contribution in jewellery was in the field of embellishments. During the Mughal period, a plain gold ornament became a thing of beauty with a stone encrusted front and enamelled back. Navrattan, for instance, became very popular with the Mughals and navrattan necklaces and bracelets of uncut stones became typical specimens of

the jewellery of that period.

Kundan work — a method of gem setting that involves inserting a gold foil between the stone and its mount — was an obsession with the Mughals, who loved to use precious and semi-precious stones set in jewellery. Today, the finest Kundan jewellery is made in Bikaner, Rajasthan. The historical aura associated with this jewellery, that was once worn by kings and queens, is what makes it attractive. As they say, Kundan jewellery, like old wine gets better with time.

Traditional jewellery comprises almost 70 per cent of the share of jewellery being made in India today. And of this 75 per cent, at least 40 per cent is still being manufactured the way it has been for generations by traditional craftsmen. The remaining 35 per cent is undergoing a slow but steady change.

According to Shibani Leekha, a Delhi-based jewellery designer, these changes pertain to the fusion of Indo-western designs. In these, the outer form is simple and geometric, while the inner detailing is elaborate, with filigree, goli, batni and wire work.

She says another predominant feature of today's traditional jewellery is the mixing and matching of precious stones, such as rubies, emeralds and pearls with semi-precious stones like amethyst, lapiz lazuli and garnet.

Besides, the emphasis is more on the surface textures such as matt and frosted finish and gloss and silk finish. Enamel is an integral part of today's jewellery, with advanced technologies and shades of enamel being used. The jewellery, although renewed in its style, is still very traditional with craft techniques such as engraving, granulation and filigree work with emphasising on traditional designs and methods.

As against this, in modern jewellery — which comprises 25 per cent of the manufacturing sector — the emphasis is more on the 'wearability' and overall finish of the product. Interestingly, though the volumes in modern jewellery design are big with different types of finishes and textures, the jewels are much lighter than may appear at first sight.

Almost as a complement to the fact that it is the largest gold consumer, the Indian gems and jewellery industry has acquired a great degree of professionalism, integration and upgradation in production and selling.

More and more jewellers, for instance, are opening up to the need for hiring professional designers to add to the creativity of their products. As Shubhash Bhola of the Delhi based Bhola Sons Jewellers says, "the growing awareness among the buyers and the new upcoming brands has made the jewellery industry very competitive."

This in turn, he explains, has put pressures on the jewellers who are in turn always looking for something new to woo the customers. This gap is being filled in by the trained jewellery designers who are not only looking into the aesthetic aspect of jewellery but also brushing up the technical side of jewellery making. In the process, they effectively bridge the gap between the customer's perception and the craftsman's understanding.

A new entrant and concept is branded jewellery. There are already names such as Tanishq, Enchante and 24 Karats, that have carved their little niches in the gems and jewellery market. The pioneer in the field is the Minerals and Metals Trading Corporation (MMTC). The single largest bullion trader in the sub-continent - handling 22 MT of gold and 300 MT of silver of India's gold jewellery—it was natural for MMTC to make forays into the domestic market. In 1994, it launched its brand of jewellery, '24 Karat' in the first All India jewellery exhibition in New Delhi.

Branded jewellery signifies a certain level of quality of a product which distinguishes it from the 'me too' category. It also aims at acquainting people with the latest international trends, educating people on how to buy jewellery and at the same time providing customers with a unique international shopping experience. Another encouraging development in the gems and jewellery trade is the presence of the World Gold Council in India. The council's purpose, as its manager(North India) G.S. Pillai says "is to increase the consumption of gold in the world and also in India."

As part of this effort, the Council has sought to combine traditional gold jewellery design sense with state-of-the-art technology. To make up for the loss of professionally trained craftsmen and designers the council has supported the National Institute Of Fashion Technology's (NIFT) three-year jewellery design course.

More significantly, points out Pillai, the WGC has sought to provide the manufacturers, retailers, jewellers and customers a common meeting point through its annual WGC exhibitions planned in cities and towns across India. Interestingly, the next such expo is slated for Calcutta in the second week of April this year.

Where the Council's efforts will take it, only time would tell. But there is little doubt that the lure of gems and jewels is going to be as eternal as the glitter of the gold. ■

ROHINI KHOSLA

Representative of Christies

My favourite is a gold-plated bracelet which is about 50 years old. It is like a locket in a bracelet and looks like a watch. What I like about it is its unusual masculine design even though it's a woman's bracelet. I bought it from somebody and has a little bit of age to it.





FASHION

Black and White Bridalwear?

Fashion designer Krishna Mehta is full of surprises; as **Sudipta Basu** finds out



Krishna Mehta: Best known for her bridalwear

Where did Krishna Mehta acquire that lispy French accent from? Whether she is speaking English or her native Gujarati, the words seem to roll off her tongue in a smooth purr. Was it the diploma at the Alliance Francise taken 15 years ago, or does it come from her annual visits to the Alps every year? Or is it simply a Malabar Hill syndrome?

Any which way, it settles easily on her petite form, translucent skin and wide kohl-lined eyes. Even her well-oiled short and crimpy auburn hair looks deceptively gel scrunched!

Krishna Mehta might be a designer of repute today, but 15 years ago she did not know where she was headed. She belonged to a conservative Gujarati family in Mumbai, and after graduating in commerce from Sydenham College all she had decided was that after her marriage (which was to inevitably follow) she did not want to sit idle at home. So, she took a barrage of courses, in home science and social work, from Nirmala Niketan; learnt weaving and embroidery from a neighbourhood Parsi lady and enrolled for a course in Fashion Design at the Sophia College, and another one in French at the Alliance.

"I had to keep all my options open then," says Krishna. And all the while, a small clock kept ticking away within her. For by now she knew her forte; so much so, that she positively loathed the saree-blouse that she was forced to design in the final semester of her course at Sophia. "Apart from it being a part of the curriculum, there was hardly much happening in the fashion scene then," she says.

Eventually, she was married to a garment exporter, Nilesh Mehta; design and fabric were wedded together, it would seem. While for her own wedding she wore a simple saree ("Who had the time then, I was neck deep in the several courses I was taking; my French exam was a week after my wedding."), Krishna Mehta has attempted to change the saree and other traditional wear with time.

Best known for her bridalwear range, her latest collection is shorn of the popular screaming gold on silk. A sheer black saree embossed with velvet and just a sprinkle of gold with a velvet blouse accompanying it is as distinct as an all-white lehnga choli with a long black embroidered velvet cloak, or a simple white diaphanous saree with a gold and black blouse.

White and black for the bride?

"There is a small but decided change coming upon people gradually. While almost all of them stick to the basic traditional wear for the wedding itself, they want to be adventurous for the mehndi and sangeet sessions, and later the cocktails," she explains.

Krishna Mehta opened her first flagship store, Krishna Mehta, in Mumbai in '96, where she displays all her designs in western and Indian wear for men and women. The following year, she took the store to New Delhi as well. Apart from this, her clothes are also retailed from Ensemble in Mumbai, Ogaan in Delhi and Calcutta, and Pfolio in Bangalore and Madras.

Her ethnic collection for women is derived from the Indian villages and the traditional art of pottery, and for the western collection, she stays as close as possible to the trends of the west. "People want to dress well and dress differently today. They have a discerning eye and demand international standards in design," says she.

She admits that while it is easy to dress up women, there are limited choices available in the men's range. "Also, men resist change, compared to women," says she. "So, all that is available for me is to experiment with the fabrics for them, or work on the collars of the shirts or the styles of the trousers, or very subtly introduce fresh colours and get them to believe that it could be good for them."

As if to illustrate her efforts to get the Indian man updated, she tries to cajole a young couple who have been aggressively debating in her store over a long kameez for the man. Krishna pulls out a self-embroidered, off-white material. No go here. A black Jamewar? Definitely not on. "Can we stick to the basics please?," he says. They finally settle for an off-white self styled silk kurta and will have diamond buttons put on it. The designer hopes that the monotony will be overcome in the years to come.

With the wedding season upon us, it is an extremely busy time for her in Mumbai, as one can gauge from the bustle in her shop every evening. There is a clutch of pleasantly plump women in the foyer, scanning the racks feverishly and a few others in the dressing area waiting to be measured up. So much so, that a bashful teenager accompanied with her mother beats a hasty retreat after getting a pair of trousers altered. Krishna presses a punjabi suit on her, but the girl promises to come back later. The knitted peach suit may not wait for her return though, Krishna calls after her.

So far as the male clientele goes, she feels that the men in Delhi are more keen to experiment than their counterparts in Mumbai. "There are more people there willing to wear the Jamewar, Brocades and Tissues. Here people still stick to the classics," she avers. "In this respect, I find Delhi more inspiring."

Also inspiring are Milan, London, Paris and New York. The imports from there are skillfully amalgamated into traditional designs — a blouse in intricate French lace to go with a demure saree, to elaborate beadwork and sequins on a saree. Krishna has also been retailing in Paris for the last five years and in Sweden in the last two years. The hallmark of her exports are the clever use of Indian fabrics moulded in western designs.

Having a garment exporter around all the time sure helps. But while her husband wears her ethnic stuff, he shops for shirts elsewhere, says the designer. And she has yet to make a dent with her daughter. "I was pleasantly surprised to see her pick up one of my batik tops the other day. Otherwise, she doesn't buy much from my store," she says. "At 13 she is very young to conform to any singular style. And she is too flashy to look for anything here, anyway."

No traces here of the genteel, but confused Gujarati girl of the '70s, weighed down with the burden of several work options. The only similarity from those days exists in her love for her home. "Even now I can't wait to get back there," she laughs. "I love being at home and not doing anything."

What she also loves is skiing. Both Krishna and husband Nilesh are avid skiiers. After a whirlwind business-cum-pleasure tour to Europe every year, they quietly slip away to a snow-capped terrain for a week. And bring back a dash of cosmopolitan chic for the desis in India. ■





My Personal Style

Fashion model Mehar Bhasin loves travelling, watching movies and meeting friends



Going Places



WORKING HOLIDAY:

Though travelling on assignment is in a way easier, as the nitty gritty of travel is taken off your hands, somehow it's not the same as taking a holiday. When you're on work you have to stick with the group and the only forays you can make into the destination are into shopping malls.

I love travelling and to my mind it's the best way to unwind. I think that everyone should build a holiday into their yearly schedules. If not, one runs the danger of getting bogged down in the rut of daily routine.

Modelling comes with a host of pressures in attendance and an annual holiday is the ideal way of relaxing and getting rid of the cobwebs. For me, travelling means a whole lot of new experiences and helps to widen my horizons.

I'm particular about taking a holiday every year and that's when I really let down my hair. In my profession, August through March are very busy months, with tension mounting with every show. It's a high pressure job and can be pretty exhausting too, as sometimes before a show we rehearse from 9 am to 2 pm. A holiday comes as a welcome relief in this scenario.

For the past three years I have been planning my holidays at the end of winter. This way I have ample time to chalk out a trip that keeps me away during the sweltering Delhi summer. I prefer to travel to places that I have not seen and like spending time exploring the place. Over the years I have taken off to London, Paris and Australia.

For shows I've travelled to Singapore, Sri Lanka and Malaysia and recently, I was pretty sorry for having missed Tokyo. Though travelling on assignment is in a way easier, as the nitty gritty of travel is taken off your hands, somehow it's not the same as taking a holiday. When you're on work you have to stick with the group and the only forays you can make into the destination are into shopping malls.

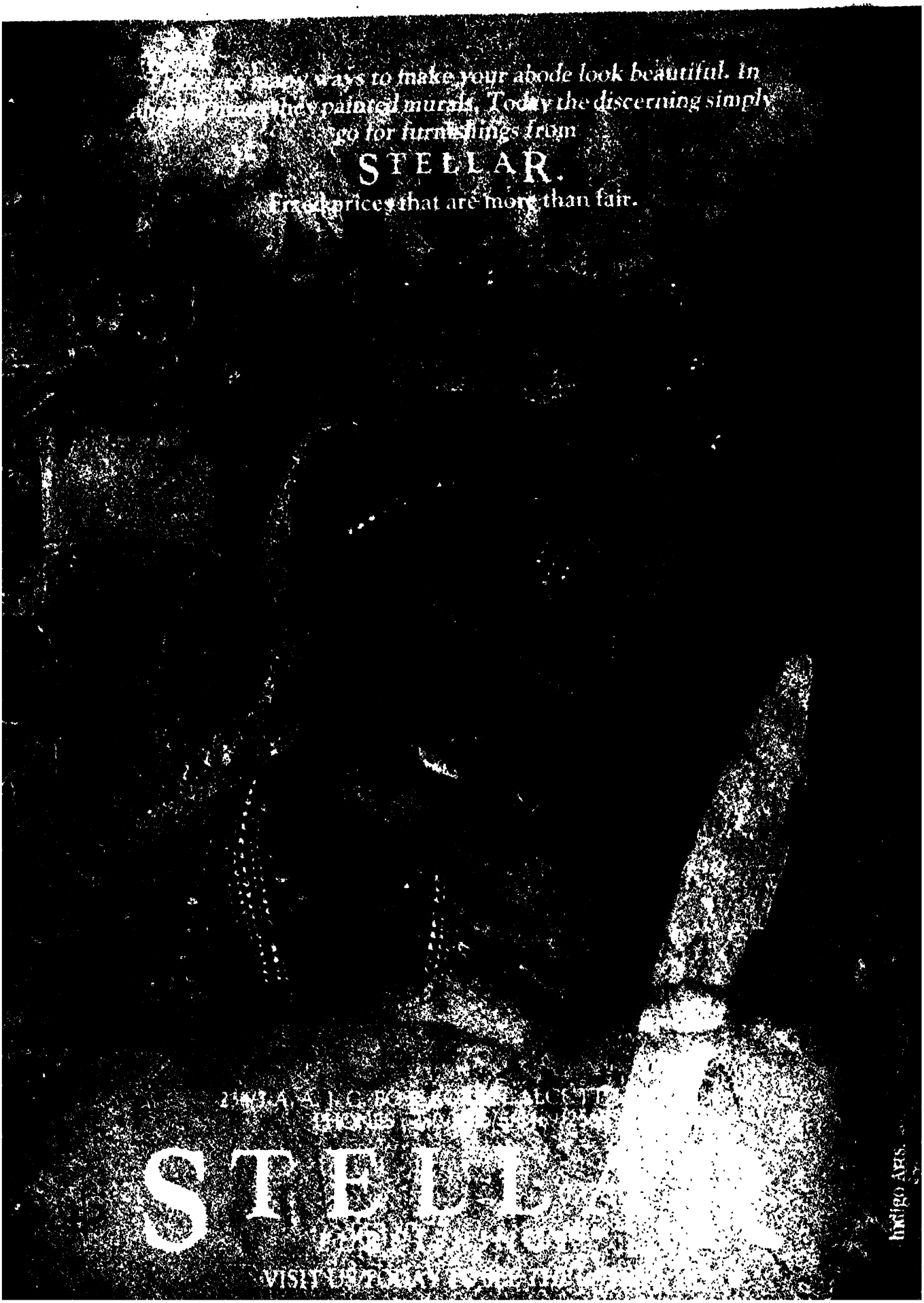
Even if the destination offers an opportunity to go on a safari or a hike, it's not possible to take a break at that point of time. However, whenever I can, I do stay back after a show and do some travelling on my own. I really enjoyed a desert safari in Dubai recently and the trip to Spain and Switzerland that I took last summer after a show in Manchester.

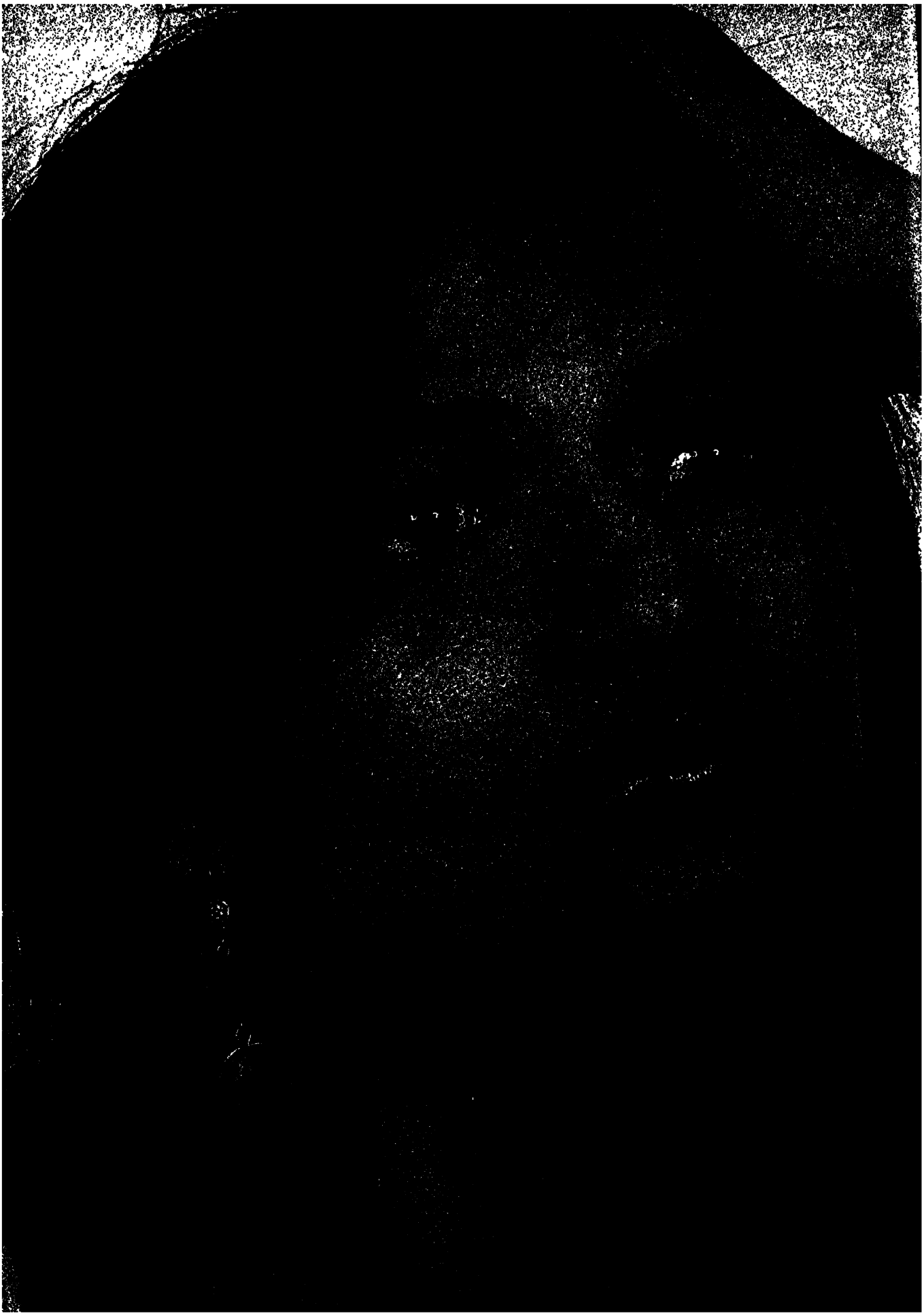
Besides travelling, I enjoy watching movies and spending time with my friends. Films by themselves are a great way to relax and may well prove to be the much needed break you're looking for. At home too I could spend hours watching films.

I also curl up with a book as often as I can, but most of all, I love chatting (for hours) on the phone with my friends.

Now I'm looking forward to the coming summer when I hope to travel abroad — but, of course, I'll have to check with my accountant to find out if I can afford it.

As told to Samita Bhatia


ways to make your abode look beautiful. In
they painted murals. Today the discerning simply
go for furnishings from
STELLAR.
Price prices that are more than fair.
STELLAR
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THE SECOND ACT



Courtesy : Lift Nene Screen

From heroine to mother, wife and costume designer; Sarika's played all the roles, says **Malini Nair**

Sarika Hassan sits working in the midst of complete clutter in her office. Around her lie strewn a hundred sample bits of cotton cloth, prints of life in the 18th century, a mannequin draped in muslin and several tailors busy with yards of turban cloth.

She is nothing like the pubescent, pasty-faced *gaon-ki-gori* from Bollywood of the 70s. You recall her from *Geet Gaata Chal* and other such bucolic, sugarcane-sweet films, laden with greasepaint, frolicking in short chiffon *ghaghras*, the *chunri* pulled tight over torpedo shaped *cholis*, pouting cute lines.



Her marriage with Kamal Hassan

This woman who sits frowning at her laptop looks almost frail in her austere black-and-white handloom *kurta*. She sports spectacles, a no-nonsense short hair-cut and no jewellery to speak of except a silver ring. There is not a trace of make-up on her pale face; somewhere in the midst of what till some months ago was a bald pate there is a smear of *kumkum*. That is it.

"I can't tell you how I hated make-up. I was happiest when I had to shoot hospital scenes. I would go to the director and prattle innocently, '*Isko bina make-up ke kurte hain, achcha lagega.*' And they would agree!" She recalls with a laugh.



'For me *Marudhanayagam* is very important, it gives me a sense of achievement. I cannot afford to make a mistake this time. I am not scared but you never can measure up to expectations, can you?'

But the real change does not lie in the spartan look. It lies in how differently she connects with the film world today. As she sits referring to historical tomes, sifting through mounds of research material you see in her nothing of the overripe child artiste working in films that nearly always ran to B grade.

She is busy designing the costumes for her husband Kamal Hassan's multi-crore venture, *Marudhanayagam*, an 18th century historical saga about a small-town chief who rebelled against the British.

She has designed for Kamal's movies like *Guna, Kuridhi Punal* and *Thevar Magan* earlier but this is a tough assignment. This time around it is not enough for Sarika to just make the characters look pretty. Kamal, being the finicky filmmaker he is, the costumes have to be true to the period.

The work has taken her to remote corners across the country, from Dindigul to Delhi searching for antique motifs and fabrics. She has jetted to Paris and London to collect sketches and writings and spent long hours quizzing Delhi-based historian Johan Marie Lafont on military uniforms.

The workload is immense: she has to design for a main cast of 150 characters, apart from dressing crowds and soldiers.

The test shot itself needed 7,500 costumes. Hundreds of yards of fine muslin has to be manufactured, blocks of old motifs have to be made. There can be no whites, only unbleached stuff can be used. Which caste wore which turban and how? Did all French soldiers have

At a function with Kamal Hassan and Rajnikant



women wear only silks?

"For me this film is very important, it gives me a sense of achievement. I cannot afford to make a mistake this time. I am not scared but you never can measure up to expectations, can you?" she says earnestly. There are a hundred details she cannot afford to miss out, for all of the tinsel world is watching her, some with amused indulgence and others with cynicism.

Today Sarika and Kamal are the first couple of the city's film circuit. They are to Chennai what the Bachchans are to Mumbai: an exclusive couple who zealously guard their privacy and fame. They notched an all-time hit when Queen Elizabeth took time off during her packed trip to drop in on the sets of *Marudhanayagam*.

But ten years ago when Sarika dumped Bollywood to settle down in her lover's city, acceptance had not come easy. The two had broken Chennai's conservative social norms. For one, Kamal had walked out on his danseuse first wife, Vani Ganapathy, alienating even his own family. For another, the two chose to live in and have their first child, Shruti, out of wedlock.

Sarika's stint as an actress was never a great success and she was through with her quota of village belle, pious wife roles before she could leave any imprint on the film world. In fact, her stint in Bollywood is something she recalls with fondness but without any passion except for her films with directors like Basu Bhattacharjee and Jalal Agha.

But Sarika, the researcher-designer, has come a long way since her days as a moppet when she would walk around the studios lugging a dictionary. Without a formal school education all she had to shield herself against English was the dictionary.

Her childhood, spent in studios, is something that still rankles. Her parents had just separated and she had to earn for herself and her mother. No studies, no play, just hard work and a few lessons with a strict but kind Parsi tutor, Roshan Bulsara, who would haul her up often for not finding enough time to study.

"Whatever you say, making children work in films amounts to child labour. I was made to work. I would never make Shruti work if I am ever in the position my mother was. A full education is what a child needs," she says.

Sarika's innings with Bollywood began when she was five. The United Producers were holding a talent search contest and the photograph her father sent across had appealed to the judges. Singer-music director





'I was keen to study, to go to school. I didn't want to work.' And the fact that her mother insisted that she did, drove a wedge between Sarika and her



Zealously guarding their privacy and fame

Hemant Kumar had been on the panel and he asked if she knew any songs.

"I somehow rattled off two songs. I cooked up something that went *Zaroorat hai, zaroorat hai, zaroorat hai, matipati ki, patimati ki*....And then finished off with *Buddha milgaya*..." she recalls.

B.R. Chopra had been looking for a child artiste for his Sunil Dutt-Rajkumar-Nimmi whodunnit *Hamraz*. Sarika fitted in and had a grand stage debut: she arrived in a huge 'egg', which when cracked popped a little Sarika. Her first film got her friends for life — Sunil Dutt, Raj Kumar, Yash Chopra, Mumtaz, Iftekar and Madan Mohan.

Other baby Sarika films followed — *Majhli Didi, Balak*, even a role as a boy in *Mera Munna*. But it was not as though she enjoyed the experience: "I was keen to study, to go to school. I didn't want to work." And the fact that her mother insisted that she did, drove a wedge between Sarika and her.

But the good that the years of hard work did was to make Sarika thoroughly familiar with film making. "I can confidently say that if I am given any department of film making to handle, I will not make a complete mess of it."

The Kamal-Sarika success story



Courtesy Lalit Nanal/Screen

Sarika literally grew up in front of the cameras. She was 12 when she did *Kagaz Ki Nao*, 13 when she did her biggest hit, *Geet Gata Chal*, romancing with heroes when she hardly knew what it all meant, her body padded to look adult. "I should have been given three years off. I just wasn't right for these films," she says.

Her greatest embarrassment was Gulzar's *Khushboo* where she started off working as a child-maid. "In about six months Gulzarbhai was horrified to see me. I had grown in all directions — front, behind, hair all over my legs. It was awful. My role had to be cut abruptly," she guffaws.

The one film she loved doing was Agha's *Nirvaan* where she was left to be herself and could be as natural as she pleased on the screen. Basu Bhattacharya taught her a lot with *Grihapravesh*. He worked on her gait and posture to give her that sexy look.

As for the rest, it was work, particularly her goody-goody roles as a long-suffering woman. "I did feel like rebelling, but actors are not paid to rebel, are they? I even did a film like *Kunwari Bahu* where the woman gets pregnant but shields the man who causes her all the misery. My friends would scream 'how can you play someone like that?'"

But, she says, all the kitsch notwithstanding there was much more innocence to it all earlier. Shooting romantic scenes would be hilarious. "It was rather cute. If we were hugging, we would tuck in our fronts or put out a hand so nothing would touch, if you know what I mean."

Despite the innocence, there were the requisite rumours revolving around Sarika's petite form. The most famous of these was the one involving Karan Kapoor (son of Shashi Kapoor, and then a failed actor). But that relationship never amounted to anything. And then, of course, Sarika met Kamal Hassan, and gave up on the movies to move in with him.

Sarika finds today's heroines an admirable lot, in the kind of roles they do, and of course in being allowed to look natural on screen. "It makes me really happy to see Pooja Bhat sing *Mere dilka woh Shahzada* dressed as she is. She looks like a girl on the street. In the old days she would have had to wear a yellow and purple dress with sequins with a halter-neck and load herself with jewellery."

Sarika's own efforts are to keep the clothes as close to reality as possible. In Kamal's *Guna*, she wandered through Hyderabad's red-light areas to create costumes for the prostitutes. In *Marudhanayagam*, she has clothed the hero in muslin which does not look glamorous, but was the main fabric of the day. But she has Kamal's go-ahead to make the characters authentic, even if they are unglamorous, as a consequence. Yet Sarika does not want to make costume-designing for *Marudhanayagam* a bookish effort. "I could do endless research but I need to be realistic about it — after all I am not writing a book but making a film. We are also committed financially so we have to complete it as soon as we can."

The Hassans are a hard-working couple, trying to squeeze in some time for home and kids, 11-year-old Shruti and seven-year-old Akshara. The Chennai film circle does not party as hard as Bollywood does, but even by these soporific standards Sarika and Kamal are rather reclusive. They socialise little except with a close circle of friends and the Press is not too welcome to pry into family matters.

"We need this privacy in a circle where everything is known to everybody. And where is the time to party? When we come home tired after a whole day, sometimes after several days of work, all we want to do is shower and relax with the children," she says.

Her acting days, Sarika says, are more or less completely behind her. "I want to be around when the kids grow up. Acting means working from 6 am to 8 pm. Besides, I don't think it is inferior to just be a wife and mother. In fact, it is far easier to face the cameras. I mean you can cover a bad film with a good one but you cannot right a wrong done to a child. I don't want the children to go through what I did." She may, some day, return to the screen though she is in no hurry to don the greasepaint. "*Bahut kar liya*. I have experienced so much now I cannot do any old role. I would only touch a role that frightens me." ■

Queen Elizabeth with Kamal Hassan on the sets of *Marudhanayagam*





Shooting romantic scenes would be hilarious. 'It was rather cute. If we were hugging, we would put out a hand so nothing would touch'

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Your inclination will be to question yourself, delve deep into your inner psyche prompted by an assessment of your financial affairs.Budgets and personal cutbacks may be in order, temporarily, as the emphasis this week is on loans and funds, employment and projects. A career change may be likely.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The emphasis is strongly on hard work.Pay close attention to your inner voice for guidance on what you need to do and how to do it in order to excel at your achievement of goals. These goals may be prestige, social status, promotion, tri umphing in power struggles, awards and rewards.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Ganesha says house, home and property are the main focus even if it's just renovation, refurbishing or redecoration. You find yourself giving money matters extra time and being ready to grasp financial opportunities or interacting with people through whom you can gain. This is a warm-up period.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The emphasis will be on career and business activity, your ability to generate income to cope with the demands of modern times. Also at the forefront this week will be partnerships, collaborations and ties. Household and family matters dominate your time distracting you from work but they need time.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Your sphere of interests expands, letting your personality shine through. You display a tremendous ability to make friends, socialise, give and receive love. The focus on gains,so guard against disregarding the welfare of others, going to the emotional extremes and a kind of mental fatigue as well.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Epicurean delights that tickle the taste buds, the joys of family life, the security of money in the bank is the buildup from the influence of Jupiter. This influence is only now coming into full play. Right upto June, from the initial weeks of March, hospitality, guests and visitors will take up your time.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Friendly activity supports your mental growth and expansion. Sometimes entertaining and socialising may not pan out as anticipated but it will give a boost in will power, optimism and vision. You enjoy yourself at varying levels with hobbies and sports, love and warmth when dealing with children.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



More mundane and earthly matters occupy you— be it investing for raising funds, buying, selling, new acquisitions, shopping for clothes or even perhaps, a new summer wardrobe. You may be shopping for the home—giving it a new look. A week of hectic activities—official and domestic—to keep you busy.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



A frantic, or at least, a hectic week lies ahead. Mars creates friendly activity that supports your mental expansion. You may find your creative abilities and finances a little short, but you have the ability to change this situation by applying vision, optimism and faith. That should be the guiding principles for you.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



The key words will be bonds, connections, relationships in general. Travel is the other, very strong indication. In your present changed state of mind, you cope beautifully—agile and strong both physically and mentally. Guard against letting communications deteriorate, displaying negativism or culpability.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



All your efforts and endeavours, your energised and creative approach are finally bearing fruit. All the I"s that matter - power, pelf, promotion, perks and position will show a steady upward graph Pending matters get a positive resolution and foundations are laid for new projects and affairs.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



The full moon -shifts your areas of interest and focus to inner revisions vis-a vis your personal foundations and lifestyle values. Education and higher education, research, religious impulses, new discoveries will all absorb and draw you. You will experience joy in relations with parents and children.

BIRTHDAYS

March 8: **Venus sextile Mars claims success in ventures, tremendous popularity and a positive attitude to life and the luck of the draw. You should get what you want.**

March 9: **Mercury sextile Neptune means loans and funds will be available, says Ganesha. Marriage, engagement, collaborations and long distance connections are foretold.**

March 10: **Jupiter square Pluto means stress and strain on individuals though it could mean trouble to the country. Changes on the work front are predicted.**

March 11: **Mercury sextile Venus would indicate to quite a few, progress and pelf despite tension and turmoil thus proving that life itself is a big paradox. Avoid haste and jealousy if you wish to be really happy.**

March 12: **Mercury trine Pluto means for those who live by the written or the spoken word, one of the better years for sure but expenses will mount and be your bugbear.**

March 13: **The full moon helps you to bond with mate, friend or people in general as you will have charisma and class.Trips and ties will thus be important.**

March 14: **Mercury sextile Uranus positioning promises money, wit, ingenuity, luck of the draw.It means you are a winner.Funds will be secured.**

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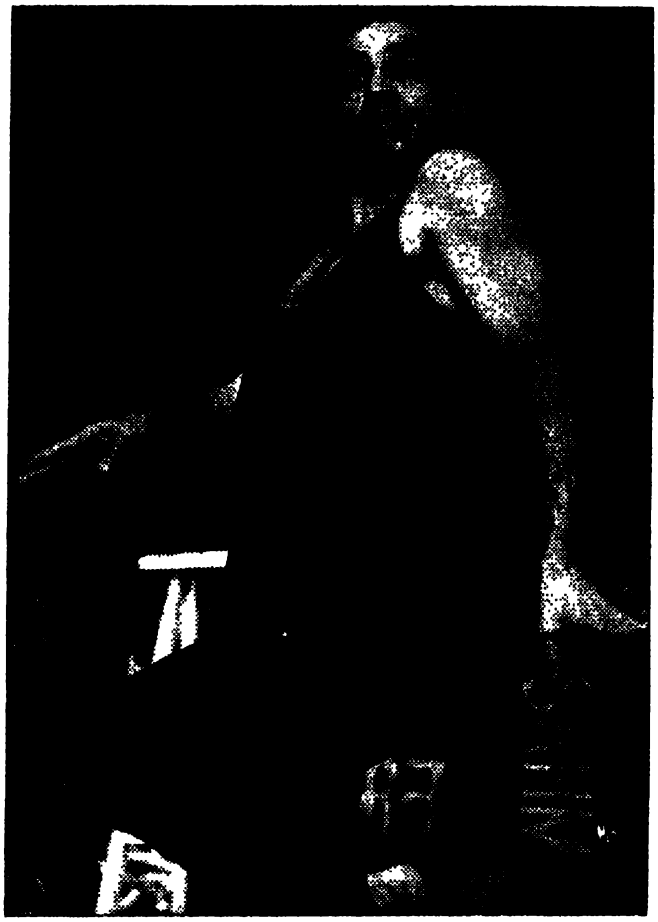
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Body and Soul

Combine to perfect effect in Astad Deboo's dance, says **Sudha G. Tilak**

Does modern, contemporary Indian dance possess an idiom of its own? Or is it, at its best, a fusion of all classical and folksy forms of dance? And at its worst nothing better than a hotch potch of all manner of performing arts?

Watching Astad Deboo dance at the Krishna Gana Sabha in Chennai it seemed that Deboo is one of that rare breed who is adept at amalgamating past and present dance forms and evolving a modern idiom of his own. This was evident at his 90-minute solo performance 'Interpreting Tagore,' which used Rabindranath Tagore's verses in a contemporary context and used them to expostulate his own personal feelings, his isolation in the Indian dance circuit and his internal rapport with the form.



Astad Deboo: Evolving a modern idiom of his own

The work is an adaptation of Aruna Chakravorty's translations of three poems of Tagore from *Gitanjali*. The first piece is an invocation to the creator, the second is about a very familiar symbol of Bengal, the goddess Kali, set to the music of Shostakovich and the third piece, 'Walking Tall' (*Ekla Chalo re*) had Deboo making use of the performance platform to showcase his own style of dance.

Deboo's 28-year-long career has gone through a series of changes just as his dance has evolved over time. From his training in Kathak in his college days he was drawn towards modern, contemporary dance that demanded a different temperament. Since then, Deboo has given everything that came his way a go: be it Kathakali, jazz, ballet, Japanese folk and, of course, the styles of contemporary dancers from the West, be it Pina Bausch or Martha Graham. Deboo's only preoccupation was to condition his body to speak a language of its own.

Perhaps it is due to the individualistic nature of his art form that Deboo has always been toasted at private dos and shunned at many public platforms in India. From being a fringe performer who 'is talented, but who wants to see that kind of dance' and being seen more abroad than at home, Deboo made a stunning spectacle at the Khajuraho Dance Festival in 1991. The establishment too honoured him with the Sangeet Natak Award in 1996 which finally signalled that there is place for an original kind of dance in India.

Dressed in an ethereal white ensemble, Deboo's first piece for the evening's performance was emotive, wispy and transparent as he twirled the folds of his kurta like some large white bird flapping its wings before soaring away. The piece was an invocation to the god of creation and used the Kathak and ballet styles to make an enchanting spectacle.

The second item for the evening was stunning visually as Deboo shrunk and expanded his body to form a mask-like apparition, a symbol of Kali, using Kathakali postures and facial gestures, set to the strains of Shostakovich. Since Deboo likes a certain spontaneity to all his works, each performance in 'Interpreting Tagore' has an explanatory note. Deboo, despite being open to multi-disciplines, uses a stark stage and dark backdrop. His props are finally his own body, his mobile and plastic face which is a perfect complement to the calisthenics that his body crafts of space, silence and music.

Deboo has always been ready for anything aesthetically new and appealing. Even as he uses multiple idioms to formulate his own dance and personal vocabulary, he does not hesitate to use external art forms as well to expand the frontiers of his art. For his 'Thanatomorphia' he danced to a stage that was occupied with life-size puppets of Dadi Pudumjee or with Thang-tha deaf and dumb artistes as well.

Deboo remains essentially a loner in the dance field in India but his genius is apparent in quiet flashes such as 'Interpreting Tagore'. ■

Remains of the Day

Does the International Women's Day mean anything to anyone? *The Telegraph Magazine* finds out

On March 8, the women of the world will once again unite. So what if only a few remember what on earth for. On the occasion of International Women's Day, we spoke to a cross-section of women to see what the day means to them and how they would celebrate it. The conclusion: cynicism has spread its tentacles, but only peripherally.

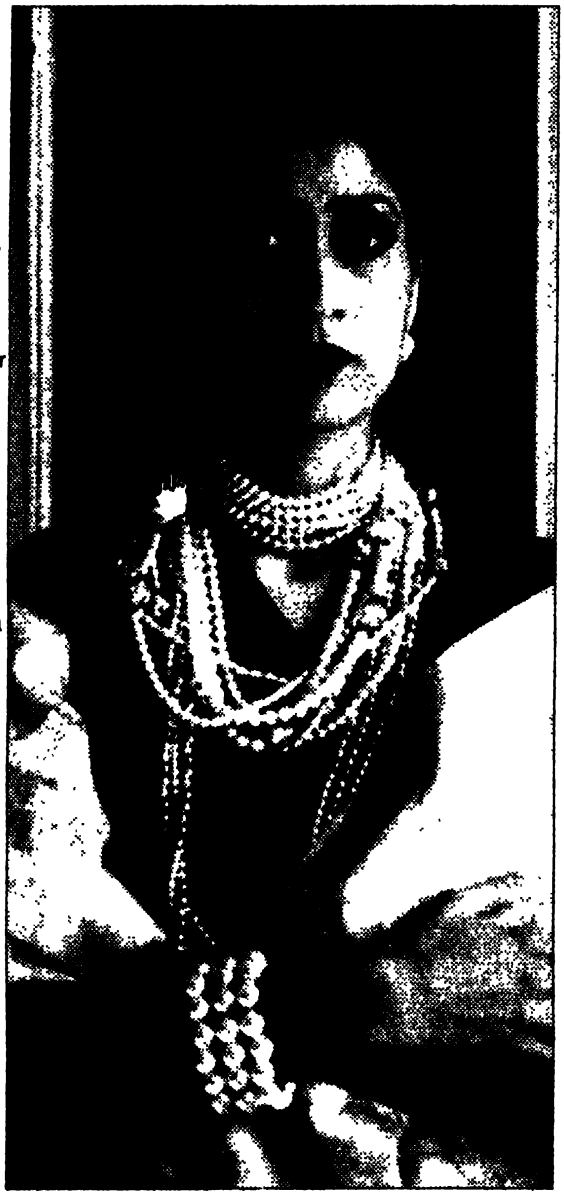
SHEILA DIXIT
Former minister and senior member of the Congress party:

It is very important to celebrate International Women's Day as it draws attention to the rights and plight of women the world over. For one day the focus is on women and issues concerning them. At least, now these issues are not relegated as mere women issues and people worldwide have started taking genuine interest in them.

Ever since United Nations instituted the commission for women, they have come a long way. But there is still a long way to go. After all, it is the question of one half of humankind. You cannot ignore them, their needs and aspirations. It would amount to not using the potential of half of humankind. You can't have real development as long as this half is left behind.

I would spent the day introspecting as I feel it is very

Geetanjali Kashyap:Unmoved; Nafisa Ali:Celebration with a purpose





important. I'll introspect how much we have achieved and how much we still have to achieve. More importantly, how should we go about achieving it.

GEETANJALI KASHYAP
Fashion designer

International Women's Day means nothing, absolutely nothing, to me. Is it actually observed internationally? I wonder what they do. I am sure none of the girls in my office have heard of it. Since I am ignorant about it you can see the kind of impact it has on an average person.

Come to think of it, what do they actually achieve by observing an international day for women. I personally don't believe in mass observation of anything. To me, it is nothing more than a *tamasha*, a waste of time. I would rather spend my time with a particular women's group working towards the betterment of womenfolk at the ground level. And that's what I am doing. I am working with a particular group in the slum areas, helping women learn a few basic techniques like stitching etc. I'd like to help educate them, help them become aware and self-reliant. I think that serves more purpose than celebrating one day as women's day. It is all nonsense.

NAFISA ALI
Former Miss India and a social worker

As far as I am concerned, I don't think that observing one day serves any purpose as such, after all each day is a new day and has to be treated like that. It brings new challenges, new hopes and new desires. But if it gathers a group of women who are doing something meaningful and facilitates a kind of a fruitful dialogue then yes, it serves a purpose. I don't celebrate it anyway. But I don't mind hearing or experiencing something of substance. Something which is enlightening and at the same time does something for the general upliftment of women.

NALINI SINGH
TV journalist and a social activist

Nalini Singh:A sign post; Sheila Dixit:Introspecting the relevance of the day





What should the International Women's Day mean to me? I don't know. All I know is that women need to wake up. This is no longer a patriarchal society where decisions are made for them. Where men rule their life, domestically and politically. They need to wake up and take control back in their hands and navigate their own lives, make their own choices, take their own decisions.

As far as I am concerned, I don't think that observing one day serves any purpose as such, after all each day is a new day and has to be treated like that. It brings new challenges, new hopes and new desires. But if it gathers a group of women who are doing something meaningful and facilitates a kind of a fruitful dialogue then yes, it serves a purpose. I don't celebrate it anyway. But I don't mind hearing or experiencing something of substance. Something which is enlightening and at the same time does something for the general upliftment of women.

NALINI SINGH
TV journalist and a social activist

International Women's Day is certainly a sign post. I feel pleasantly surprised and happy that each year women, and I don't mean the urban,' enlightened women, but the rural women, observe it.

Though it is an internationally-designated day and not something that comes from within, but it is still

heartening to see this determination in women, and here I mean women who have to struggle every hour of the day. They struggle to keep their home and honour together, bring up kids, earn a living, even struggle to get a meal together. If despite all this they still have the determination to observe March 8 as a day of strength, of solidarity, then this is definitely some sort of a reflection of their inner strength. As if they are asserting that

women who have managed to keep their own despite difficult conditions. Earlier I used to be involved, but of late I have got too busy with television that I have not been able to do anything on this day.

PRIYA PAUL
President, The Park hotel

The day as such has no

model who can talk to them, relate to them, tell them about her experiences, how she achieved what she did to inspire the younger lot. This is the only way I can think of commemorating this day in a meaningful way. Otherwise, why just March 8, let every day be a women's day!

KIRAN BEDI
Magsaysay Award winner and special secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Delhi





Madhu Jain:Expressing solidarity; Kiran Bedi:Focus on gender and bringing women at par with men

you can make it, live life on your own terms despite all odds.

I happened to be in one of the rural areas on this day quite by chance and was very pleasantly surprised. Actually it is these women who understand the full import of this day and the reason for observing it. You know, NGOs like Saathin in Rajasthan and SEWA in Ahmedabad, they have helped mobilise the women force and their dedication is almost religious. Here I am discounting the role played by the elite women. Because, in my opinion the real winners are the

significance for me. As far as I am concerned I wish every day was a women's day. Besides, I don't understand what is there to celebrate, if it was commemorative I would have understood, but celebration, for what? Do people actually celebrate it? Do something special on that day? And more importantly, does any of it have any meaning to it?

What would I do on that day? I think I would get some women together, facilitate some kind of intercation between them. You know present someone as a positive role

International Women's Day, to me, means focus on gender. On issues concerning gender. And that, in my opinion, is very important. Bringing women at par with men so that they can contribute to the social development of the country. You know, bringing about an awareness among them so that they are productive not only population-wise but socially too.

No, I don't think it is a meaningless exercise. For me, it has a lot of meaning. It is not just a question of celebrating the International Women's

Day, it is a question of focussing attention on hitherto ignored and sidelined-half of the population, focussing attention on issues which were considered only women's issues.

May be, in tangible terms it has a limited purpose, but that is okay, the intangible is more important at times. See the amount of awareness it has created, amount of government funding, international aid the cause of



Priya Paul: Nothing special about the day

the women got after United Nations declared the International Year of the Woman.

I look at it as a birthday, a day to celebrate. It is as important or unimportant as any individual's birthday. Why do people celebrate their birthday? What is so special about that day? Ultimately, it's believing in a particular thing that makes it special, otherwise everything is meaningless, even festivals.

I would like to celebrate the day by reiterating my commitment to empower women. If I can help empower even one woman I would feel that my purpose is served. That's what I try to do through my NGO Navjyoti. I try to educate them, help them assess their abilities and their areas of strength.

MINI MATHUR
Television anchor

I think the International Women's Day is like a focal point for all the forums, organisations, societies to focus on a single issue. To my mind, it is a day to remember the women's movement, to celebrate its achievements and ponder on the future course of action.

It is like a festival, like Diwali. It is a day for like-minded people to come together and share their thoughts and experiences. I don't think it is a meaningless exercise. It has a lot of significance. So many articles come out on the occasion, seminars are held, meeting are convened. So much awareness is created. Even the people who are not aware of it come to know of it through all this. Besides, they also come to know what has been happening to the women's movement worldwide, what have been the latest developments and also failures. For this reason alone it is important to observe this day. It is like Archies with their advertising, reminding people of Valentine's Day.

I don't celebrate the day as such, I mean, I don't do anything in particular, except write a few articles. That's what I have done now, they'll appear in March. I think that is my contribution to the day.

MADHU JAIN
Fashion Designer

For me, it is the day to express solidarity with the womenfolk throughout the world. It means expression of one's femininity. To tell the world that being feminine does not mean being weak. Basically, the way I look at it is that this is the occasion we can tell men, hey look, we are not the weaker sex.

To say that it is irrelevant is wrong. I think it is very relevant paticularly in the Indian context where women have always been considered a secondary sex. There are places even today where female infanticide is very rampant. Then you have dowry deaths, and so many other ways of mental, physical and psychological oppression. The day, and the fact that it is celebrated with such enthusiasm, reflects the desire on part of women no matter what social and financial background they come from to come together as equal. I suppose if we have a woman President now it would drill the message home more effectively. Though we have had a woman Prime Minister, but now to cap it further if we have a President too it would be really effective. She would be able to do so much more.

My way of celebrating it would be to emphasise on the fact that I design clothes mainly for women. Women of strong character, of great inner strength, the complete woman. She need not be a great beauty, but she has to be one in control of her life.■

As told to Ghazala Wahab

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1120	2 4 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1520	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1 3, 5, 7
GUWAHATI					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
HYDERABAD					
IC-703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-701	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2 4, 6 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1 2, 4 6 7	IC-714	1430	4 7
IMPHAL					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4 6
IC-777	1815	1 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1 3, 5
JAIPUR					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAMNAGAR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
JODHPUR					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
PUNE					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

ABU DHABI					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-308	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
BRUNEI					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0650	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC 747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-538	2230	4	SU 537	1030	4
KB-106	1000	2, 3 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19 20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs Fri & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed & Sun; Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saralghat Express Dep: Tues., Wed & Sat. Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun, Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Dehrapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.:; Arr Mon., Thurs & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.: Arr Sun., Wed & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kalimpur Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Saraf Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8 20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15 30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19 40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6 20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5 30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	17 05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep. Sunday; Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10 40	2427
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03 30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2208545-54 for in-coming trains; 2208535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



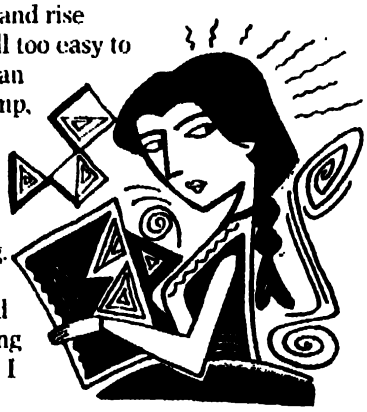
SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a student of class 12. During my school days, my friend (who is a lesbian), made me enter into a homosexual relationship. But after a few months she started avoiding me, she may have got someone else to play with. I knew that she never loved me, but I loved her truly. We have been separated since school final, as we study in different institutions now. My other friends don't understand my feelings. My mental condition is hampering my studies. Please help.*

Name withheld, Calcutta

A. What you feel for this young lady is certainly not love. You have been ruthlessly abused into a relationship by someone who is obviously adept at manipulation, and you are confusing the extreme trauma of your psychological scars for an emotional response. It is essential for you to examine your own attitude very carefully, to feel your own pain and rise above it. It is all too easy to get mired into an emotional swamp, but let me tell you that true love is always, but always, a positive feeling. Any love that causes hurt and pain and nothing else is not love. I know you are intelligent enough to find your way out of this ugly situation — it is only a question of asserting your dignity, individuality and self-respect.



Q. *I am a 23-year-old man with a strong desire to achieve something in life. I am a commerce graduate and am taking courses in C S. I belong to a middleclass business family where all proud fathers expect their sons to join their trading business. I do not want to be a businessman and I have told this to my parents. My family taunts me on my abilities and question the limited earning capacity of professionals. My parents want me to start earning as early as possible without considering that the completion of courses will take time. For the same reason they treat me as a kid and refuse to involve me in serious family matters. I have regular arguments with my parents. My father indulges in all kinds of false accusations and hurls abuses at me. I am fed up with the ill treatment. I am looking for a part time job. But, how do I handle the situation ? How do I tell them of my satisfaction in choosing my career? Please advise.*



D.P, Calcutta

A. For better or for worse, we have all to ultimately accept responsibility for our own lives. We have to learn from our own mistakes and our own experiences. The clash of generations is also a fact of life. Your parents are obviously unable to comprehend either your motivation or your goals. It is a real test of your perseverance and faith not to get deflected by your parents and continue to stick to the path you have chosen. In most parts of the world, where the joint family does not operate as it does in India, a young man of 23 would quite naturally be on his own by this age. I suggest that you have a serious talk with your father, where you bluntly convey your determination to stick to your own course. Explain that this does not lessen your commitment to your family, only your path to contributing to the greater good is different. As you have described your situation, I do not really expect family politics to de-escalate. Very few joint families are resilient enough to allow scope for individuality. However, a part-time job will certainly ease matters, and convince those around you of serious intentions. In time, you will, of course, have to move out and make your own way in life.

Family members upset that you do not want to join their business? In most parts of the world, where the joint family does not operate, a man of 23 would quite naturally be on his own. I suggest that you have a serious talk with your father, where you bluntly convey your determination to stick to your own course

Q. *I am 20 years old. I have a younger cousin who is very frank with me although she*

lives in another city. Of late she has been suffering from depression as she has gone to a new city because of her parents transfer. But the real problem lies somewhere else. Recently, from her letters I could make out that she is planning to commit suicide after her class 10 exams. But she refuses to tell me the reason for her decision. I am in complete dilemma as to whom to contact or what to do to bring her interest back in life. I cannot tell her parents as she has threatened that if I do so she will take the extreme step now. Please help.



Arpita, address withheld

A. Many adolescents suffer from depression — it's a part of growing up and coming to terms with the world. Functionally, most of them outgrow it. Articulating and talking about problems is almost always a good thing it provides a vent and an outlet for the intense feelings and reactions that mark the teenage years. The strangest thing about being young is that everything — the good and the bad — is happening for the very first time. It is really important at this age to have a confidante to trust in. I suggest that you continue writing frequently to your cousin and try to elicit real reasons for her depression. It could be linked to stress, unrealistic expectations from parents, an unsatisfactory love affair or over some incident of childhood abuse. Very gently try to draw out the real reason from her pain which quite possibly she is suppressing even from herself. If possible, visit her in her new city, and try to distract her and deflect her to more positive ways of thinking. In all likelihood she will outgrow this phase on her own, but in case you feel that there is something which is seriously disturbing her, take her parents into confidence and visit a trained psychiatrist who can clinically examine the roots of her suicidal tendencies. However, I personally think it's just a 'normal' abnormal phase.

Q. *I am a degree student of Arts. I stay with my mother, she suffers from rheumatoid arthritis. We have a servant problem and my mother and I have to do all the work. I don't find time to read books. I am worried about my career and mother. I have another problem. I have no friends in college. I find most of my fellow students frivolous about their studies and career. I am, therefore, thinking of appearing as a private student. I feel depressed and frustrated with occasional bouts of mood-swings. I have completely transformed into a quiet girl from being a jolly one. For your information I may point out that I've been disappointed in love. The relationship was snapped so abruptly that I am still coping with the consequences. Please help. Will my appearing as a private student affect my qualification? I am keen to have a career in psychology.*

Depressed with domestic worries? You don't have any problem at all except that your domestic situation and your mother's illness have made you a little introverted — just turn the curve of your mouth up instead of down and go out and face the world again!

Name and address withheld

A. Your letter sounds so very sad and pathetic, yet when you break it down into manageable components your situation isn't so very bad at all. I quite understand and sympathise with the difficulties of looking after your ailing mother but housework, if approached rationally, can be brought to manageable proportions, by shortcuts and clear-headed planning. Cook a simple meal once a day and don't become a perfectionist about every possible detail. I don't think it's the housework that is the problem at all; it's the worrying. You worry about your mother, you worry about yourself, you worry about your career and your studies and the housework and anything else you can possibly find to worry about. Worry is like a cancer, it feeds upon itself. No wonder you are depressed and don't have any friends. Appearing as a private student should not in any way affect your qualifications but it may well retard your growth as a balanced and well rounded person. Inter-personal and interactive skills are important for a career in psychology.



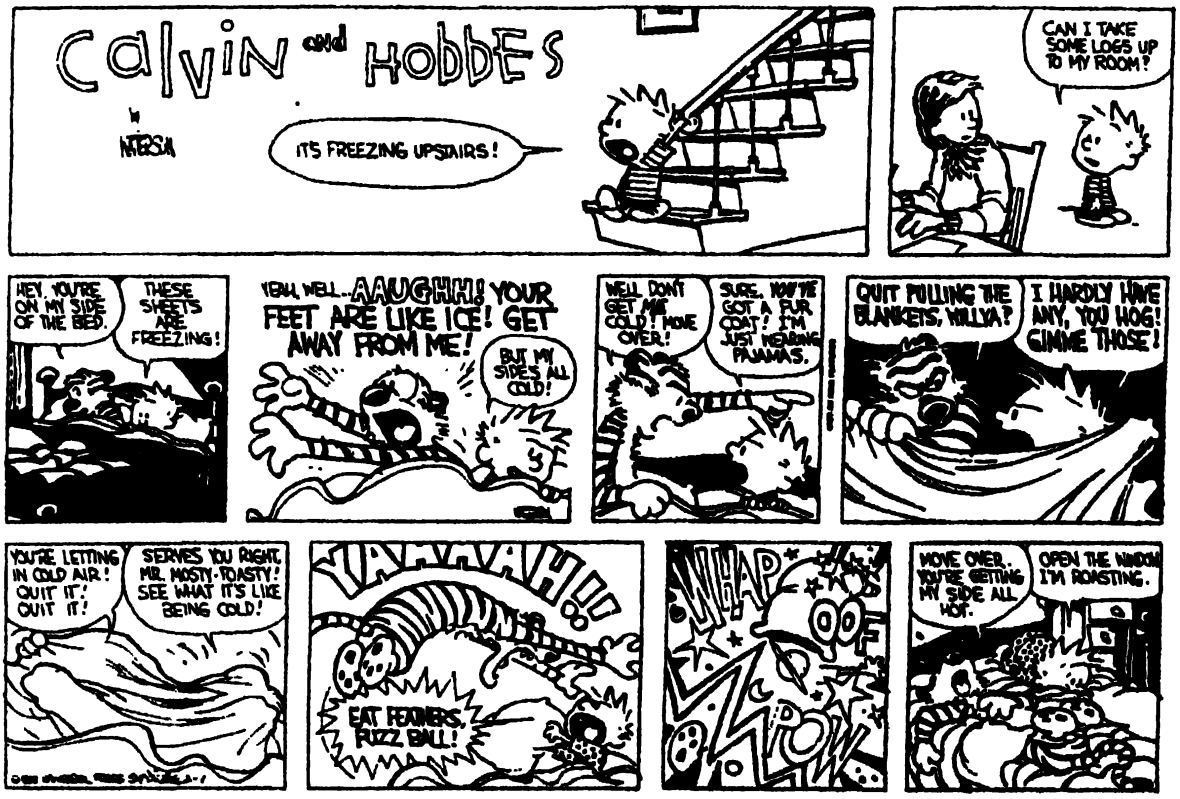
Go ahead and be a little frivolous yourself — a little frivolity never did anybody any harm. You don't have any problem at all except that your domestic situation and your mother's illness have made you a little introverted — just turn the curve of your mouth up instead of down and go out and face the world again!

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

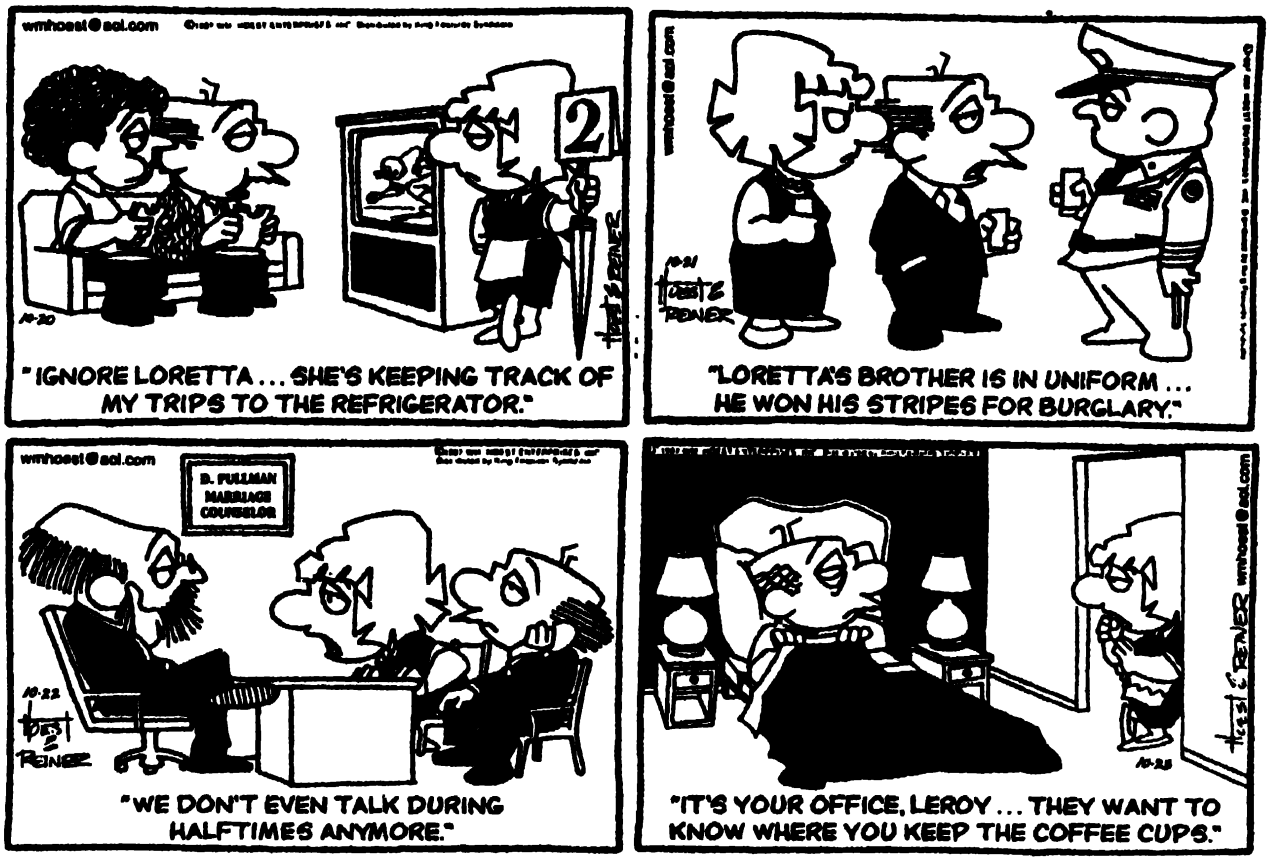
ARCHIE



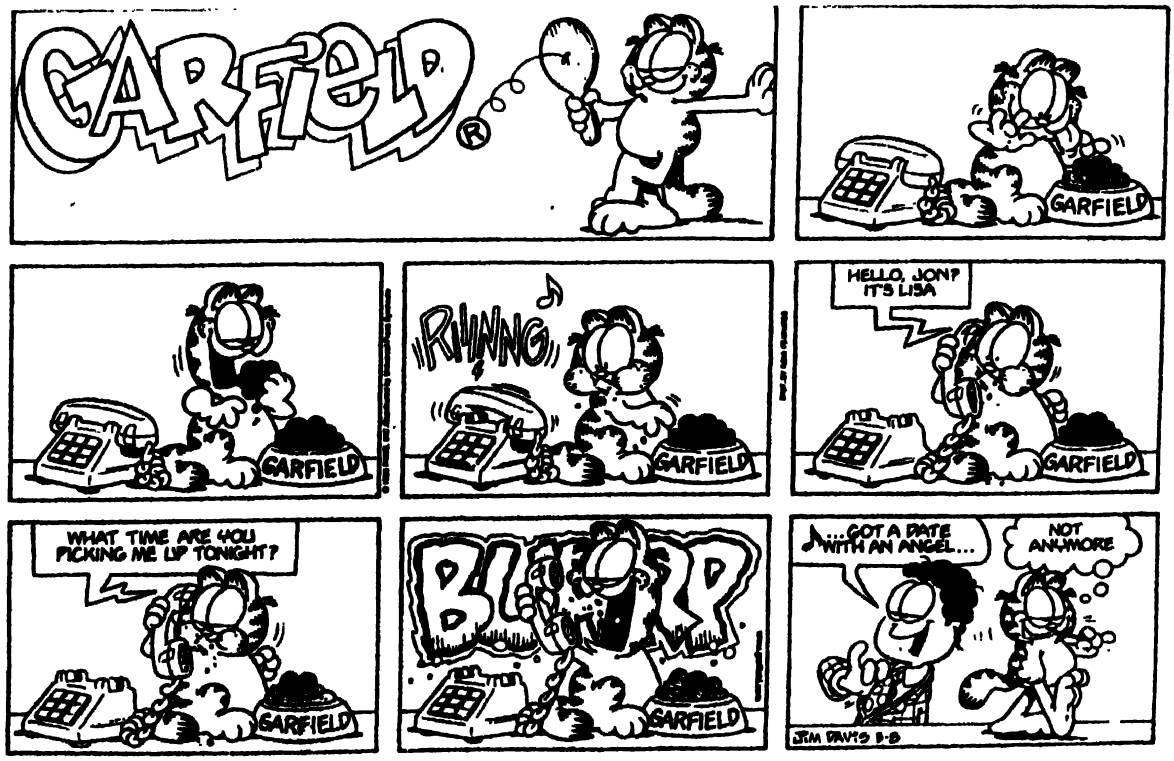
CALVIN AND HOBBES ❀ WATTERSON



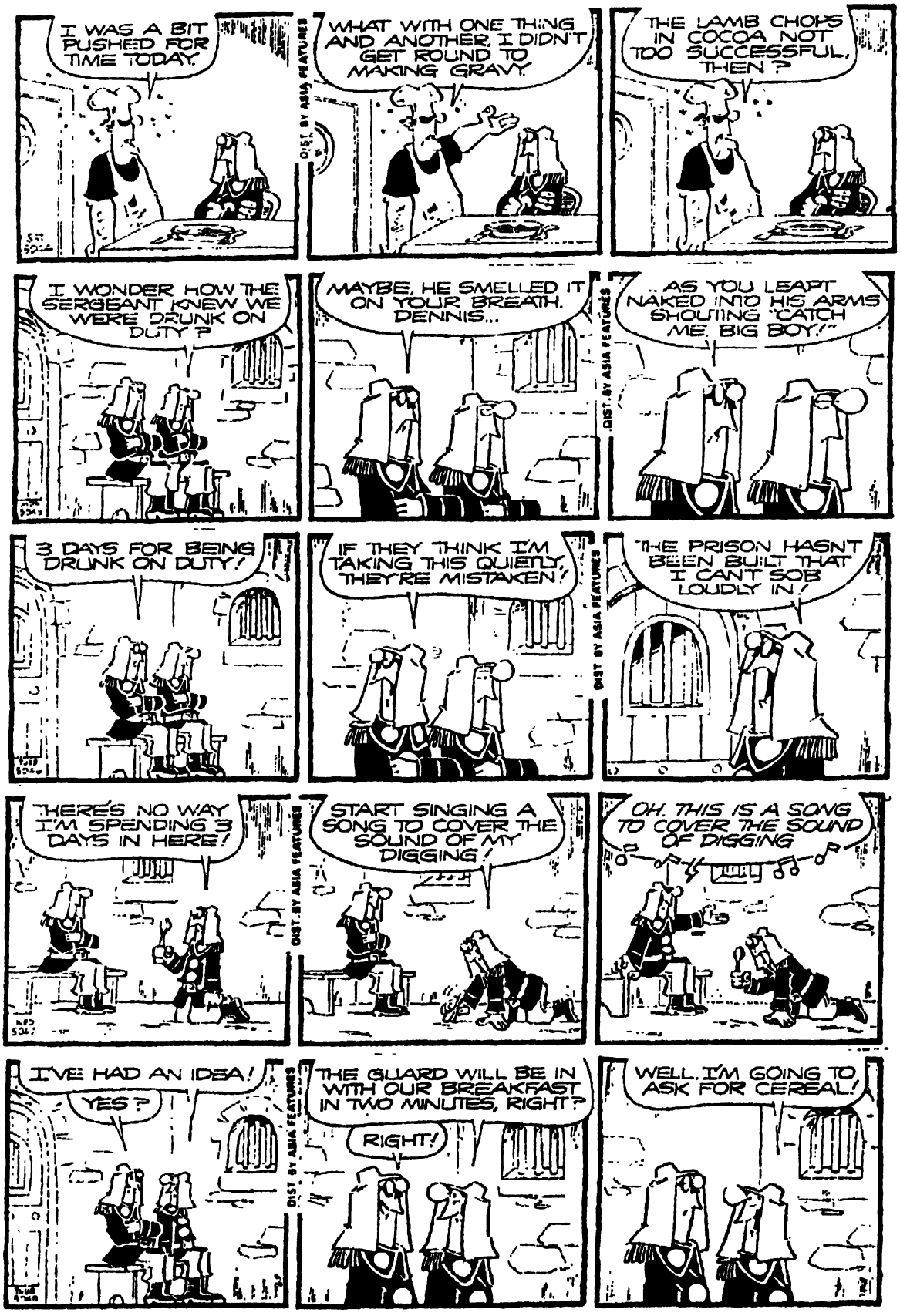
THE LOCKHORNS



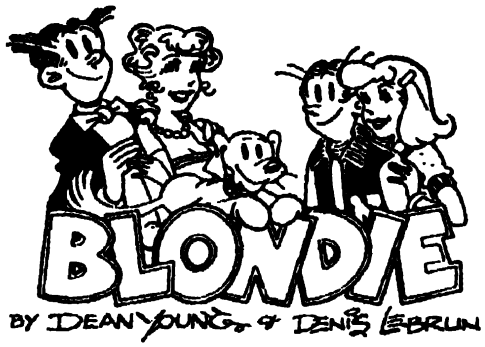
GARFIELD ▪ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

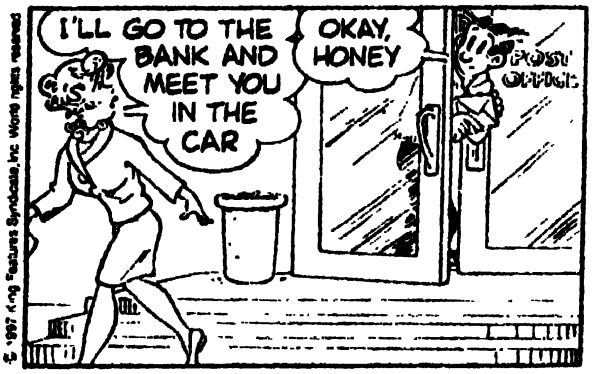














BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q ***I am 29 years old and have a dark complexion. My legs are very dark with some patches on it. What should I do to lighten the colour of my legs? I have very dry skin and rough hands too. Please advise.***
Rina Ghosh, Seodaphuli, West Bengal



A It is no crime to be dark. For heaven's sake feel good about your colour! Some of the stunning women in the world are dark, sultry and sensuous. Yes, it is important for you to look after your skin as no one else will do it for you.

Massage your legs and hands with warm coconut oil to which you have added the juice of one lemon. Leave on for about six to seven hours before bathing so preferably do this at night. When bathing, use the following with a *loofah*...fresh cream, lemon juice and gramflour. Massage gently on the legs and arms and then bath normally. This should be done thrice a week for results and remember anything natural isn't magical. It's only when you do it regularly will your skin start to glow like magic.

Q ***I am 18 years old and my height is 5'4". I want to increase my height by at least two inches or so. Can you suggest any exercise routine and diet which I can follow to grow tall?***
Ipseeta Sharma, Orissa

A I am afraid there are no wonder exercises at this age or food to make you grow taller. Yes, stretching exercises like toe-touching and skipping will help to a certain extent. Games like volleyball and tennis will also benefit you but I do wish you had started all this a little earlier. A healthy diet with a substantial amount of dairy products, fresh fruits and vegetables will help to a certain extent only.

Q ***I am 27 years old and have a combination skin and try out various face packs to improve my skin. I would like to know the usefulness of orange peel face mask? Is it good for a combination skin?***
Sunita Sahay, Durgapur



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

The usefulness of orange peel mask:

■

It has acidic properties as well as nourishing oils which is good for combination skins

A Combination skins have to be handled with great care. Keep your skin clean. Orange peel powder is very good for your type of skin as orange has slightly acidic properties as well as having its own nourishing oils. Make a face pack of honey, orange peel powder and rice powder. Apply all over face and neck and leave on for a good 20 minutes before washing off. You will see your skin glow. Combination skin types need to use a moisturiser also as their skins demand it.

Q ***I am 22 years old. I am fair but my lips are very black. I don't smoke. Please advise.***
Subha Patra, Salt Lake, Calcutta

A If you are regular and serious in treating your lips you will find a difference in no time. The lips are the one area of the body that has no pores and therefore it is important for you to put a layer of oil and leave it on for several hours. Mix coconut oil and almond oil together in equal quantity. Apply a coat of this on the lips and leave on overnight. This has to be done daily for at least two weeks for results. Soon you will have lighter lips as well as smooth ones.

Q ***I am a 16-year-old girl. I have a dry skin and dark circles around my eyes. Often my skin looks dark and dull. I use a pack of multani mitti, sandalwood and honey once a week but to no avail. I would be obliged if you could recommend some pure vegetarian home remedies.***
Tasai Deepa, Sarangahad, West Bengal

A The best thing for your eyes would be proper sleep, no late night movies, lots of water to drink, a healthy diet and a regular massage with pure almond oil every night before retiring. Also thrice a week, make the following face pack: 10 ground almonds, full cream milk, grated potato, lemon juice and gramflour. Mix all the ingredients to a thick paste and apply all over face, neck and under

To lighten dark lips:



Mix equal quantity of almond oil and coconut oil, apply on the lips and leave on overnight

the eye area. Leave on for about 20 minutes and then wash face with cold milk and then water. This is a simple but effective remedy if applied regularly.

Q ***I am 16 years old and have lots of facial hair. I would not like to wax or thread. Please suggest some natural remedy.***
Preeti Prasad, Darjeeling

A I am afraid at this age there are not many options available. Uptans have to be started much earlier when one is younger and the hair root has not become so firm. In the South uptans are started from a very early age and that is why many women in the South do not have hair on their legs and arms either. You could start to do this at home but I am afraid that it will be a long and tedious process. If you do want to start at home I would suggest that you make a paste of the following things: gramflour, turmeric, lemon juice and sandalwood powder. This should be done daily before a bath. Leave on till dry and then scrub off in a rotating manner until all the grains have fallen off.



Q ***I am 25 years old and my skin is very dry. Please tell me some natural remedy to make my skin look soft and healthy.***
Agni Sarkar, Jalpaiguri, West Bengal

A A healthy lifestyle portrays a healthy skin. I would suggest that you take a healthy diet with lots of dairy products, fresh fruits, green veggies and salads. As for your skin a proper cleansing and moisturising programme is very essential and has to be worked out as a daily routine. Massage your face with fresh cream and honey for about five minutes everyday. After this I would suggest that you wipe clean with rose water. Apply a pack of bran, rice powder, almond oil, sandalwood and one egg. Mix into a thick paste and apply all over face and neck. Leave for about 20 minutes and then scrub off gently in a rotating manner. Wash face with milk and water.

Q ***I am an 18-year-old girl. I have black marks on my feet. I think it is because of school shoes. I don't wear them now as I have finished school. I want to get rid of the marks. Please suggest.***
Jashodhara, Calcutta

A I do wish you had got rid of the shoes earlier or found some which were more comfortable. Invest in a pumice stone and a natural *loofah*. Whenever bathing start to scrub gently with the pumice stone in a rotating manner and then with the *loofah*. After bathing apply almond oil to the feet and massage until all the oil has been soaked up. Do it for a month for results. It's not a bad idea to go in for a professional pedicure once a week.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

"....My hair feels soft as silk because of the henna in this shampoo. Harmful chemicals are history."

Debashree, Alipore, Calcutta



Thank you Debashree and all other satisfied consumers who tried Vatika shampoo and wrote to us. We're pleased to know that henna conditioning has worked wonders for you and has made nature shine in your hair.

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Dabur Vatika Henna Cream Conditioning Shampoo

Let Nature Shine in Your Hair

CHM 99



SANJEEV KAPOOR
Of Khana Khazana fame

The Pahlitoon food at Juhu Centaur has been an all-time favourite. But the most memorable dining out experience has been at the Thai Pavilion. Particularly the prawn soup and the chicken starters that are done wrapped in leaves and flavoured with spices.



RASHMI UDAY SINGH,
Food columnist:

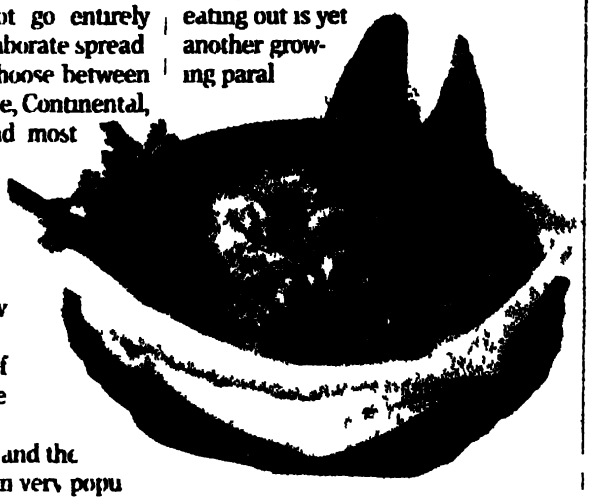
I love the Chimney Soup at Kamling, for it is authentic Chinese. The Fish Kothambir and Bombils at Gajalee and the mutton sukha at Gomantak have also been regular favourites with me.

Sound Bites

Sudipta Basu surveys the restaurant scene in Mumbai

If the clothes horses—bare shoulders, well toned legs *et al*—stole the show at the gala McDowells Derby nite in Mumbai last weekend another slice of that evening which did not go entirely undevoured was the elaborate spread. As always, one could choose between the Indian, the barbecue, Continental, Thai and Chinese. And most people did just that. They loaded their plates with all of it!

Indeed, kebabs and paneer tikkas seemed to go down very well with cold cuts and cheese fondues. As Chef Harpal Singh says "The Chicken Bourgnon and Cacciatora particularly and the cold cuts here have been very popular in the last two years, but an appetite for Indian food always remains simmering."



Fitness might have sunk into the lifestyles of most urban Indians, but eating out is yet another growing paral lel pre-occupation. And like that all-time favourite, the salwar kameez, traditional fare stays put, despite the onslaught of a more adventurous cu sine. Also, the absence of health food from the menus of the more frequented resturants does not hurt too many people (noontime salads at Saledero and Trattoria are an occasional filler), as given an opportunity, they willingly succumb to the succulent seductions as well.

Says Rashmi Uday Singh, a health freak herself. "There still hasn't been a perceptible change in the eating habits of people, as a corollary to aerobics and rigorous gymming. Eating out actually means pigging out." Also, adds Bans, "While people have a hard time trying to find low-fat diet, there are no options for veggies, that are devoid of oil and



masala"

"Actually, more people like to talk about health food, rather than eat it," dismisses Chef Kapoor. "There's a certain snob value there. Then again, while they compulsively dig into spicy food, they also do not want many people to know about it."

The deluge of food festivals coupled with the growing appetite for variety with the great Indian traveller has resulted in the mushrooming of several niche outlets. While the likes of Lebanese, African and Californian cuisine tide over at the festivals, the spicy Thai and Mexican food have percolated down well with the the desi gourmet. "It was easy to market Thai and Mexican since it is close to the Indian palate," says Kapoor. Oberoi adds far eastern cuisine to this list as well, particularly satays, curries and meats.

Chef Ananda Solomon of The President feels that Thai Pavilion took off in a major way in this city because the resturant was launched with a proper perspective. The team working here before it's launch in '93, carefully picked out only those items from an elaborate authentic Thai spread that would suit the Indian palate, at the same time remaining close to the authentic Thai. "Otherwise there was the danger of degenerating into the popular Chinese, of the paneer tikka variety," he says. Creating the right ambience and putting out the right crockery, etc., were helpful props.

The hot favourites at the Thai Pavilion are Yum Hoppe, a banana salad; and the tangy sweet and sour Tom Yum soup. The mild to spicy lobsters done with bird chilly and soya sauce and the barbecued duck are hot sellers from the main course. Solomon also has people who come up to him for recipes wishing to make certain dishes part of their regular eating habits. "Then there are guests who also call me from Delhi before boarding a flight for Mumbai asking for a table for dinner here," says Solomon. The Casa Mexicana, at the Oberoi, acquires its masculinity from it's rugged wood-work interiors and the accompanying pulsating music. The warmth of the indoors sits in stark contrast to the aqua cool of the pool-side just a step outside the resturant. The fiery sizzlers here, accompanied with stiff tequila shots are as much palate ticklers, as is the warm sea-view beyond the Casa and the pool-side, a sight for travel weary eyes.

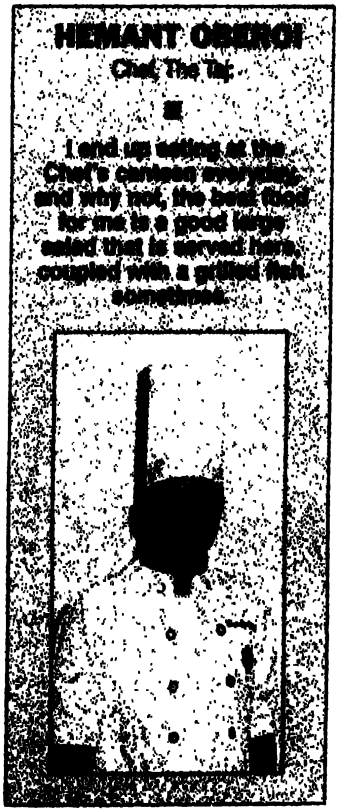


RAMNA BANS

Chef Jane Fonda and health freak

■

The prospect of digging into food [illegible] is dizzying for me. I stick to a [illegible] and well balanced diet which I also recommend to members at my health club. Also, the seasoned fish and veg dish at Marine Plaza [illegible] as well as the Chinese [illegible] at Golden Dragon. Trishna's sea food is the best in town for being low in oil content. A [illegible] recent discovery was the [illegible] at Tandoor. Can you imagine one without curry? That was home cooked food.



HEMANT OBEROI

Chef, The Taj

■

I end up eating at the Chef's canteen everyday, and why not, the best food for me is a good large salad that is served here, coupled with a grilled fish sometimes.

Chef Gavino, who has been with the resturant for the last 14 months feels that pancakes, the Tex Mex starters and the black chicken soaked in spices have been a hit with those who are otherwise more accustomed to tikka masala fries and spicy curries. Gavino worked in Singapore before coming to Mumbai, and he feels that the Indian clientele at the Casa are more inclined towards the pungent variety than Indians in Singapore.

Maybe that's just as well? After all, so long as the spices continue to tickle the tongue, there is always the parallel bhel and panipuri off the streets when pockets are running just a wee bit dry. ■

Pop goes Penaz

After a lifetime spent singing ghazals; she talks about her new avatar to **Ghazala Wahab**

The critics have been vindicated. The ghazal singer with those western looks has finally turned to her true vocation. All pretensions to singing in the classical style have finally been junked. Penaz Masani has started singing popular songs, complete with music videos to popularise them.

But happier than the critics is the singer herself. For her, ghazals and popular music are two different streams of one art form, and she does not mix the two. "Popular music is the need of the hour and I'm glad I am able to fulfil that need, but mind you, I have sung ghazals in the purest of the pure forms."

But even those pure forms always had the vivacity of a young, exuberant girl. Each of her ghazals were heavily flavoured in her trademark style, like her pop numbers are now.

Since she always looked like a pop singer the transition was more mental than physical. "But," she points out, "it was a very gradual process."

Born into a musically-inclined family, she learned music at her father's knees — quite literally so. "My father learned classical music from Ustad Faiyyaz Khan of the Agra gharana, so my initial training came from there." Music wafted in the air of this Parsi household. It was part of growing up, part of the stuff memories are made of.

"Yes," she laughs. "My most vivid memories are of going up and down the stage during the school function. Every time I would step down my name would be announced again for some other award. Mathematics, English, Dramatics, but above all, singing. I just loved singing," says Penaz, with a childlike glee in her eyes. At one such programme she met the late music director Jaidev who immediately recognised the potential in this enthusiastic youngster. So she started learning singing from him.

"No," she interrupts the presumption. "Not singing, but compositions. Even that is a very important part of growing up as an artiste." Jaidev, in turn, introduced her to the well-known ghazal exponent Madhurani. "Madhuraniji initiated me into ghazals," she says, almost reverentially.

It was, perhaps, Madhurani's influence that led Penaz into singing the composition of such poets as Mir, Ghalib, Dard and Jigar, at a time when everyone was experimenting with the ghazal as a music form. Whether it was *Dil-e-nadan tujhe hua kya hai* or *Dard minnat kash dawa na hua*, Penaz was comfortable despite the fact that these poets have been sung umpteen times by such experts as K.L. Saigal, Begum Akhtar, Madhurani and so on.



"Amazing, wasn't it?" asks Penaz with evident pride. "I could have done simpler singing, opted for easier numbers like most people at that time. After all I was very young. But my grooming was such that the idea didn't even occur to me."

Funnily enough, with experience, as her rendering became more refined it also became lighter instead of getting serious. "Well, that was the compulsion of changing times. One starts thinking in terms of saleability and popular tastes." So graduation to popular music was a natural consequence; and something she is very pleased with. "I love music, any kind of good music. For me the divide does not exist."

Enough of music, you decide. After all there has to be another side to Penaz. So what is she like when she is not singing?

"Tense," she says almost immediately. "Very tense. I think there is something wrong with me. I am not able to relax. I am always thinking of tomorrow, of the next show, or the next recording. Even when I take off for a couple of days I just cannot put tension out of my system."

But she doesn't attribute this tension to nervousness about her performance? Masani doesn't agree. "I am a human being, a little bit of fluttering in the stomach is only natural before the show, but I call it excitement not nervousness. After all, I am a hard worker, I put in a lot of effort in

whatever I do and I expect good results."

We are back to music. Penaz cut her first album, *Aap Ki Bazm*, in 1981. A couple of years later she made her first television appearance and it was love at first sight. "Oh, I just loved the camera," she enthuses. And the camera loved her.

You try to steer the conversation away from music. So she can't relax, but if she could, what would she want to do ideally? "Go to the sea. I just love the sea, the waves lashing at the rocks, the sound of it, you know the kind of an echo it leaves in your heart," says Penaz wistfully, then laughing she adds, "May be I have the makings of a poet."



May be, but doesn't one detect a note of sadness in that statement? Is she lonely? Says Penaz, "I get so much love and support from my family. At times I feel totally cocooned, totally incapable of facing problems on my own. But at the same time it has made me confident of love. I know I am capable of giving a lot. And I think this reflects in my music as well."



Is she afraid or insecure about all this security her home provides? And that it may not last forever? "No, not this, but I am afraid of loneliness, of humiliation. I need to have a lot of people around me."

That brings us to the obvious question: marriage. She smiles, and says, "No, I don't think marriage is an outdated institution. Though there is a lot of bitterness about it, I think it needs a little more effort than it did in our parents' time. People break their homes on smallest pretext. May be it is because there are so many options before women now."

Is that cynicism? Is the romantic, optimist Penaz cynical about marriage? She smiles cautiously. "I would definitely work at my marriage," she says firmly.

Encouraged, you prod further, so is it on the cards? That's when luck walks out of the make-up room door, where Penaz is getting ready for a shoot. "No, I wouldn't talk of that," she says with a sweet but firm smile. As you try to recover Penaz gives you a 'what-next' look, while the make-up man struggles to get the right colour on her lips.

Is she religious? "Yes," she says in an almost hushed tone. "I am very religious, not a fanatic though. I have a very broad perspective of religion. It's reverence, faith, love, all rolled in one. You have to believe in the supreme being, the rituals are not important."

From religion comes her strength, her conviction. "Also from my family," she asserts. Family consists of her parents and her elder sister "who was more like a mother to me." So, did her sister bully her when they were growing up? "Bully?" laughs Penaz. "I drove her mad, she is very sweet."

So when it is not the auditorium or the studio, it is family for the homebird Penaz, though she loves socialising too. But 17 albums — two gold, one platinum and one pop — later she knows the value of success well-achieved, and of the importance of an anchor back home.

"Fortunately, I have always been very popular, right from school. I was always used to attention. It did not dawn on me suddenly, nobody discovered me all of the sudden. So I never felt that I was suddenly famous and that is the reason success never went to my head," says Penaz, adding after a moment's pause, "God has been very kind to me." ■

My Personal Style

Newsreader Komal G.B. Singh opts for interiors with a familiar, lived-in look rather than modern chic ones



Homely Touch



WALL WITH A VIEW:

I love to scatter porcelain pieces in the living room though I don't like to put them into cabinets. I do run the risk of damaging the curios but I am averse to locking them away. The walls in my house are never bare, they are embellished with photographs, paintings and artefacts.

I like my home to be just that — a home, not a showcase. The aura that I like my house to exude is that of comfort, of a lived-in look with perhaps an old fashioned touch. The ultra modern look of today — chrome, glass, wrought iron — is not for me.

I'm not one who is given to browsing through interior and design magazines. I don't understand form or space but go by my instincts instead.

While I don't consciously opt for the wholly co-ordinated look, my house does look like an orchestrated whole, with nothing standing out as jarring.

Aesthetics and colour are the two criteria for me when I do up an interior. This is primarily the manner in which I've chosen most of the furniture and colours for my house. If mauve and sky blue are the colours of my study, the living room is done up in neutral shades.

Somehow I can never look at a room and say to myself — "hey! I need to refurbish this room in the next ten days". It just doesn't work like that with me.

I do a lot of mix and match in my interiors and most of the furniture, the curios and wall pieces have all been accumulated over many years. Everything that I have in the house is a medley of bits and pieces that I've collected from all over the world. Bric-a-brac that I brought back from Hungary, Amsterdam, London, New York and some from closer home, Jodhpur and Kerala. This has resulted in a synthesis of the Indian and Western look. So a porcelain violin lies close to statues of Hanuman and Buddha, and gels with them too.

I love to scatter porcelain pieces in the living room though I don't like to put them into cabinets. I do run the risk of damaging the curios but I am averse to locking them away. The walls in my house are never bare, they are embellished with photographs, paintings and artefacts.

Lighting is very important to me. I feel that the manner in which one distributes the lights in the house must lend it warmth. I generously disburse lamps throughout my living room for I simply love the atmosphere they lend the room.

A certain amount of foliage also makes for some great interiors. A fish bowl finds place in my living room as, besides looking aesthetic, just watching the fish helps one unwind. In a way it also lends a languid air to the room.

In all, I am never ruled by what 'should' go into a home, but rather what 'must' find a place in my home. After that I make sure that it fits in.

As told to Samita Bhatia

A Thrill of Comfort


B-001

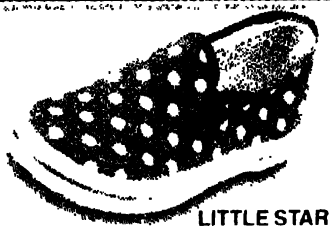

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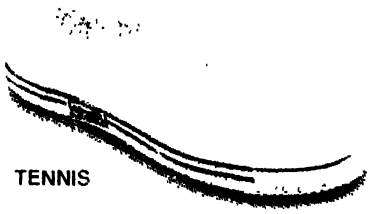

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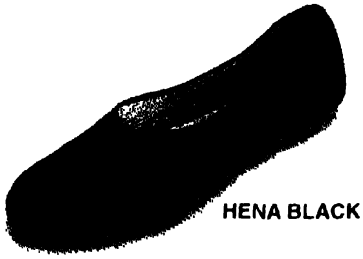

GENTS SHOE

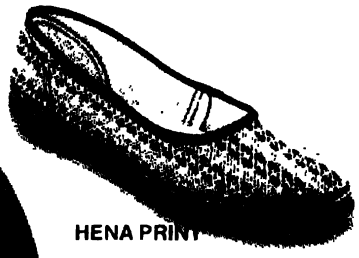

SCHOOL GIRL

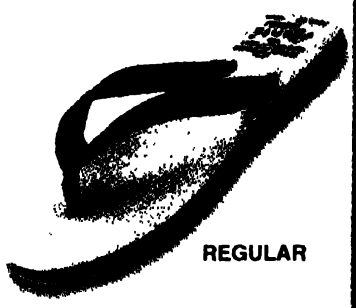



LITTLE STAR

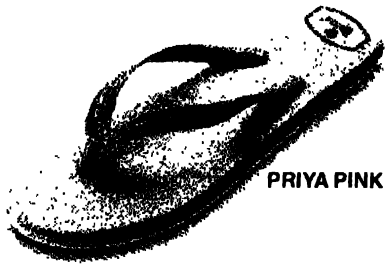

TENNIS


HENA BLACK

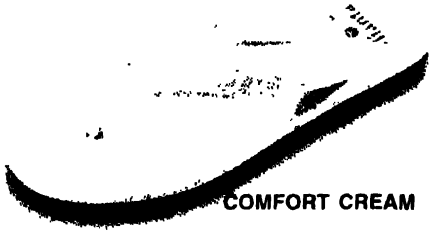

HENA PRINT


REGULAR


GOLD SKY


PRIYA PINK


PRIYA GREEN


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POST MORTEM

Woman of Many Parts

It is heartening to learn that Yashodhara Raje, the famous Scindia progeny, has the aptitude for both social work and polo ('The People's Princess' February 1). Although polo has always been considered to be the favourite pas time of the royality, with the era of the monarchy gone long by, polo should be played by ordinary folks, too. Of course, not everyone is equipped to play it, either in terms of social or monitary access, and hence the halo around the game.

Prahlad Agarwal, Nadia



It is "the scent of the soil" that lures every person to his/her motherland and that is what brought Yashodhara Raje back to her homeland. Welcome home, princess. Kudos for making a niche for yourself outside the palace walls.

Akash, Tinsukia

What's so special about Yashodhara Raje being a polo-freak or a social worker? There are many others who are actively involved in more altruistic or genuine services to mankind. In most cases they had to overcome all sorts of odds to achieve their goals. But for a person born with a silver spoon in her mouth, social service is just a tool to keep her in the news.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Is politics the mecca of the rich and the successful? Yashodhara Raje will be able to keep up her image of people's princess only if she refrains from joining her mother's coat-tails and confines herself to her twin-domains of polo and social work.

Somjit Rakshit, Jamshedpur

Green Only

The focus on M.C. Mehta, the environmentalist, was commendable ('Mr Green' February 1). He has dedicated his life to save the Taj Mahal. But our duties do not end here; we should try our best to usher in an era when there will be thousands of Mr Mehtas engaged in bringing about a pollution-free world.

Prahlad Prantik Sanyal, Calcutta

The role of Mahesh Chander Mehta as a green crusader and his fight against the ecological threat to the Taj Mahal have been been rightly appreciated through the Magsaysay Award and the Golden Award.

Govinda Bakshi, Budge Budge

In our bid to urbanise our cities, we care very little to the ecological destruction we are causing to our ancient heritage as also the flora and the fauna. But thanks to some sensitive people like Mehta we are made to realise the importance of preserving our environment.

Rupak Das, Howrah

Calcutta needs someone like Mehta to bring back the old glorious and verdant look of the city.

Bipasha Dasgupta, Calcutta

The Telegraph

18 MARCH 1998



PAGE 4

In the Name of God

Remember those famous lines *Alei lagi lagan*, which catapulted Anup Jalota to stardom overnight? Well, *Bhajans* may be his forte but he is no *sadhu*, he claims, and likes grooving at the disco also with friends. Now married for the third time, Jalota is still his old optimistic self.

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Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

Dancing to her own Tune

A virtuoso performer and a sensitive interpreter of the finer nuances of Bharatanatyam, Leela Samson has managed to give this classical dance form a startling freshness.

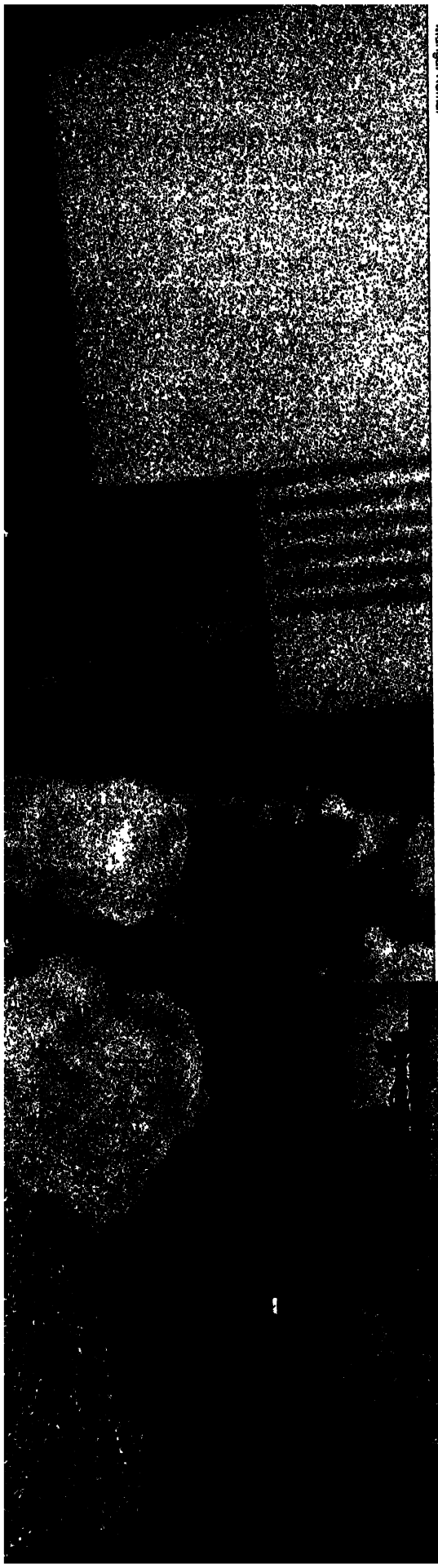
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First Person

Bhaichung Bhutia's favourite pastime is climbing hills.

Cover: Mangal Kumar





Mangal Kumar

COVER STORY

IN THE NAME OF GOD

Bhajan samrat, Anup Jalota, has gone from strength to strength. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** meets the singer

The air at Essex Farms in Delhi is abuzz with excitement. This party spot of the capital is today playing host to Anup Jalota, who is singing to raise money for cancer patients. Clad in a beige silk kurta, white churidar and delicately embroidered Kashmiri shawl, Jalota floats in with a handful of friends. He coils up with the harmonium — a grin hovering at the corner of his thin lips — and strikes the first few notes for his *bhajan.*

Anup Jalota's wife, Medha, and their son



Vikas Khot

Cymbals chime and the santoor clinks as if on cue. Jalota takes off with the ever popular *bhajan, Aeisi lagi lagan,* his bass voice echoing with verve and feeling. A hush descends on the audience, enchanted by the magic he spins within minutes.

Jalota's *bhajans* have a clarity that is rare among singers of his genre, never dwindling into a series of musical chants. In between songs, he cracks jokes — for instance, soliciting a good match for his guitarist. But all through he keeps track of the *taal;* the distraction, though deliberate, never jars on the listeners. Says Rayeez Mirza, an eminent Urdu journalist, "He has the ability to carry the audience with him, a rapport reminiscent of Begum Akhtar."

Through the *bhajans* of Ram, *ghazals* of Ghalib or the more pedestrian Punjabi folk tune, *Gori, gori, chitti chitti,* Jalota sings with unflagging enthusiasm; there is never a dull moment.

His songs are an indication of his attitude towards life. There is that same *joie de vivre* which sustains him through his successes and flops. Two failed marriages — the first to *ghazal* singer Sonali and the second an arranged match with a girl called Bina — have done little to dim his optimism. "I have always been a positive thinker," says Jalota with conviction.



Two failed marriages — the first to *ghazal* singer Sonali and the second, an arranged match with a girl called Bina — have done little to dim Anup Jalota's optimism. 'I have always been a positive thinker,' says he with conviction

Even if people poke fun at him for taking on a third wife, Medha — who was Shekhar Kapur's first wife — he doesn't seem to mind. "She is the ultimate one," he says, only half-jokingly, while aknowledging her contribution towards his change for the better.

To begin with, he is a lot trimmer than his usual portly self, Medha having taken complete charge of the kitchen. "His weight is the only thing which puts me off — well almost," adds his wife with a laugh. Even then, Jalota does indulge in the occasional cooking of egg-based dishes which rank among his favourite recipes.

Eggs and *bhajans?* How does he manage to reconcile the two? Jalota has a ready explanation for that: "Images are created by people. That may have nothing to do with the life I choose to lead."

His life would mean wearing jeans and T-shirts; or shorts, when he is lounging at home. Jalota enjoys watching movies or hitting the beaches on a Sunday, or even grooving at the disco when he is with friends. "Singing *bhajans* does not mean I am a *sadhu.* A fan was horrified when he saw me eating chicken in a restaurant," laughs Jalota. But he will not make any compromises in the quality of his songs. There, he is a purist.

Music is much more than a profession to the singer. It was first his hobby — besides cricket — and later, his livelihood. All along he has enjoyed the process of creating new *sargams* and *alaaps* for a song he may have sung 3,000 times. But each time, he invests it with a charm of its own.



Memories of another day: Anup Jalota with his former wife, Sonali

Jalota's career was charted out from the age of seven when his father and guru, Purushottam Jalota, gave him *taalim* to perform on stage. His college and school functions always had a Mukesh or Kishore Kumar number from *Kati Patang, Aradhana* or *Bobby* as their staple and Jalota took to crooning them for his audience. By the time he left home to try his luck in Mumbai, Anup Jalota was an established name in Lucknow.

Armed with a BA degree, he went as a virtual stranger to Mumbai. The cultural shock at times proved too much for the singer. Like when he heard a bus conductor barking, "*Wahan khada hoja* (Stand there) in a tone that would have got the man beaten up in Lucknow," recalls Jalota, with mock horror.

His first salary was a paltry Rs 320 a

month. As a chorus singer with All India Radio, he could hardly hope for more. But it gave him the training of a lifetime under such musical stalwarts as Salil Chowdhury and Kanu Ghosh. "I imbibed my knowledge of Western music through them," adds Jalota, who dabbles with the Spanish guitar for his *bhajans*: "I use it to sound like a sitar one moment, or a mandolin and sarod the next."

At the Sur Singar Sansad, Jalota's fresh voice won him the much-needed break, and then there was no looking back for this singer. Having grown up on Begum Akhtar's *ghazals*, Jalota's first album *Shama Nama* comprised only *ghazals*. His next double album, *In Concert* was also *ghazal*-dominated. But it was *Bhajan Sandhya* which took his success to dizzying heights. And with it the Bhajan Samrat was born.

Jalota is very committed to his school of music. "Original music will never die," he says "nor will it lack real listeners," citing Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jasraj and Ravi Shankar as legends who have never really gone out of fashion.

The sudden flush of Indipop music on Channel V and MTV has not given him an identity crisis, either. "India is the place for *bhajans*," he says, "it is a country of villages." That is why root music is so popular with the masses.

Jalota's *riyaz* can stretch for endless hours in a day that should ideally begin at 6 o'clock — it seldom does — when his son Aryamaan cuddles up to him in bed. "There are no clockwise calculations; I consider my singing a 24-hour job," he says. Jalota usually spends 18 days a month at home and for the rest he is travelling for his performances.

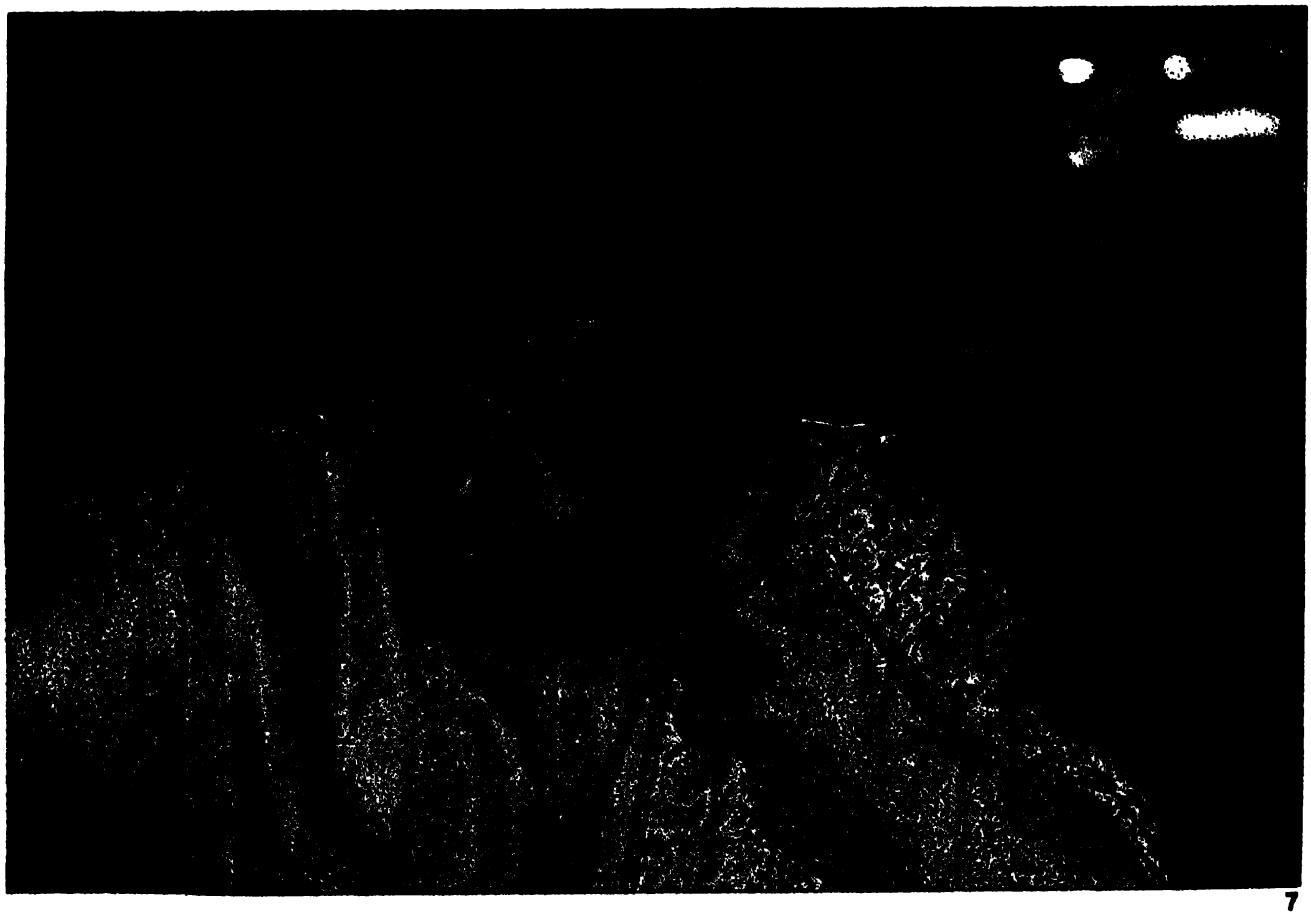
But that hasn't stood in the way of his being a devoted father — "he used to change his son's nappies," vouches Medha — and a caring husband. In fact, things couldn't have been better between Jalota and Medha.

He first met Medha some seven years back when she dropped in at his flat with a few common friends. For the next four years, they didn't say so much as a hello. In 1995, a friend informed Jalota that Medha, who had since divorced Shekhar Kapur and moved to Delhi, was in town. He gave her a call and invited her for lunch. Three hours later he was proposing marriage. They finally tied the knot in London, without having to put up with the social *tamasha* and worse, a prying media.

At 42, Jalota wasn't young, but was willing to give their marriage a try. "It so happened, things clicked beautifully for us," he beams, referring to their wedding "as one positively made in heaven." Medha, too, feels "the past has never stood in the way but has helped us to mature and become more sensitive to each other's needs and emotions." Though she trained in classical music under Pandit Jasraj,



Jalota's career was charted out from the age of seven when his father and guru, Purushottam Jalota, gave him *taalim* to perform on stage



Mangal Kumar



Medha does not seem inclined to make a career of singing, remaining till date, one of Jalota's constructive critics.



Jalota is very committed to his school of music. 'Original music will never die,' he says 'nor will it lack real listeners,' citing Bhimsen Joshi, Pandit Jasraj and Ravi Shankar as legends who have never really gone out of fashion

True, Jalota's *bhajans* of Ram may have peaked with the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* serials on television, but Jalota maintains that this music form still commands the highest market share in the sale of audio cassettes. Considering how important a role Ram plays in his life, what is the *bhajan* singer's perception of religion — or of Ram, for that matter?

"If humanity is religion, then I am religious," says the minstrel. He doesn't go to temples every day. What he believes in are relationships, and in doing his duty. "After all *dharma* means duty," concludes Jalota after a pause.

"Whenever I sing of Ram, I sing of his values," he says, citing Muslim devotional numbers like *Natiya Kalam, Jaini Bhajans* and Sikh religious songs as part of his rich repertoire. "If I am a Hindu I don't think I am a follower of Ram but of all messengers of God," emphasises the singer who prides himself on his secular beliefs.

Though *bhajans* account for most of his popularity, Jalota is equally at home with *ghazals*. "Both have poetry woven in them," Jalota avers. But discerning listeners argue, the *talafuz* (pronunciation) and *izafat* (punctuation) in *ghazals* is all too important, and for a *bhajan* singer, switching styles to suit the romantic mood of a *ghazal*, may not be all that easy.

The market for *bhajans* expanded ever since the late Gulshan Kumar took to showing them on television. Overnight, he had become a cult-like figure with viewers diligently switching on their sets in the morning to receive a dose of religious sentiments.

But Jalota cannot imagine having the kind of hype Gulshan Kumar generated for himself. "Media is so expensive. It costs Rs 3-4 lakhs to show your face on televison," he says, adding, "Gulshan Kumar had a budget of Rs 10-15 lakhs set aside for the purpose."

The cassette baron would look to Jalota for suggestions every now and then. "We had decided to record the *Bhagwad Gita* together, though that became impossible considering Gulshan*ji* had his hands in too many things, from mineral water to fan manufacture; music was just one of his ventures."

Jalota has plans to record 700 *slokas* of the *Bhagwad Gita* over 24 cassettes after consulting a panel of Sanskrit experts; he has so far done three. The whole project, which will take a year and a half, would include English, French and Russian translations. That is as far as Anup is prepared to go to appeal to international audiences.

Says Jalota, "If Asha*ji* has signed up with Code Red it does not mean she has forfeited her style. She continues to sing pop music — only the language this time is not the same."

Sticking to traditional mores, he has already completed a set of 20 cassettes of the *Ramayana* and has future plans to sing *Nazrulgeeti* and modern Bengali songs. Bengali has always been a "sweet language since childhood" for the bard who has so far recorded about 20 cassettes in the language he cherishes.

The proximity to Bollywood, however, has never kindled his desire to make a career in playback singing. Jalota had watched Kishore, Mukesh and Rafi in his early days when he realised that it would not do to sing like them. Since then, he has carved out his own niche, a decision he never regrets. If he has recorded for directors like R.D. Burman, Kalyanji Anandji and Hridaynath Mangeshkar, it is for films that "may have needed my classical artistry", he says.

Drawing his own crowds without a filmi hit to back up his success has never been a problem with Anup Jalota. After all, *Choli ke peechhey* may have withered from public memory, but his *Ram ratan dhana paiyo* continues to live. It is like an anthem deeply ingrained within the Indian psyche, making Jalota something of a national bard. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The full moon forces you to concentrate on job and welfare schemes, says Ganesha. You will have help from strange quarters and it will stand you in good stead, too. Mars helps you very considerably in taking the initiative and finishing pending work. Health safeguards are a must. So be careful.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Events and happenings will warm the cockles of your heart. A good time to have anything to do with children, including delivery or pregnancy. Your planetary ruler Venus is well placed leading to business deals, comforts, friendships, ties and intense passion. Time to woo and coo.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



House and home will be the centrepiece of attention for you. Mercury, your main planet, helps you to push forward in your work area, be it computers, management, communication, contacts, sales, writing, media utilisation and so on. You do run into exciting people who can help you.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Set a fast pace as there is no time to lose. Yours should be the gift of prophecy and good taste. Journey and ceremony and publicity are fated for you. Contracts and documents will be signed. Moneywise, the prospects are excellent. Joint-finances will accumulate. Health will definitely improve.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Focus sharp and clear on finances and family. The Pluto impact helps you to envisage all possibilities, thus enabling you to take the correct decision. Do look forward to visitors from a distant place.Alternatively, a journey will be taken and the results will be glowing. Week of interaction with others.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



The emotional slant favours marriage, engagements, collaborations and alliances at various levels. Financially, you are in for a better period, and it is recognised that finances help romance in our world. Legal issues are indicated. These can be resolved out of court, if you so interested.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Expenses will multiply. Plenty of behind-the-scene activities are envisaged. Your creative juices flow freely. Children, poetry, better relationships, more funds and finances, the use of public trusts and money, capital raising, investments, buying, selling are also salient features. Love smiles on you.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Time to party, time to be friendly, time to circulate, time to move, dear Scorpios! Mars, your chief planet, encourages you to take risks, be it renovation, decoration, buying, selling. Loans and funds will be available. You will find the time to entertain and be vastly amused. But hard work lies ahead for you.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Hard work will be your lot. Luckily, rewards will get more than commensurate with efforts. While there is a possibility of an emotional see-saw, the chances are that, you will be singing a pretty tune. Those of you interested in sports, creative pursuits, the great outdoors, strike it lucky.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



The luck of the draw will be yours thanks to Jupiter. March 15-18 show the way to joy. A study course, better communication channel. Changes on the homefront are clearly on the cards. These changes will prove rewarding in the long run. March 21-23 is very definitely for taking firm decisions.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



A well connected Uranus factor helps you to earn money, make use of it and be of use to others, announces Ganesha. A dash of romance makes the week exciting. Passion will run high. Trips are emphasised. Those in research and grants prove worthy and do their sponsors real proud.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Love, marriage, alliances, partnerships, collaborations and a grand reaching out to people and places. Your income registers a new high, or will do so, shortly because of promotions and different sources of money. A general feeling of well being will elate you. It does well for the future.

BIRTHDAYS

March 13: Mars trine Pluto, moon opposition Saturn says Ganesha. Despite opposition and tribulations, you are destined to succeed in ventures.

March 14: Moon square Neptune indicates that you should postpone the meet for the weekend. Matters improve for you in the days to follow.

March 17: Moon trine Jupiter augurs. Uranus and Jupiter, your Ganesha states, promise prosperity and that you will have enough surplus to save for a rainy day.

March 18: Moon conjunction Pluto spells trouble for you. Be careful with your words and actions. Avoid risks.

March 19: Moon trine Uranus means power and pelf will both be yours, assures Ganesha. Changes in your work will be extremely beneficial.

March 20: Moon trine Mercury-Saturn promises that skill and stability are your twin friends and with these at your side, success and joy will be yours.

March 21: Moon's last quarter means contacts and consultancies help you to be liked and earn good money, too. The family situation takes a turn for the better.

Triumph

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Artists Anonymous

The Crafts Museum honours some unsung men and women.

Geeta Sharma reports

They have been relegated to anonymity because their craft is considered to be 'primitive.' And since their creations are produced on a somewhat large scale, they are conveniently dismissed as an 'ethnic collectivity.'

The 'craftsman' label is etched on the frames of their works for they are the upholders of the hoary traditions of the past. And as if to drive home that aspect of their work, they are often 'encouraged' to play up the primitive aspects of their motifs, designs and subjects. As Jyotindra Jain, senior director of the Crafts Museum, puts it, the craftsmen are made to "play the clown, adding more and more bison-horn and cobra-hood headgear to their own personal selves than to the images of their gods, especially designed for the fashionable ethnic art market."

It is precisely this myth and its ceaseless perpetuation that Jain has sought to question in 'The Other Masters,' an exhibition of the works of five master-craftsmen, now showing at the Crafts Museum. Jain, who both conceived and curated the show, points out that the folk arts have been treated as crafts in the cultural context, "where the entire edifice of the arts is designed to promote the modern, academy-trained artists who work in the studios, sell through organised galleries and are regularly covered by the media. The present day artistic expression of the village and tribal population has hardly any place in this system."

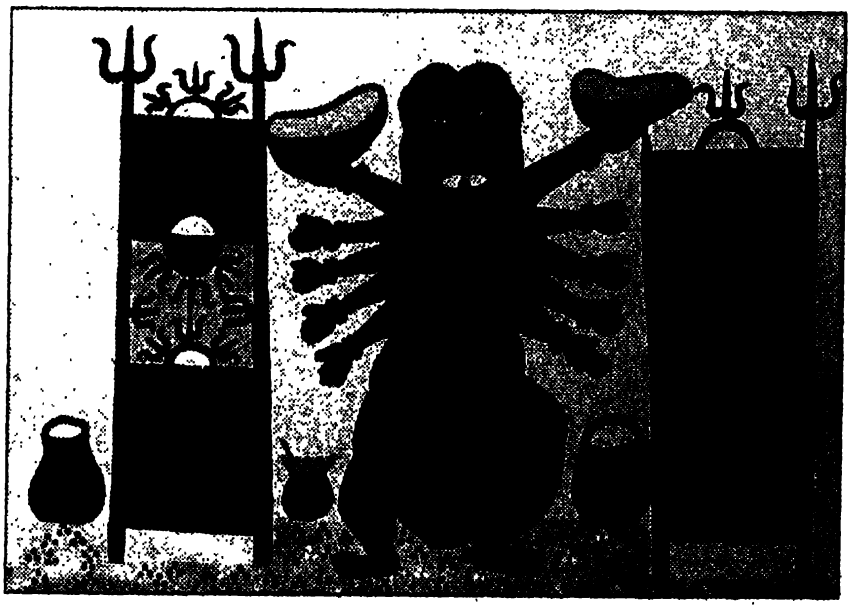
The show has been conceived with a view to explore the sensitivity of contemporary folk and tribal artists. These are artists who neither see themselves as belonging to an imaginary 'traditional' society or as waiting outside the so-called world of 'modern' art, to be absorbed and recognized at the first available opportunity, says Jain.

The artists — Jangarh Singh Shyam, a painter from Madhya Pradesh; Jivya Soma Mashe, a Warli painter from Maharashtra; Sonabai, a clay relief artist from Madhya Pradesh; Neelamani Devi, a potter from Manipur and Ganga Devi, a Mithila painter from the Madhubani district of Bihar — have all been decorated with prestigious state and national awards.

Their works rather than being derivative, are highly individualistic. They have not allowed the characteristic traditional style and



Terracota pots crafted by Neelamani Devi, (below) Art by Jangarh Singh Shyam



content of their art or inherited ritual conventions to act as constraints, leading to repetitive reproductions of their distinctive works.

In fact, their works are a happy assimilation of their experiences of the world outside their tribal environs and myths and images of their rich past. Interestingly, even impressions of a theatrical or cinematic show they have seen, or ideas picked up from a textbook or calendar find expression in their creations.

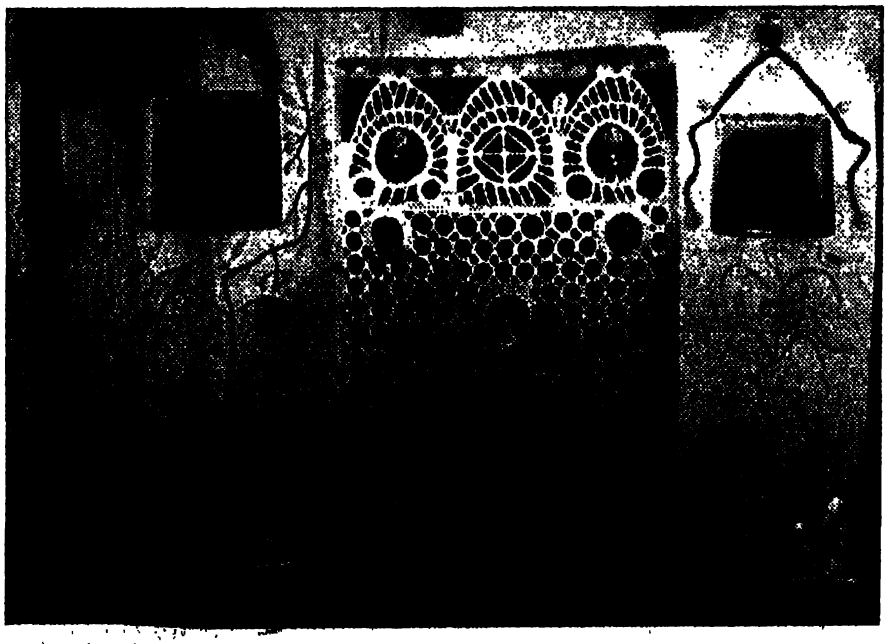
One instance is renowned Mithila artist Ganga Devi's use of scenes from the stage performances of the Ramlila in her Ramayana series. Similarly, Sonabai's painted and clay relief figures speak of a fantasy world peopled by birds, animals and human beings, all of whom inhabit different spaces of their own.

Jangarh Singh Shyam, began his artistic career by adorning the walls of his house with clay-relief work and paintings in the Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh. Now, he has imbibed into his art, experiences of his journey from the tribal world to Bharat Bhawan in Bhopal, where he works as an artist. His large ink and poster colour works on paper, among other works at the exhibition, have shown how it is possible for a person previously unexposed to the urban milieu, to not only survive but to grow in it as well.

The exhibition not only explores the artistic sensibilities of these forgotten men and women, but also brings to the fore a whole new perspective on the hitherto neglected crafts



Warli painting by Jivya Soma Mashe, (below) Sonabai's clay works



The Warli paintings have traditionally been the domain of women artists called 'Savashi' or "a woman whose husband is alive." But with the introduction of brown paper and white paint works, changes followed in this traditional art form. A catalyst among these was Jivya Soma Mashe. He is one of the first male Warli painters. He not only began to paint lively scenes of human activity in fields and forests but even made his leitmotif, images of the village money-lender or the charcoal maker.

Perhaps the most endearing and touching works are those of Ganga Devi, whose Mithila paintings exude an unprecedented freedom from the confines of religious iconography. What is striking in her works is her ability to transform her experiences and expressions into pictorial images. There is, for instance, her depiction of the life-cycle of a woman or her graphic depiction of Ramayana tales.

The most touching among her works on display is her own story — of her falling critically ill with cancer, receiving monetary help from the Crafts Museum senior director and being taken to a hospital for treatment.

Another collection that catches the eye is that of Neelamani Devi's earthen pots. Though meant to contain such mundane things as water, dried fish, or food grains, the terra-cotta pots, look like they have been crafted layer by layer. Painstakingly burnished by hand from inside and outside, they exude the quality of living flesh heaving and breathing. The timeless pots, conjure up the image of the womb mentioned in the myth of creation of Manipuri potters.

Clearly, 'The Other Masters' exhibition not only explores the artistic sensibilities of these forgotten men and women but also brings to the fore a whole new perspective on the hitherto neglected crafts. ■



FOCUS

Blood will Tell

Anoushka may be Pandit Ravi Shankar's daughter and star disciple, but for the first seven years of her life she was brought up by another man. This is his story; and the Shankars' response to it.

Reported by **Suman Buchar** in London and **Geeta Sharma** in Delhi

It is a thin line that divides love from hate. And Narendra Kotiyan crossed it the moment his wife of 14 years, Sukanya Rajan, informed him that Anoushka, the girl he had reared as his own for seven years, was not his daughter. To prove her point conclusively, she even sent him the results of a DNA test which made it clear that Kotiyan could not possibly have fathered her child.

This, says Naren — as his friends call him — came as a terrible shock. And even before he could recover from this blow, he received a letter from his then ex-wife's solicitors, asking for Anoushka's birth certificate — she was born on 9 June, 1981, at the Park Royal Hospital at Harleston, north London — so that Pandit Ravi Shankar could be registered as the 'natural father'.

Naren responded with an angry: "Please ask Ravi Shankar if he can spell the word 'father'? Does he know the meaning of the word?" Ultimately, a compromise was worked out



between both parties that Shankar should be registered as the 'genetic father'.

According to Kotiyan, it was in 1986 — three years before this incident — that it was first suggested that Anoushka may not be his natural daughter. His response had been to confront Ravi Shankar at a London hotel and ask him, "What have you done to my life?"

Says Naren, "I wept. I shed tears in front of him." He told Shankar that he had trusted him like a father. Shankar's response, says Naren, was a curt: "You can do what you want."

This is, of course, just Kotiyan's version of events. As can be expected, Sukanya Rajan, now Mrs Ravi Shankar, has a different tale to tell. According to her, their's — Rajan and Kotiyan's — was just a marriage of convenience. Sukanya, who had run away from her Madras home to escape an arranged marriage, needed some way to stay on in London since her visa was running out. Naren suggested marriage, despite the fact that Sukanya had made it perfectly clear that she did not love him. "Maybe one day you will change your mind," he told her, and they were wedded.

Says Sukanya, "As for his claim that he was made to believe that Anoushka was his daughter, let me tell you that we did not have sex for 13 months before I gave birth to her. He knew all along that it was Panditji's child I was carrying. All my friends, my gurus, including Shanta Dhananjay Narayan, all knew that Anoushka was Panditji's child. So why wouldn't he?"

According to Sukanya, Naren knew about her affair with Pandit Ravi Shankar from the beginning. In fact, she says, he would often ask her, "What do you see in him? Why do you keep seeing him?"

So, for him to claim ignorance now is 'a clear and utter lie'. Says Sukanya, "I don't know why he is doing this now, ten years after our divorce."

Naren-Sukanya's marriage (left); Ravi Shankar, Naren and Sukanya at a dinner and (below) little Anoushka



Kotiyan has an explanation for that. According to him, he always refrained from telling his side of the story — despite the fact that Sukanya gave several interviews after her wedding to Pandit Ravi Shankar in a temple in 1989 — for fear of hurting Anoushka. But he now feels that at 16 she is old enough to be told the truth. "She is a sensible girl," says Naren, "and will have the moral strength to bear this."

What follows is Naren's version of events. He met Sukanya Rajan at the home of business associate in London at the age of 40. She was then a youthful 22. Naren, whose family originates from Karnataka had come to Britain to study ophthalmic optics, but instead got involved in the import-export business. However, his main passion was and remains international folk music and dance, especially from the Balkans.

Sukanya, who was drifting from job to job — home help, part-time model, market research — was living in Earl's Court, an area that Naren considered rough for a woman who brought out his protective interests.

So, he offered her his flat in

north London to stay in when he went to India on a business trip.

He also proposed to her before he left, and she responded by writing him love letters while he was away. So, says Naren, he was astonished to discover that she had become engaged to someone else during his absence. But that relationship ended, and Naren and Sukanya were married in November 1973 at a registry office in Hampstead. This was followed by a Hindu ceremony at a temple in London.

But Naren now accepts — as Sukanya has asserted — that since her short-term visa to Britain was running out, she might have married him in order to be given permission by the immigration authorities to stay on in England.

Kotiyan, however, claims that he became disillusioned about her within a few months of the marriage. "She had a split personality," he says. "She could be extremely charming and you would think the world of her. The next, you would wish you have never met her."

According to Naren, she suffered from hallucinations, saw a ghost in the flat and was prescribed tablets by her doctor. "She used to have hundreds of valium tablets, Mogadon, Fortral — her drawers were full of these things."

The couple were expecting their first child in the mid-Seventies. But, says Naren, Sukanya terminated the pregnancy because she felt that the X-rays she had taken for her back may have damaged the foetus. Also, she felt their flat was too small for a baby.

Then, one day in 1980, after the couple had moved to a larger house, a semi-detached in Willesden, Sukanya came running, "I am pregnant! I am pregnant! Oh, happiness!"

Naren says he was present when Sukanya gave birth to Anoushka. "I was the first one to hold her," he says. "Every man should know how life is delivered and what a woman goes through to give birth."

"That's a lie," says Sukanya. "My mother was there with me. He stood outside. In fact, the only reason I kept quiet initially about whose daughter Anoushka was, was because Panditji asked me not to as the media would interpret it wrongly. Also, Naren begged me not to do so as it would be a big shock for his mother. I kept quiet because I respected that lady. Now that his mother has passed away, he is making all these baseless allegations."



'How could he think that I was his daughter? Didn't he see the resemblance in our (Ravi Shankar's and Anoushka's) faces?'



Naren accompanying Ravi Shankar on the tanpura and (top) Naren and Anoushka : Fatherly love

Initially, at least, both Naren and Sukanya were close to Pandit Ravi Shankar. Whenever Shankar visited London, Naren would act as his 'unpaid' guide and chauffeur, and take him on shopping trips. His relatives would routinely stay with Sukanya and Naren. Sukanya would call Shankar 'Kaku', and from 1975 onwards both Naren and Sukanya would occasionally accompany him on the tanpura.

Apart from one visit when Anoushka was a few months old, Shankar showed little attachment for the girl, says Naren, and seldom visited her. "Where was he?" asks an angry Naren, "I had my first full night's sleep after two years."

When Shankar, as a trusted family friend, was asked to choose a name for the child, he chose Hemalata. Naren

chose Anoushka — 'it sounded a bit Sanskrit as well as Western' — and on the birth certificate, the name appeared as Anoushka Hemlata Lakshmi Kotiyan. Hemlata was later amended to Hemangini after one of Naren's childhood friends.

Naren says that he doted on 'his' daughter. "Till she was seven years old, she spent all her time with me. I have given her all her values."

He recounts putting her through infant and primary school, and has fond memories of Anoushka climbing trees in Hampstead Heath and feeding the ducks at the Serpentine in Hyde Park.

He bought her a collection of books, read her stories and watched television with her. His heart filled with joy on the occasion that Anoushka gave him a hug and said, "Papa, you are my best friend."

Now, on the odd occasions that she contacts him, she calls him 'Naren', says Kotiyan sadly.

But life continued for a fashion despite an uneven marriage, until one day in 1986, when Sukanya's sister, Yashodhra, told him that Sukanya was going around saying that Anoushka was not his daughter, but Pandit Ravi Shankar's child.

"I reacted immediately," says Naren. Through a friend, he urged Ravi Shankar to come to London immediately from Coimbatore to take a paternity test. His wife was in a rage that day when he went to pick her up after work — Shankar had telephoned her from India with the news.

According to Naren, Sukanya even then did not confirm that the child was Shankar's and not his. Instead, she began pressing for a separation despite Naren's reluctance to break up the marriage. "The divorce was forced on me," says Naren. He later found letters that Sukanya had written to Shankar during this period — they were stamped 'return to sender'.

Going by these letters, he wonders whether Ravi Shankar was trapped into marriage. "They more or less corner him to own up to something."

Naren and Sukanya's own relationship became increasingly bitter. Their house was sold, the proceeds split, and the couple divorced in 1987 on grounds of incompatibility. Sukanya eventually left for India, and he read a newspaper report of her wedding to Ravi Shankar.



Naren with baby Anoushka

Naren's relationship with Anoushka is now confined to sending cards on special occasions. He sent her 16 pink roses on her 16th birthday. Last Christmas, he sent her a card.

But he does have one message for Anoushka. "I have always told you that one day I will tell you the truth. This is the first installment."

Sukanya's truth is, of course, different from Naren's. According to her, far from treating Anoushka as his own daughter, Naren did not even contribute financially towards her upbringing. "He did not spend a penny or buy a thing for her. When I asked him to, he said, 'Why should I? She is not my daughter?' As for how much she loves him, I still remember when she was three and he was fighting with me, she asked him to leave the house."

In any case, asks Sukanya, if he really believed that Anoushka was his daughter, why did he take babysitting charges — 200 pounds for ten days — from her when she visited India and left her daughter back home with him.

Says Sukanya, "I have washed dishes, worked as a waitress, a baby-sitter and done all sorts of odd-jobs to earn the needed dough to bring my daughter up. When we divorced I returned everything to him, including the bangles and the chain that his mother had given me for Anoushka."



Naren: Happy with his Balkan music

The teenager at the centre of this maelstrom of emotions essentially corroborates her mother's version. Says Anoushka, "How could he even think that I was his daughter? Can't he see the resemblance in our (Ravi Shankar's and Anoushka's) faces?"
Sukanya, for her part, is at pains to point out that while her first marriage was something of a farce, she has found true happiness the second time around. "I am very happy with Panditji," she says. "We have a very active spiritual and sexual relationship, and I could not have asked for more."
But Anoushka — as is her right — has the last word. "We three are so happy together, we don't want anything to spoil it. At least, not such lies." ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

AGARTALA

Departures Flt No.	Time	Days	Arrivals Flt No.	Time	Days
IC-741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1120	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1230	1	IC 742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5 6	IC 744	1220	1 2, 5 5
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7

AHMEDABAD

CD-267	1620	2 4 6	CD 268	2135	2 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5 7	IC-716	2050	3 5 7

AIZAWL

IC-201	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1625	2 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1405	6

BAGDOGRA

IC-721	1350	1, 2 3 5	IC 722	1625	1 2, 3 5

BANGALORE

IC-771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W-512	2130	daily

BHUBANESWAR

IC-966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC-777	1815	1 3 5	IC-778	0610	1, 3, 5

CHENNAI (MADRAS)

IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily

DELHI

IC-263	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W-902	0830	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC 856	1545	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	3015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7

DIBRUGARH

IC-701	1100	1 3 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3 5, 7

DIMAPUR

CD-215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4

GUWAHATI

IC 703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1 2, 3 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1 2 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4 7

HYDERABAD

9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1 3, 5	IC 775	0910	1, 3 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1 3 5

IMPHAL

CD 255	0530	1 3 5	CD 256	1000	1 3 5
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4 7

JAIPUR

IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3,5, 7

JODHAT

CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W 621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4

LILABARI

IC 201/203	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3

LUCKNOW

CD-412	1715	1 3 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7

MUMBAI (BOMBAY)

9W 202	0630	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 211	1910	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1

NAGPUR

IC-769	1815	2 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6

PATNA

IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5 7

PORT BLAIR

CD-285	0530	2, 4 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7

RANCHI

IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6

SILCHAR

CD 753	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5

TEZPUR

CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5

VISAKHAPATNAM

CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN

RJ-185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4

AMSTERDAM

KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7

BANGKOK

KB-105	1025	2 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3

BRUNEI

BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
SU-538	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI 107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun. Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr. Tues & Sat	12 30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed & Sat; Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr. Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr. Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kather Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14 00	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6 20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22 05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15 45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr. Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03 50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).

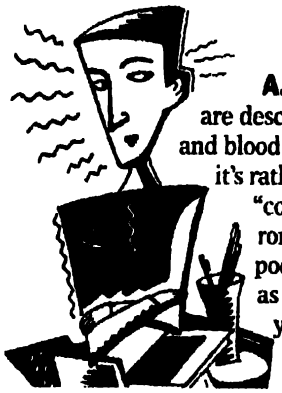


SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am an 18-year-old boy and love a woman who is 28 and has a child. But she is not aware that I love her. I know it is not right to love a married woman but I really cannot help it and feel that I cannot live without her. Please help.***

M. Banerjee, Durgapur



A. The kind of love you are describing is not a flesh and blood love. On the contrary, it's rather like the concept of "courtly love" or romantic love as found in poetry. You know as well as I do that the feelings you have for this 28-year-old mother are feelings that are unlikely to be translated into reality, especially since she is entirely unaware of your love! Perhaps it would be helpful to reclassify the emotion you feel. There is no harm in your befriending her on a normal, everyday basis but please do not make any declarations of love as that would only endanger and complicate a precious friendship. Everybody in the world needs a matrix of sincere and committed friendship and it would be wonderful if you could provide this. You are very young and your whole life is before you — you will certainly encounter the right partner in the course of time.

Q. ***I am a 21-year-old girl and my problem is that I am very, very lazy. In fact, it took me one week to write this letter to you. My parents and friends are constantly nagging me but I never feel motivated enough to do anything — be it studies or sports. Please help me out of this situation.***

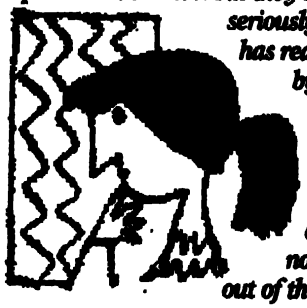


Smita Sharma, Calcutta

A. I am an extremely lazy person myself and I don't think being lazy is such a bad thing at all. However, I have learnt in the course of time that it is possible to be both lazy and active. The trick is to be relaxed and laid back most of the time, but to be on the lookout for the important and strategic things, for the things we really cannot afford to miss out on. There can be several factors behind a lazy attitude. It can be a dreamy disposition where your mind is distracted by all sorts of things. Or it can be due to depression where nothing seems worth doing because you can't really see the point of it. Laziness can also arise out of boredom, out of lack of stimulation and motivation. Once you identify the particular roots of your laziness syndrome you will be able to figure out how to come to terms with it. Write in again and tell me why you are bored and perhaps I may have some further suggestions.

In love with an elderly married lady who has a child? The feelings you have for this 28-year-old mother are feelings that are unlikely to be translated into reality, especially since she is entirely unaware of your love! Perhaps it would be helpful to reclassify the emotion you feel

Q. ***I am a 14-year-old girl of working parents. It's been a month since we moved into our new flat. A 16-year-old boy lives in the same building and he has been constantly trying to hold me, kiss me or molest me. I spoke to my parents about him but they did not take me seriously because the boy has really impressed them by his good behaviour. A few days back, he even tried to tear off my clothes. I am very scared now. How do I get out of this terrible mess?***



Sweety Malhotra, Guwahati

A. The first thing you must do is to explain to someone in authority, whether it is your parents or your class teacher, how real the threat from this young boy is. Warn him that if he persists in this sort of behaviour you will have no option but to report him to his school authorities or his parents. However, don't get hysterical or over-aggressive in your own reations; just keep your cool and level with him in a firm, no-nonsense way. Most people who act over-aggressive or macho crumple up in the face of stern resistance. Remember, fear is an

emotion which can be sensed or smelt out by other people — the best way to deal with fear is to handle it head on. There is an invisible sheath around you to protect you when you are unafraid and to think of it, why on earth should you be afraid of a silly 16-year-old who doesn't know how to behave? If he does get aggressive just give him a kick where it hurts the next time he gets 'friendly' with you!

Q. ***I have a peculiar problem; fear of failure. I have been performing consistently and did well in Secondary and Higher Secondary examinations. But I could not get through Joint Entrance exams. I am preparing myself to sit for this exam again this year. But I cannot concentrate. My detractors are having a field day saying I only managed to do well so long because I was just studious and studied hard. I am very depressed and my exams are round the corner. Please advise. Also, can you say what the tarot cards say for me? My birthday is 10. 12. '78.***

Name Withheld, Gamharia

A. Fear of failure happens when one feels that the expectations of those around you are higher than what you can fulfil. Failure and success are both very relative terms, and one should judge neither oneself nor others too harshly on the basis of these criteria. I suspect that you are just too anxious about your results, and your anxiety is communicating itself negatively to your performance. Give yourself a break, take time off to do all the things that a young man of your age should be doing! As for the tarot cards, I don't think I need them to predict that this is just a very temporary phase and that you will be back in action in the studies department soon — as soon as you stop worrying! Your birth date indicates that according to the Chinese calendar you are born under the sign of the horse. Horses are consistent, hard-working, and have excellent judgment. Like your sign you, too, are a long distance runner and time will prove your worth!



Q. I am a smart looking, 24-year-old working woman. My problem is that I am absolutely crazy about the marine profession and yet no one comes my way. My parents know about my fascination and have advertised in local dailies. The marine engineers who applied took it for granted that I was after their money. I could not convince them that I genuinely love their profession of sailing and returning home after long voyages. I am hooked to only this profession. Do you think I am insane? Please advise.

In love with a girl but impotent at 22? There are often some psychological reasons for the condition — just go into detail with your doctors and check out the medical options available

R.M., Calcutta

A. Anything in life that we really want we get! If you want ot marry a sailor, why I'm quite sure you will do just that! You are still very young, just take it easy and wait for things to work out. Of course there is another option as well. Save up all the money you earn and go on a long cruise. That way you get to see the world, be near the sea, and who knows bump into the right man of your dreams! Good luck!



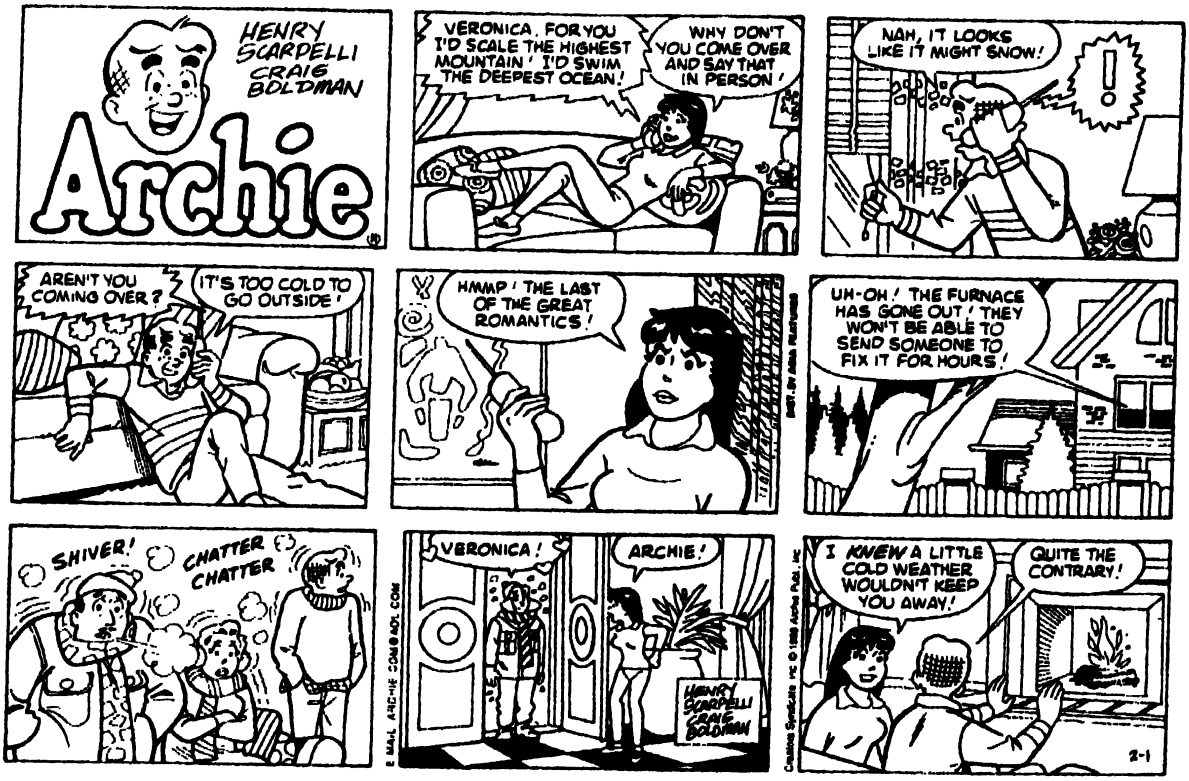
Q. ***I am a 22-year-old engineering student. I am in love with a 20-year old girl for the last 5 years. We love each other very much and were planning to get married soon. But recently, I underwent a medical test and have discovered that I am impotent. I cannot decide what to do now. Should I tell her about my impotency?***

B. Biswas, Howrah

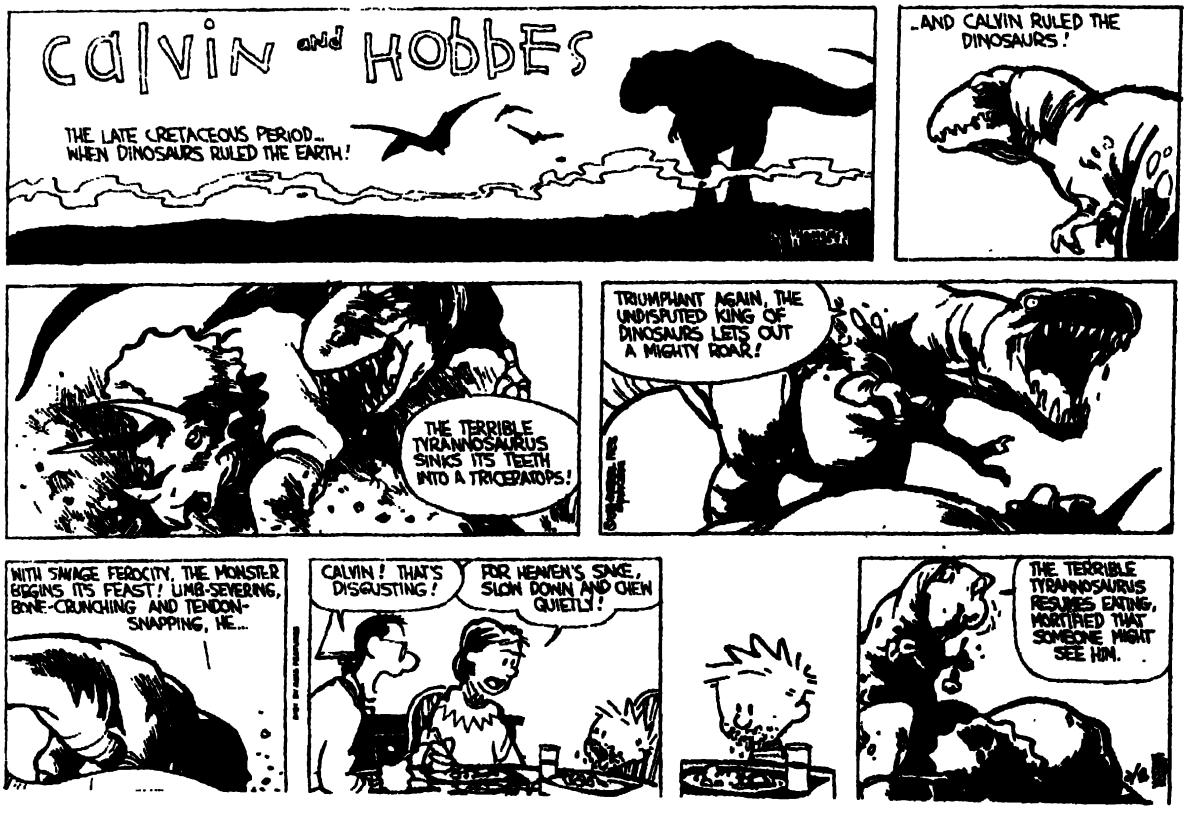
A. Impotency is not always an irreversible situation. First try to understand the exact medical nature of your physical problem, and see what you can do to remedy it. There are often some psychological reasons for the condition — just go into detail with your doctors without any sense of embarrassment and check out the medical options available. Of course, you must confide in your girlfriend. Judge her reactions and modulate your own responses accordingly. I may be wrong in my way of thinking but I feel that marriage is not only a physical or sexual relationship. A marriage involves compatibility at many different levels, and sexual play is available to you even if the complete sexual act is not possible. As for children modern science has ensured that men are really not that necessary any more! I personally think that if both of your are mature people, a successful and realistic marriage is still possible but, of course, everything depends on your girlfriend's state of mind. Go ahead, do whatever your instincts say, be brutally truthful with each other, and let events play themselves out.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

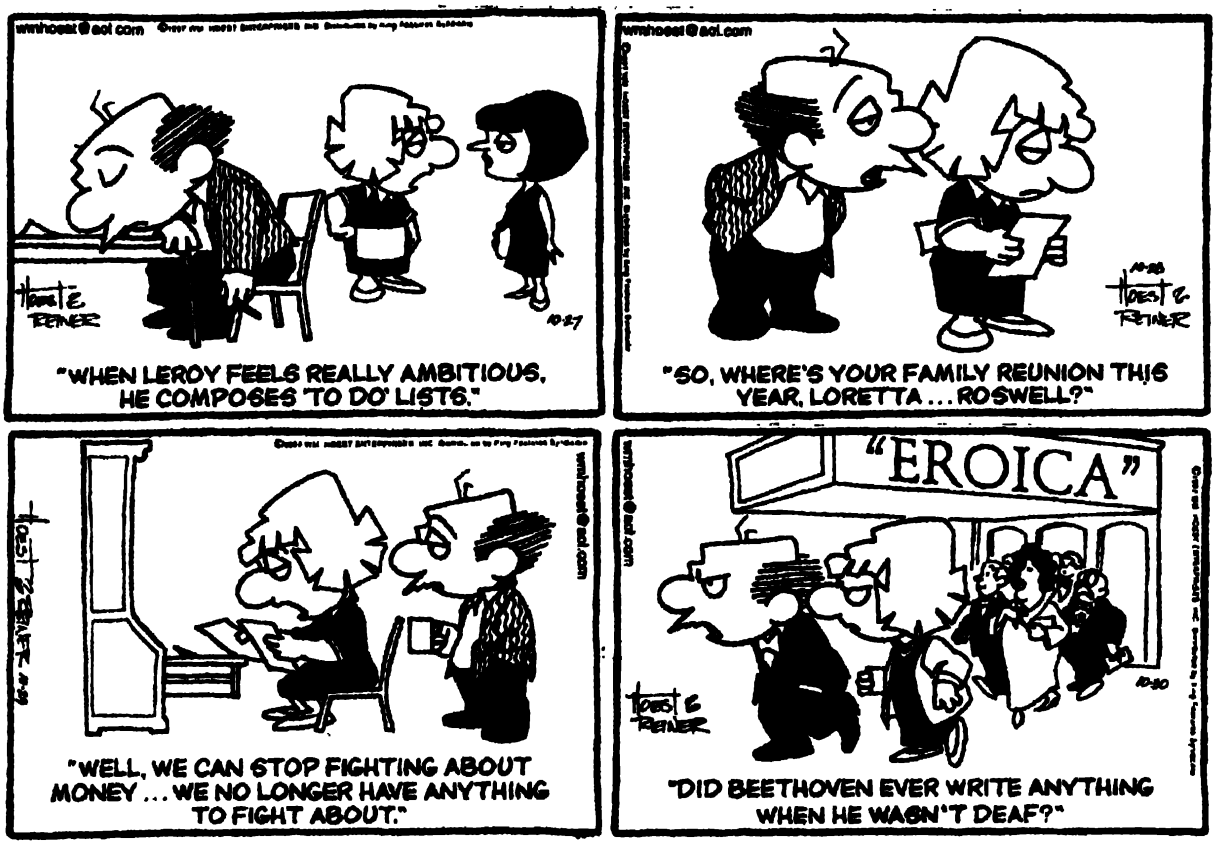
ARCHIE



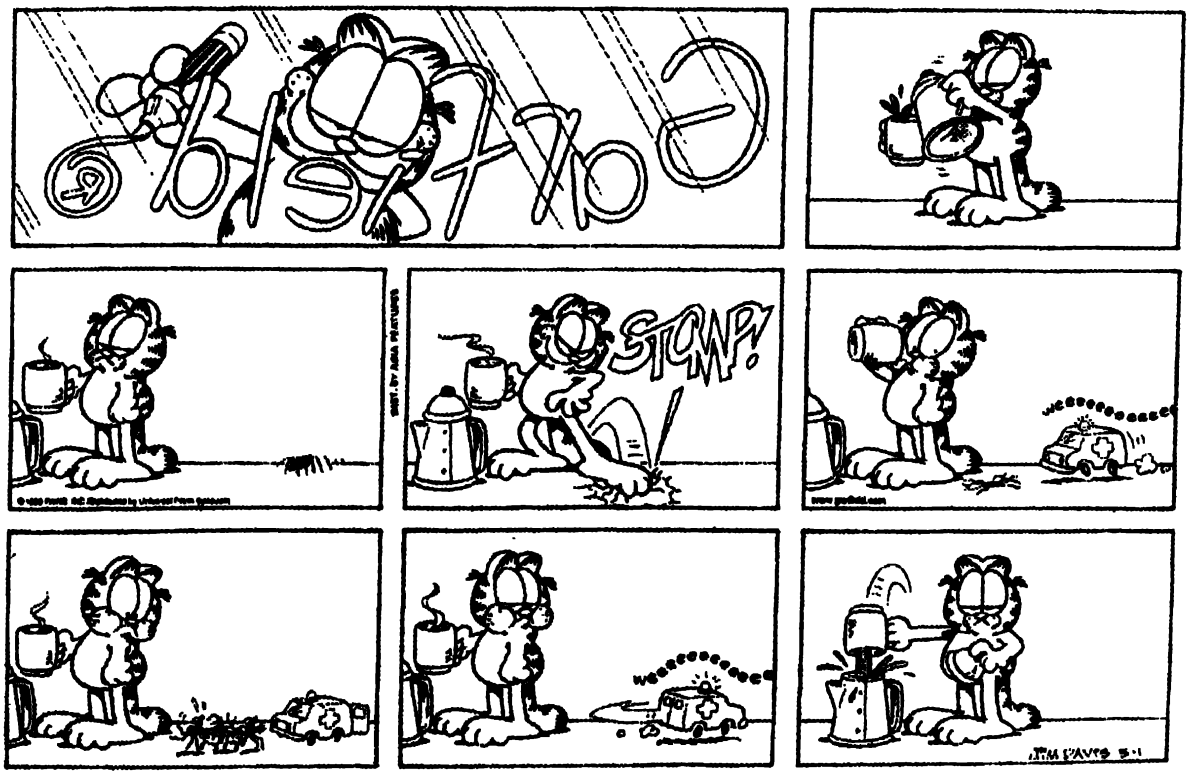
CALVIN AND HOBBES © WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



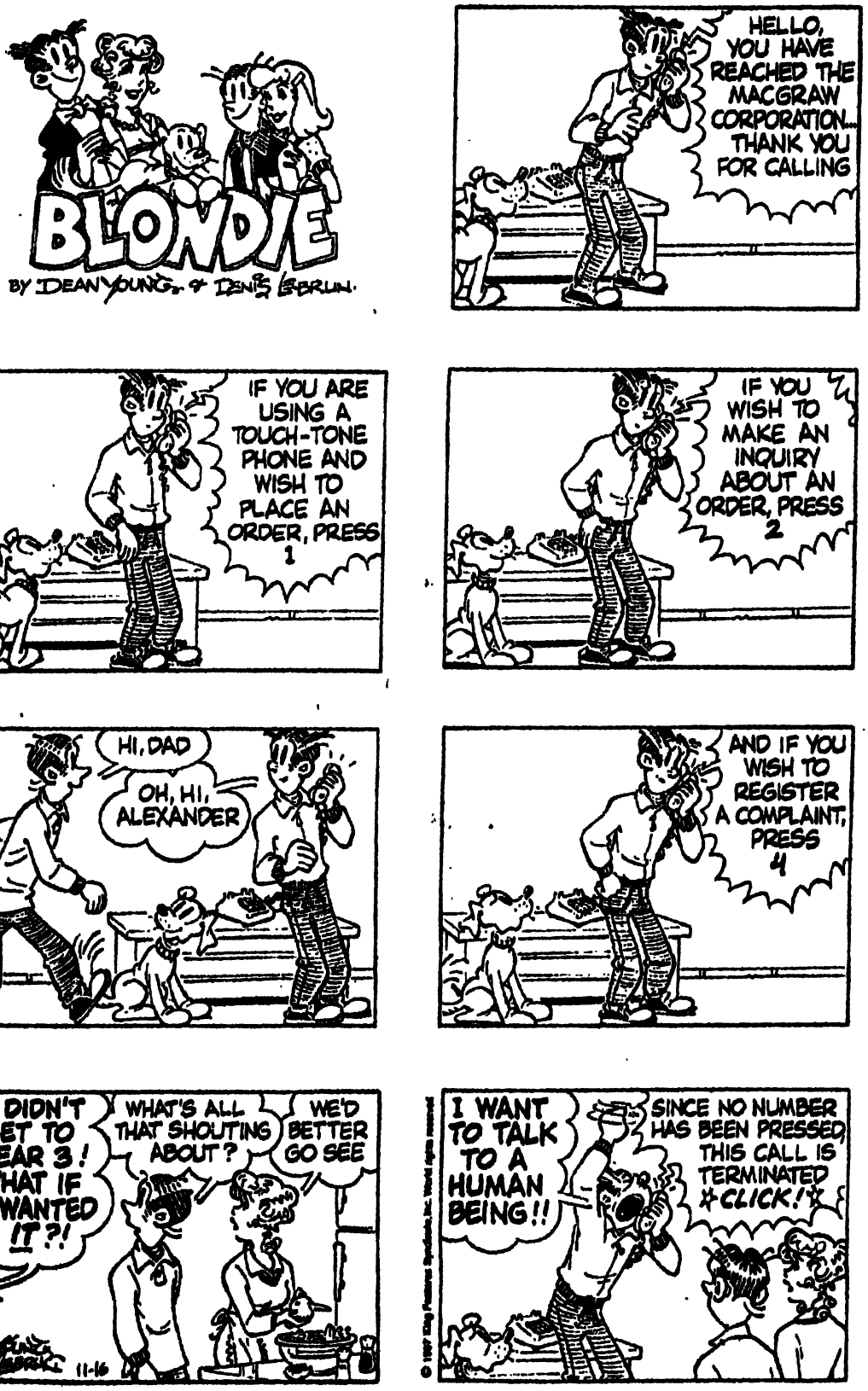
GARFIELD ▒ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ▪ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q ***I find your tips very useful. Please tell me how to make lemon and sugar hair removing cream at home.***
Nasreen, Calcutta

A I have never mentioned anything about using lemon and sugar to remove hair in the form of a cream! You are perhaps confused. Lemon and sugar when mixed and boiled to a thick consistency will make wax . You can use it for removing hair by applying it evenly on the skin and then removing with cellophane paper or cloth strips.The hair is pulled out evenly but believe me, this is no child's play and should really be done by a professional who knows how to wax .At home, it is safer to use cold wax that is easily available from cosmetic stores and can be safely used at home. Be sure to pull the skin firmly where you are waxing so as not to peel the skin and always wipe the skin with a cold compression or cold towel after waxing and not a hot one. This is to close pores and prevent skin from sagging. Most salons use a hot towel to get rid of remaining wax easily but it should actually be a cold compression.

Q ***I have acne on my forehead and have an oily complexion but do not have acne anywhere else. Please suggest a remedy.***
Sapna Mukherjee, Calcutta

A Check to see whether you have dandruff. It is probable that you have dandruff and this is resulting in acne on the forehead.Wash your face with cold rose water several times a day. I would also suggest that you treat the dandruff side by side. Oil your hair with warm coconut oil and then apply the juice of one lemon and steam your hair. Wash hair only after a minimum of two hours. Henna your hair once every 10 days as this will help reduce the dandruff. A healthy diet is always reflected in healthy hair. So start right now with a balanced diet, lots of water and a regular exercise programme.

Q ***I am 16 years old .I have a problem of hair loss. I have developed a bald patch on my head. Please advise.***
Bibhudutta Mohapatra, Orissa



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

A natural way to cure corns:

Apply warm almond oil and leave on overnight

A It is quite obvious that there is an internal problem resulting in a bald patch. Get a complete medical examination done immediately. Also, go to a professional who can start hair packs for treating alopecia. Start to use castor oil twice a week. It is not possible for me to give you a detailed hair care programme as one has to detect as to why this is happening at such a young age.

Q ***I am a 21-year-old girl and have a good slim figure. The only problem is my bulging tummy as it looks very odd. I am going for a 25-minute morning walk every day. Can you suggest another method to have a trim tummy?***
Soma Ghosh, Asansol

A A brisk walk will definitely make a difference but I would suggest that you also start to do sit-ups and cycling exercises while lying down flat on your back. A daily exercise routine will definitely make a difference but the most important thing is regularity and also remember that you should not over strain the muscles . Start with a five-minute routine and then gradually increase to about 30 minutes. Tummy trimmers can be done anywhere: whenever you are standing,pull in the stomach muscles, count to 10 and then release. Do this as many times a day as possible. Soon you will have a trimmer tummy and look fabulous.

Q ***I have a normal skin which turns slightly oily in summers. I am a 30-year-old working woman. What should be my summer make-up specially when going to work in the morning and for occasional parties?***
Neha Gupta, Golf Green, Calcutta

A You have not mentioned your skin tone, your face shape and your positive features. I believe that every woman has positive features which can be highlighted with make-up and negative feature which can be camouflaged. Try and avoid using any foundation and keep your summer make-up light and natural. A light lipstick and eyeliner will do wonders to the skin. For the evenings you could be a little more dramatic with mascara, a light blusher

A and some eye shadow added. What colours to use, what blending to do can only be told once the face is shown to a professional and unfortunately there does not seem to be very many of them around.



Q ***Please suggest a permanent way to get rid of corns on the feet. They become quite painful at times and regular ointments provide temporary relief only.***
Vinay Bhave, Bhowanipur, Calcutta

A Corns can be extremely troublesome and are caused by bad footwear and dry uncared for feet. Go to a professional pedicurist to get rid of them. Also there are corn pads available which have just been introduced recently into the market. They are extremely effective and have a whole range of products for the feet. At night, take some warm almond oil and massage it into the corns. This should be a substantial amount. You could wear socks so as to avoid staining the bed sheets and then leave the oil on the whole night. If you do this daily for about a month there will be a marked change in your corns very soon.

Q ***I am an 18-year-old girl with a dry skin. Every winter I get patches on my skin that are reddish, itchy and very dry. The doctor suggested AD vitamin oil. I have taken vitamin tablets along with this and moisturise my body with the onset of winter but to no avail. These patches appear all over the body except for my face and neck. Please suggest a natural remedy.***
Papiya Mukherjee, Bokaro, Bihar



To take care of dry skin:

■

Use a mild soap and add more nourishment to your diet with salads, fruits and lean meat

A I think you should go in for a medical check-up to check for any internal problems. Take a mixture of the following: coconut oil, olive oil, almond oil, almond oil and fresh cream. Every day before a bath,apply a thick layer of this all over the body massaging into the skin very gently. Leave in for about five minutes and then bathe normally.

You must use a mild soap which does not have any drying effects as this will only make the condition worse. Instead of taking vitamin pills why not add more nourishment to your diet with dairy products, salads, fruits, lean meat and eggs.

"....My hair feels soft as silk because of the henna in this shampoo. Harmful chemicals are history."

Debashree, Alipore Calcutta



Thank you Debashree and all other satisfied consumers who tried Vatika shampoo and wrote to us. We're pleased to know that henna conditioning has worked wonders for you and has made nature shine in your hair.

If you want to know more about the goodness of henna conditioning, write to us at Vatika Hairline, P.O. Box No. 4939, New Delhi-29.



Dabur
Vatika
Henna Cream
Conditioning
Shampoo

Let Nature Shine in Your Hair

99MWO



Jagdish Yadav

GAURAV GHEI

Golfer:

■

I am not much of a connoisseur myself. In winter, I am a total non-drinker but in summer I would opt for a light beer with no particular labels in mind. In Jamaica, I had a number of these cocktails which were delicious but otherwise I don't like the taste of straight drinks. For me it is a matter of taste, and it so happens that I don't like the taste of alcohol.

High Spirits

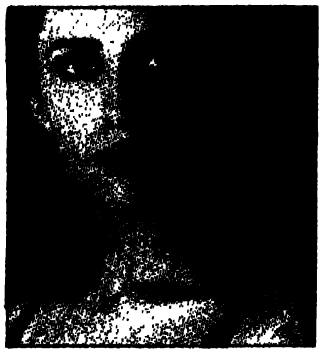
The alcohol market is growing daily, as the drinking habit catches up on Indians. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports

RINA DHAKA

Fashion designer

■

I don't drink much alcohol. Sometimes, I might have a glass of champagne or wine. I liked some fruit liqueurs during my recent visit to South Africa with names as exotic as Amarula and Cape Velvet. I would have an occasional drink only when I am bored and go out with friends and family. I am what you would call a perfect social drinker.



Booze. You have the choice of drinking yourself silly or sipping just that premium peg or two.Strange, the same stuff can make a connoisseur of one, and a clown of the other—depending on whether they are willing to treat it as an art or addiction.

Does liquor necessarily have to stink? Not when the tippler knows the limits to alcohol consumption. Premium liquor companies like Seagrams have advocated a moderation policy through campaigns like,'Drinking and driving don't mix', clearly making a case for those who enjoy quality responsibly.

The alcohol industry had initially been conceived in the late Thirties primarily as a process of waste disposal of sugar factories but with the utilisation of alcohol as motor fuel in mixture with gasoline in the wake of the World War II, its growth was somewhat accelerated. In the Sixties, alternative uses of alcohol were found and alcohol-based chemical industries started coming up. This industry has grown tremendously in size although it has not been able to acquire stability in India because of prohibition.

Since prohibition is one of the stated objectives of the Indian constitution, the liquor industry has been squeezed by the State in every possible way. "A few states like Andhra Pradesh and Haryana are in deep financial mess due to high prohibition which has impeded the flow of adequate revenues," says Diljeet Titus, an advocate handling liquor laws.

Despite the stringency, over the last decade drinking has moved from being a disreputable activity to one that spells success.The age old taboos associated with it are fast disappearing giving in to a more liberal culture.

Drinking at noon is on the rise as power lunches now include a couple of drinks, most often a few glasses of beer. Says Deepak Chaudhuri, divisional vice president of the UB group on consumer preferences, "People within the 18-24 age group primarily consume beer/white spirits and 24-30 consumers have beer, whisky and other alcoholic flavours."

The mushrooming of the pub culture in India, says Chaudhuri, has also reduced the age profile of alcohol/alcoholic beverages consumers. Women, by and large, across all age groups prefer beer and cocktails on account of the lower alcohol content. Cocktails have carved an niche for themselves ever since the drinking habits of Indians acquired an aura of sophistication. Many Indians are beginning to take quiet pride in their own tastefully decorated bars. There are predominantly

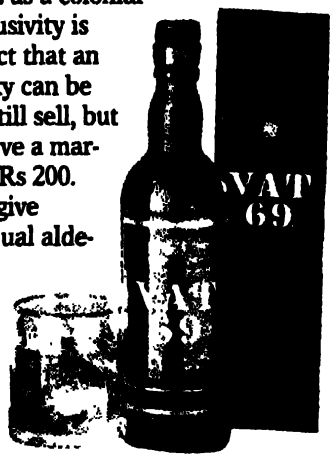


six flavours—whisky, brandy, dark rum, white rum, gin and vodka that constitute the Indian made foreign liquor (IMFL) universe with specific images of their own. Devin Narang, managing director of The Narang Industries Limited says, "Each type of liquor speaks differently to its consumers. And the psychographics of the drinker loyal to a particular flavour are quite different from those of his neighbour who drinks another flavour regularly." Though the average liquor consumer is known to be a gregarious extrovert, statistics show the majority of drinking in India is done outside the home.

No discourse on alcohol is ever complete without that master brew—Scotch. "India cannot make Scotch because there is no way one can duplicate the water, natural peat and the climate which is peculiar to Scotland. While our own IMFL brands can compare favourably with other international brands, they cannot replace the exquisite flavour of Scotch," says Narang.

"It is said that Indians consume more scotch than was ever made in Scotland," laughs Arun K. Agarwal, food and beverage (F&B) manager of Maurya Sheraton Hotel and Towers.

Whisky, on account of its easy availability and diverse range, accounts for about 69 per cent of the IMFL market. It is seen as the sophisticated man's drink owing to its perception among Indians as a colonial legacy. The tag of exclusivity is best typified by the fact that an Indian premium whisky can be priced at Rs 400 and still sell, but no rum can hope to have a market if its priced above Rs 200. "But Indian whiskeys give hangovers due to residual aldehydes (fusal oils) during distillation," adds Agarwal.



Like whisky, brandy too, is a man's drink, popular in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Brandy gives the impression of a drink good for health; hence the conservative South Indian's reasons for drinking it. Being a sweeter drink, it goes well with the spicy, curried dishes of Andhra.

"Health factors have contributed towards a shift from hard liquor to beer, specially among the youth on the supposition that it has a low alcohol content—4-5 per cent," says Pankaj Paranjape of Narang Industries. When the Indian male gets to drinking in his late teens, he does so out of peer pressure. At this stage he is cash strapped; he drinks rum because it is supposed to be cheaper than whisky. As he grows older he may shift to whisky in which case he looks back at rum as a reminder of his hurly burly days.

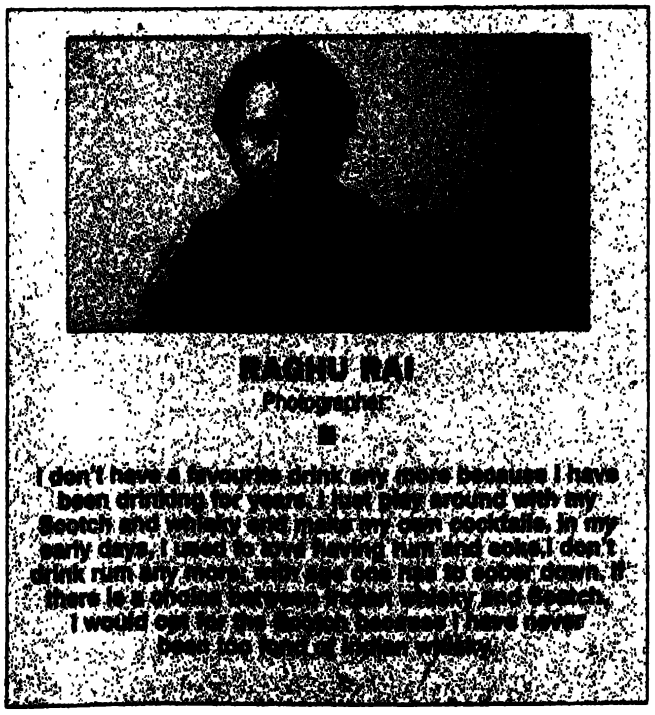
In any case, rum has a machismo mystique and runs strong both in Kerala and West Bengal. "Indian rum made from sugarcane molasses is the best in the world," says Narang. While the rum drinker is a staunch loyalist, the whisky or brandy consumer, may, at a little prodding, compromise, and settle for an occasional gin-and-lime.

Gin, vodka and rum are in the white spirits category and are generally sipped as cocktails. They are also perceived to be weaker than the dark spirits—rum, whisky and brandy— though there is no scientific reason for such an assumption. This may explain why the whisky drinker, if he is drinking in the afternoon, would order a white spirit

Women are beginning to try out wines—both Indian and foreign — but Indian wines still have a long way to go. Says Stephen Magor, executive assistant manager for F&B, The Oberoi, "The young lot prefer Grover's Indian wines, but considering the large number of globe-trotting travellers who check in at five-star hotels, the demand is clearly for superior French wines."

Taste or quality in liquor implies that the liquor should be smooth and mellow—it should not burn the throat and palate or leave too much of a sweet or bitter aftertaste, the best example of which would be the woody aroma that premium imported whiskeys have. Quality also relies on blending skills, the number of times the liquor has been distilled and the time it takes for the liquor to mature.

The West, along with a widely accessible private media, has done its bit to make drinking an 'in thing' among Indians where nursing an orange juice in a party would be a flagrant violation of social etiquette. No wonder then, that Indian liquors are keen to 'mature' with age, appealing to the palate of the sophisticate with brands that make his spirits soar and his choices clear. ■



PROFILE

Dancing to her own Tune

An exponent of the Kalakshetra style of *Bharatanatyam*, Leela Samson is today immersed in her multi-dimensional role of a performer and a teacher. **Geeta Sharma** meets the dancer-choreographer

Her gentle and expressive countenance, her soft brown eyes and brown hair tied up in a neat bun, make for an endearing image. But what stands out in the articulate and intelligent dancer's visage, as she talks to you about her life and her dance, is her stark simplicity. Devoid of any warpaint that dancers are coated with and with just a small *bindi* adorning her broad forehead, Leela Samson almost looks like a student.

One of the finest exponents of the Kalakshetra style of Bharatanatyam, Leela is at present immersed in her multi-dimensional role as a performer and a teacher of the classical dance form.

A virtuoso performer and a sensitive interpreter of the finer nuances of the dance form, the 47-year-old danseuse says that she has been able to grow beyond the pale of the Kalakshetra style eternalised by its founder Rukhmini Devi Arundale. "I was not just another of the numbers that had come out of Kalakshetra. It took time but I was able to break out of it. And let me tell you, I own it to the training I had in Kalakshetra."

The breaking out, Samson is referring to, lies in the use of certain muscles and areas of the body to produce enhanced strength of movement. "Basically I feel that training of the body outside of dance has not been given importance, just as in vocal music training of the voice outside the boundaries of musical notes has not been given importance. And to that extent, I feel that when it comes to tradition, teaching within it has at times been a little unmindful."

A reference point for her enhanced movement of body, is her much acclaimed and path-breaking effort, Spanda, the new dance group formed a couple of years ago. The group's choreography, done by Samson, marks the breaking of all the shackles that formal tutelage has enforced on Bharatanatyam dancers for nearly 50 years in this century.

Basing her experiments with the body in a group situation, Leela in her Spanda choreography, has remained completely immersed in the classicism of Bharatanatyam's use of the body and yet managed to impart a startling freshness to the dance presentation.

The new creation seeks to explore the medium of Bharatanatyam in a creatively different manner with the conscious use of the *nabha* (navel) and the spine as being relevant to the strength of style.

Two of the dance pieces in the first Spanda presentation titled *Acacia* and *Dva-Suparna* were based on a theme from the *Rig-Veda* and tried to explore the inner and outer conflicts between the self and its apparition.

But as Leela points out, she has been able to make this possible precisely because of her training at Kalakshetra. There is a world of difference in the experience of learning at Kalakshetra and in Delhi. There was almost an instinctive rightness in everything that *Atthai* (Rukhmini Devi) did. At Kalakshetra, schooling and art were brought together in a holistic approach and the atmosphere was made conducive for the learning of dance.

There was a sense of all-pervading freedom at the akademi, founded by a band of people led by Rukhmini Devi. They were committed to the philosophy of the Theosophical Society of India and were disciples of Annie Besant.

"I don't recall a single instance when a child was reprimanded for anything. If one did not want to attend a class, one was free to walk out, and come back when one wanted," Samson

Leela in her Spanda choreography, has remained completely immersed in the classicism of Bharatanatyam's use of the body and yet managed to impart a startling freshness



recalls. Besides, there was the ambience of the place. Listening to the *tanpura*, for instance, in the sylvan surroundings of Kalakshetra was a very different experience from "listening to it outside my house in Delhi," she adds.

There is also a basic difference in the students of today and of her times, she feels. In the days of yore, learning an art form meant a complete giving in of oneself. Today both students and parents are very restless and impatient. For them dance means quick stage performances and carrying a tag of having learnt dance from a high profile dancer, so much so that teacher hopping has become a common thing today.

"That is why I am very careful about the students I take. There is tremendous pressure on me as on any other dancer from parents to take in their wards. But I have insisted on not training more than six at a time."

In fact, pressure to take in more students was the reason why Leela recently decided to quit her post from the teaching faculty at the Bharatiya Kala Kendra and a part time association with the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya. She is now full-time into the twin role of a performer and a teacher. And as the latter, she can't help comparing her own attitude as a student with that of her pupils today. "In our days, the relationship was marked by respect. There was absolutely no question of a student uttering a word and critising the teacher for the dance steps. Today, they want to argue and criticise you for every little thing," she laments.

A recipient of the Padamshree and the Sanskriti Award for the Performing Arts, Leela's book on the classical dance forms of India, *Rythm in Joy* has been widely acclaimed. And yet, it is a little surprising that this widely travelled dancer had actually wanted to become a surgeon.

"My father was a commandant of the National Defence Academy at Khadakvasla. When my parents decided to put me in a boarding school at the age of nine, a staff officer suggested that I be sent to Kalakshetra." A convent school's controlled atmosphere, ties, belts, shoes and socks were a contrast to the natural environs of Kalakshetra where one did not have to wear uniforms, could roam about barefoot in the sand and climb trees during a history class.

So gradually one of India's greatest art academies turned the tomboyish Leela into a sensitive dancer. And while there, it was the imposing all-pervading persona of Rukhmini Devi that affected Leela's personality the most. "It was with a mixture of awe and admiration that we saw her. She had a beautiful presence around her and that affected us all," she recalls.

After Kalakshetra, her journey to stage was not so easy. So after five odd years in Bombay, Samson found herself in Rukhmini Devi's repertory group, rubbing shoulders with the best dancers of that time. Though she got pushed around a bit, her young and keen eyes kept absorbing the treat that was being offered. After a five-year-stint, she went abroad and matured into a 'thinking' individual.

She returned to settle in Delhi, where her sensitive mind, after much disillusionment and debate, learnt to cope with the politics that reigned in the cultural scenario. This meant not compromising on her principles and even losing out at times. For instance, she turned down offers to perform for Doordarshan's national programme of music and dance and the Trade Fair Authority of India when they failed to giver her the status and rating due to her.

Being on the wrong side of officialdom however did not prevent her talent from budding and being appreciated. Her rise in recent years has been meteoric, proving that it is difficult to keep a star of her calibre down for very long.

Besides her solo performances, which have usually conformed to the classical Bharatanatyam mode, Samson enjoys doing group choreography. Only, it is too expensive and time-consuming an effort. "I would have loved to do more and more of it, but it is difficult to get a committed, involved team of dancers, musicians and the like. Also, the costs of hiring space for rehearsals and paying the artistes is something that is too painstaking and at times humiliating," she says.

Samson has not chosen to marry and stays alone in her government allotted flat in the plush Asiad Village complex in South Delhi. "It is not as if I was against marriage. It was just that first, I was too involved with my dancing and, then, the right man never really came my way."

But at her age, does she miss the companionship that marriage brings? "Yes. I do. I guess it is nice if you have someone to share a laugh and cry with. So that is something I miss." In the same breath Samson states that she would not have married for the sake of physical needs but because it would be a nice thing to have someone else pay your telephone bills and get your car repaired! ■

A convent school's controlled atmosphere...were a contrast to the natural environs of Kalakshetra where one did not have to wear uniforms, could roam about barefoot in the sand and climb trees during a history class



My Personal Style



Besides momos, music and friends, Bhaichung Bhutia's favourite pastime remains

Climbing the Hills



MISSING MOMOS:

The more I eat'em the more I love'em. With a little help from my friends, I have perfected the art of making them. When I shifted from Sikkim almost six years ago, momos were what I missed most. Thus it was more out of necessity that I learnt making it. And now I can confidently say that nowhere in Calcutta, at least, have I eaten stuff better then what I cook.

Sleep, music, friends and momos. Apart from football, these are a few of my favourite things.

Sleep, in particular is a treasured pastime. Having to wake up early to be in time for training makes the afternoon siesta, when there are no household chores, extra special. Sunday being a day of rest, I look forward to a late, late beginning to the day.

Music is a constant companion. Rarely is the stereo off at home. Like everyone else, what I am listening to depends on how I am feeling at that point in time.To shake off the early morning slumber, I like listening to something jivvy. I mean remixes and other perky stuff.

Although I have no hard favourites, I like Back Street Boys, Michael Learns to Rock. However, new numbers —thanks to cable television — replace previous favourites regularly.

Television, therefore, is primarily a musical warehouse for me. It's mostly MTV and Channel V. *Turn to V* and *MTV Most Wanted* are two programmes I like best. Don't watch too much sport, except the odd football match, on telly.

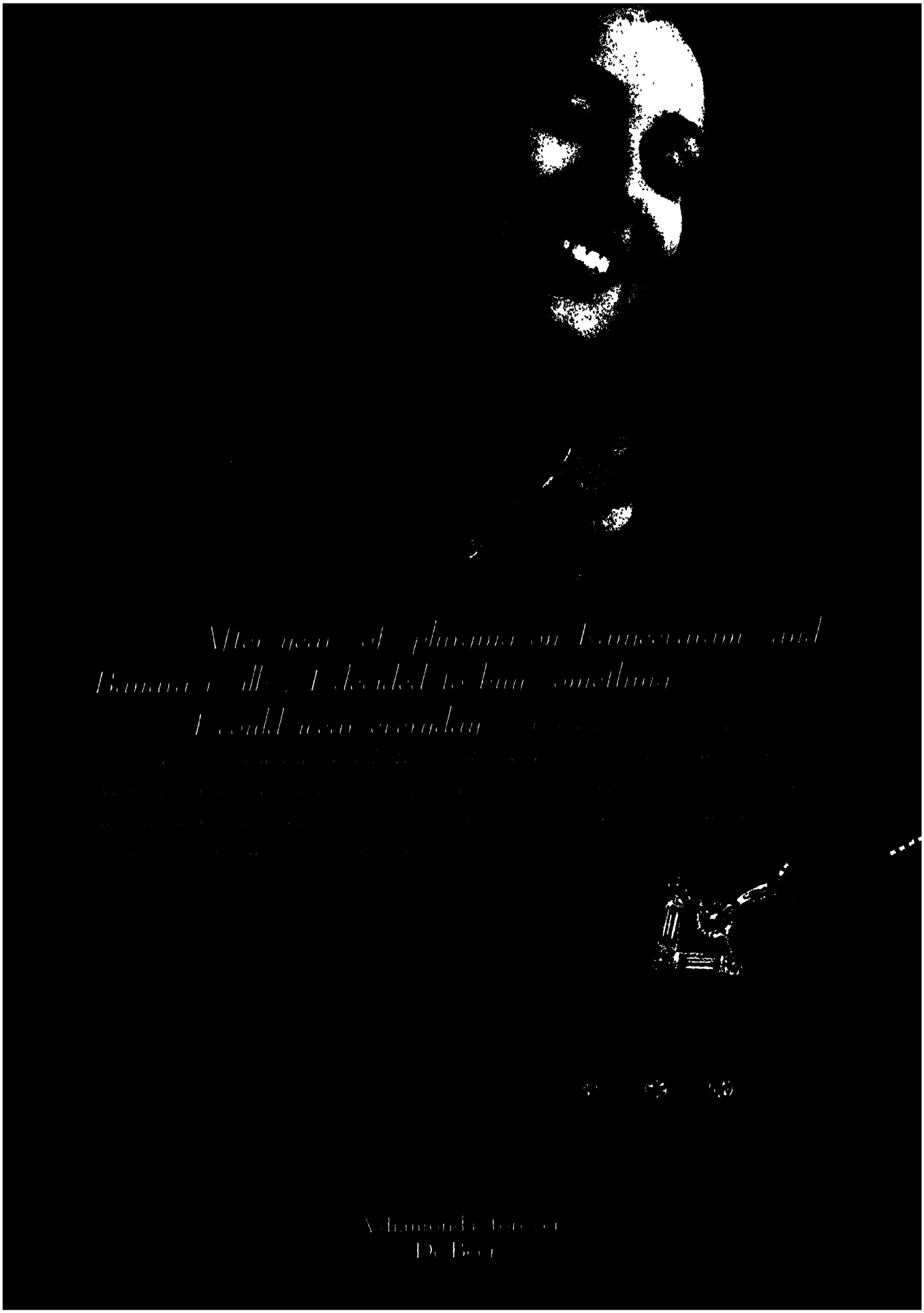
Friends. Can't live without them. Somatai Shaiza and Bijen Singh, my teammates at East Bengal, live with me. Others come over, making evenings a looked-forward-to affair. And when the schedule permits, I love being a party animal. Any excuse to celebrate, you could say, and we come together for a bit of fun. Shaking a leg at a disco too is a good way of spending an evening but that cannot happen during the busy football season.

Momos. My favourite food. The more I eat'em the more I love'em. With a little help from my friends, I have perfected the art of making them. When I shifted from Sikkim almost six years ago, momos were what I missed most. Thus it was more out of necessity that I learnt making it.

And now I can confidently say that nowhere in Calcutta, at least, have I eaten stuff better then what I cook. The best momos are made of pork, beef and chicken. I prepare a *keema* first then mix onion, salt, butter and roll it with flour. The last part is tricky but then practice makes perfect. I don't have too many preferences food wise. I hate spicy food and mashed potatoes, for instance, are a hit with me.

Long, leisurely drives put me in top gear mentally. Living close to the Eastern Bypass helps you steal a leisurely drive in the evenings. But my favourite stretch is climbing up from Siliguri to home in Tinky Tam. Driving through such serene surroundings is an exhilarating experience. Going home is my favourite vacation. After all, one gets to go there so rarely. Being born in the hills, it is but natural I would love the hills. In the din and bustle of metropolitan life, there are times when I miss them.

As told to Dhiman Sarkar





I wasn't born a princess.
But my father turned me into one.



A diamond is forever
De Beers

POST MORTEM

The Legend Lives

Thank you for the cover story on Pandit Ravi Shankar ('Heart Strings', February 8). Although nothing remains to be said about the great maestro's life-long accomplishments, the focus on his private life made the article interesting. We were all very curious about his daughter, the sprightly Anoushka who so closely resembles her father. But I just wonder if she can ever be another Ravi Shankar.

Ranjan Jha, Calcutta



Despite his fame Ravi Shankar looks a tormented individual : lost and pained. The death of his son must have been a shock to this ageing maestro. Perhaps now his only ray of hope is his pretty 16-year-old daughter, Anoushka.

Asha Poddar, Calcutta

We Indians have not yet got over traditional taboo. However, the rich and the famous are always exempted. Post-marital relationships are still a taboo in our society and unpardonable in the eyes of the law. Had Sukanya not been involved with a person of Panditji's stature, I wonder if she would have made it to the magazine cover.

Sourav Ghosh, Calcutta

The cover story on Pandit Ravi Shankar and his family was brilliant. In the world of instrumental music, they should definitely be the "first family." Here's expecting similar stories on Amjad Ali Khan, Shiv Kumar Sharma and the like.

Prabal Guha, Kathmandu

Pandit Ravi Shankar has earned applause from almost every corner of the globe. Now he is grooming his daughter, Anoushka, in the same direction. Best wishes to her.

B.N. Bose, Calcutta

Like father like daughter — these words seem to have been tailor-made for Panditji and his daughter. Here's hoping that the physical resemblance between the two gets reflected in their talents, too. May she represent India soon in the world-stage; in the footsteps of her father.

Debjani Bose, Kharagpur

Temporary fancies of celebrities destroy the peace of many. Sukanya's family life with her ex-husband was thoroughly shattered because the maestro took a sudden fancy for her. But society overlooks all this while evaluating the achievements of the rich and the famous.

Mohammed Osman, Bhagalpur

There should have been an exclusive interview on Anoushka where she should have been allowed to air her teenage views quite independently of her parents.

B.N. Sarkar, Howrah

The author of the article, 'Dead Man's River' (February 15, 1998) was Sujit Bhar and not Sujit Dhar as printed. The error is regretted.

The Telegraph

22 MARCH 1998



PAGE 4

Guddi Grows Up

From Guddi to the mother of a rebellious Naxalite. Jaya Bachchan has played it all. Now with Govind Nihalani's *Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa*, Jaya shows that after years of *sanyas* from the screen, she is ready for serious and meaningful roles.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 26

Eastern Sojourn

An unbelievable shopping experience, mouthwatering food and lots of fun. That's Singapore; Bangkok and Pattaya for you which are emerging as great holiday destinations for Indians looking for a fun-filled holiday abroad.

PAGE 30

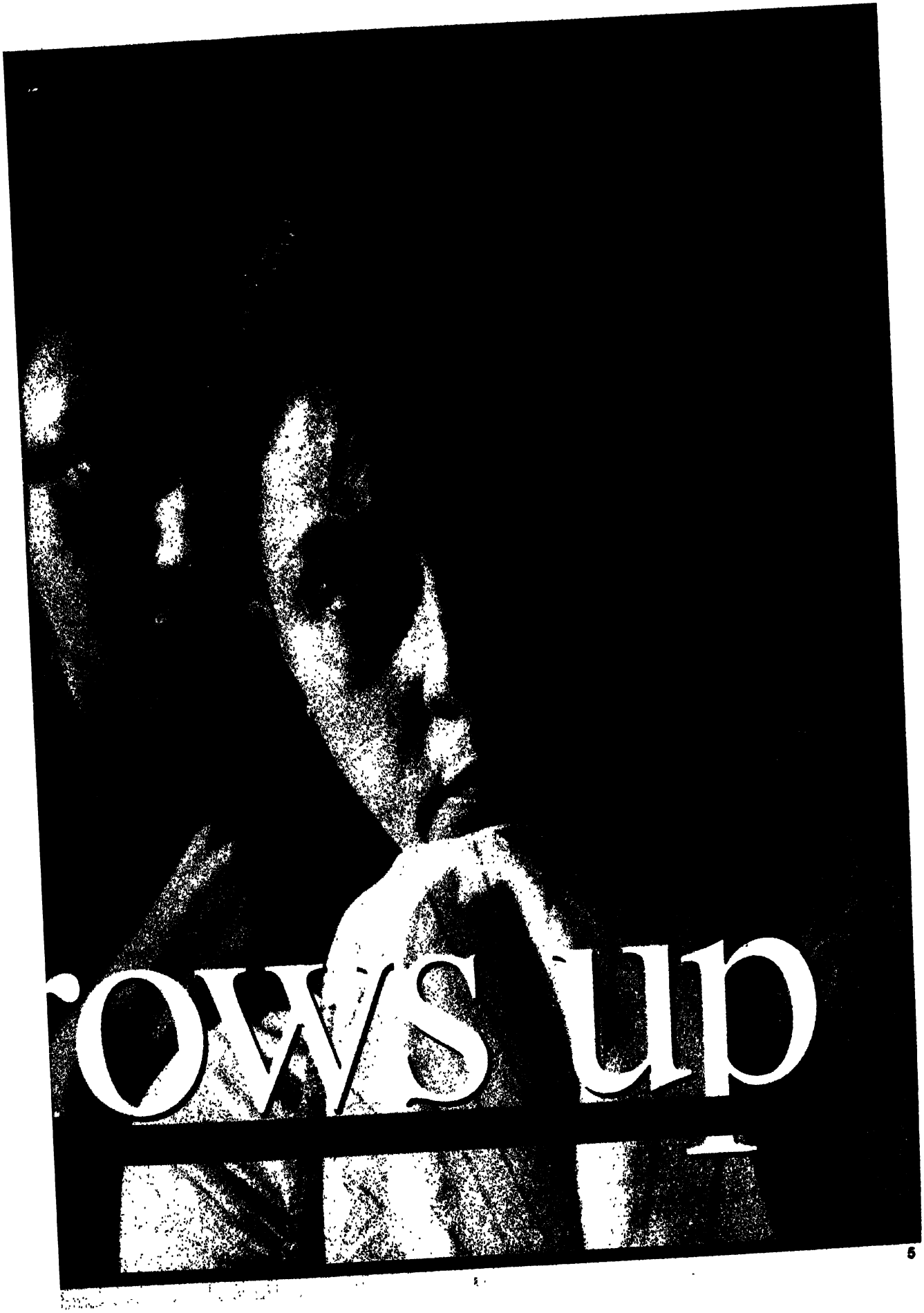
First Person

Vishwamohan Bhatt likes entertaining with traditional Rajasthani delicacies.



The *Hazaar Chaurasi* team

The role of Jaya Bachchan's life has been that of mother. Well, at least Jaya Bachchan herself certainly thinks so. When she was asked at the recent Filmfare Awards function as to why she quit the arc lights, her reply was a nonchalant: "I already had two at home." Well, at least Jaya Bachchan herself certainly thinks so.
But while she may have served many helpings of the latter favourite, gajar ka halwa, to her children, they were almost completely devoid of show-biz trimmings. Instead, while she concentrated on the task of feeding them, the values that she herself had grown and flourished on.
And that process was, if anything, not by a narrow margin. Most recently, for instance, Jaya had to use all her maternal influence to get her 22-year-old son, Abhishek, to cast his vote for the first time. Like many of his peers, Abhishek didn't believe that his one vote would make any difference to the electoral process. But while Jaya has her ways of making her feelings clear, she knows not to overdo it as well — a lesson that most mothers of rebellious sons would do well to learn. Small wonder then, that when film maker Govind Nihalani first read a translation of Mahashweta Devi's Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa, he instantly knew who should be cast in the lead role. Jaya Bachchan. The mahurat of the film last year at Rajkamal studios, dressed in a plain white tangail saree with blue border, Jaya did not look very different from the mother she plays in real life. Only her reaction to the persistent questions on her 'comeback' ("But I have always been in the industry,") rang hollow. Especially when even the message on the the four kilo inaugural chocolate confectionery at the mahurat — 'Welcome back Jayaji' — seemed to quietly mock the issue. "Silsila might have been my last main film. But I also played a character in Ta Sinha's serial, Kakkey Ki Duniya, a year ago. Then, I was supposed to have done a film directed by Shah Inamdar; the project was stalled after his untimely death," she says in her defence. As in the past, Bachchan is already receiving kudos for her performance in Hazaar Chaurasi. But the real heartening endorsement comes from the author of the novel, Mahashweta Devi herself. "Ashadharon kaaj korecho (you have performed extraordinarily well)," she said after seeing the film," says Jaya, flashing her trademark Gucci smile. "She told me that earlier I had visualised, and after watching her performance, it is impossible to imagine anyone else in the role," says Mahashweta Devi. Jaya is the mother of a militant Naxalite revolutionary in Calcutta, who is murdered after her son's political activities and whereabouts are drawn out of them only after a heated battle. Says Jaya, "It was very easy for me to slip into the character of Sujata ... 90 per cent of the women in this country ... urban Indian ... is also me sometimes. All of us pretend to have established a great ... communication with our ... ing ... them any more." In Bachchan's view, the most traumatic sequence of the film was when the mother, ignorant of her son's activities, is called upon to identify his corpse. Jaya, the actress, was faced with similar challenges in Abhagi, where such a strain prevailed right through the film. She has also portrayed the pain of a woman who loses her child in Abhiman, and then in Silsila, when her fiance dies in the plane crash. Among Bachchan's all-time


ows up

trimmings. Instead, what she concentrated on was feeding them the values that she herself had grown and flourished on.

And that process is not over yet — not by a long margin. Most recently, for instance, Jaya had to use all her maternal influence to get her 22-year-old son, Abhishek, to cast his vote for the first time. Like many of his peers, Abhishek didn't believe that his one vote would make any difference to the electoral process.

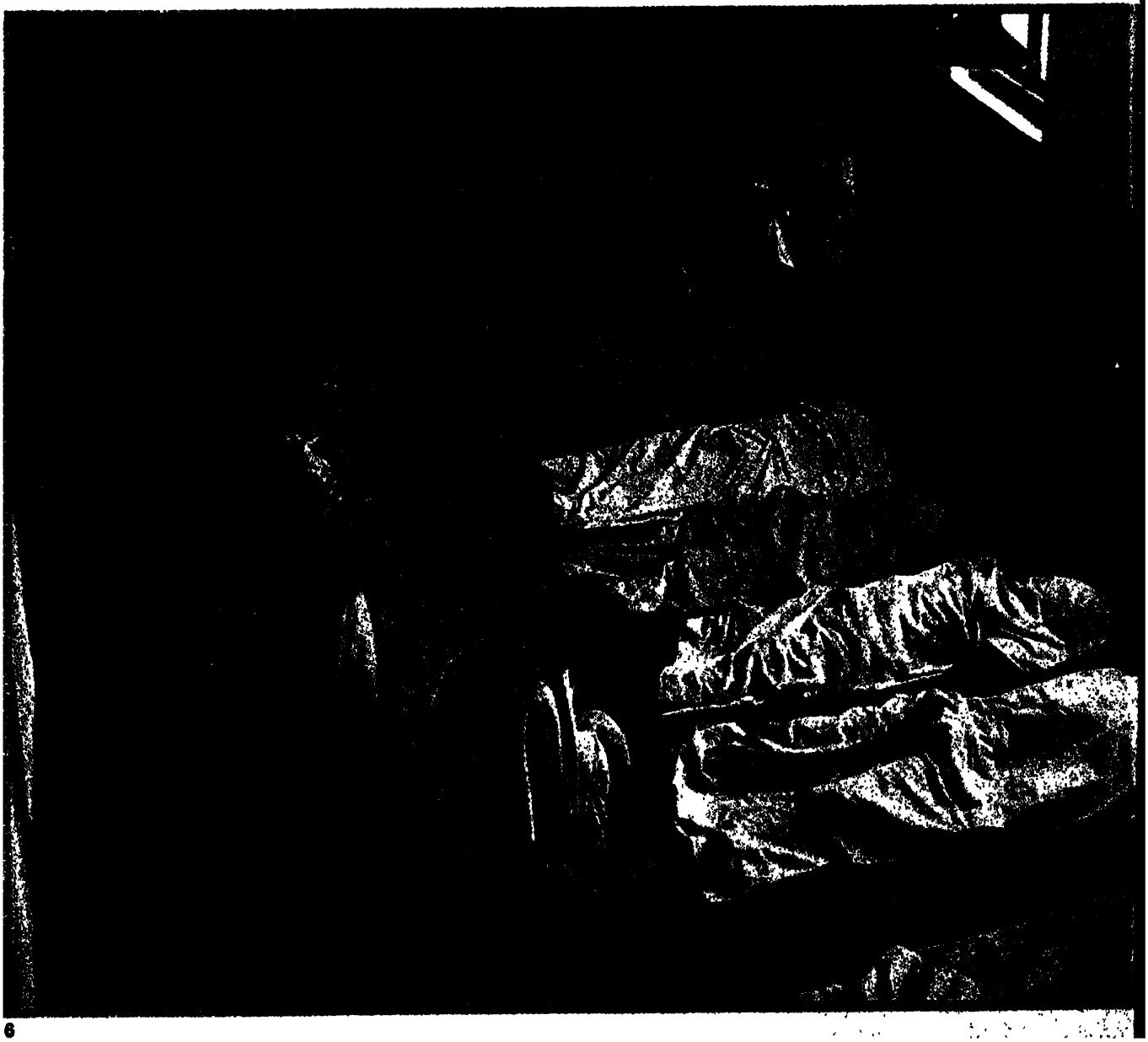
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At the *muhurat* of the film last year at Rajkamal studios, dressed in a plain white *tangail saree* with blue border, Jaya did not look very different from the mother she plays in real life. Only her reaction to the persistent questions on her 'comeback' ("But I have always been in the industry,") rang hollow. Especially when even the message on the the four kilo inaugural chocolate confectionery at the *muhurat* — 'Welcome back Jayaji' — seemed to quietly mock her.

But Jaya stuck to her point. "*Silsila* might have been my last major film, but I also played a character in Tapan Sinha's serial, *Daughters of the Century*, a year ago. Then, I was supposed to have done a film directed by Shafi Inamdar; the project was stalled after his untimely death," she says in her defence.

As in the past, Bachchan is again receiving kudos for her performance in *Hazaar Chaurasi*. But the most heartening endorsement comes from the author of the novel, Mahashweta Devi, herself. "*Ashadharon kaaj korecho* (you

Jaya Bachchan in *Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa* : Playing mother to a young Naxalite



have performed extraordinarily well)' she said after watching the film," says Jaya, flashing her trademark Guddi-smile.

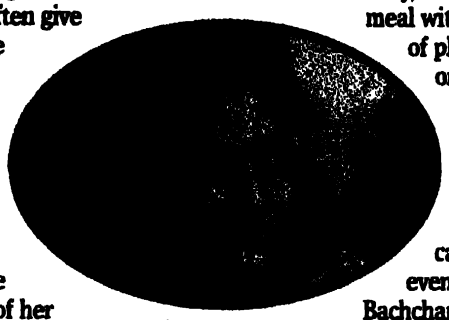
"She is very much the mother I had envisioned, and after watching her performance, it is hard to imagine anyone else in the role," says Mahashweta Devi.

Jaya plays the mother of a young Naxalite revolutionary in Calcutta, who is unaware of her son's political activities and is drawn into them only after his death. Says Jaya, "It was very easy for me to slip into this role. After all, Sujata represents 80 per cent of the women in this country. She is every urban Indian woman, she is also me



sometimes. All of us pretend to have established a great channel of communication with our children, but we seldom dig deep to understand what might be bothering them. And after we do, we often give up, saying that we cannot handle them any more."

In Bachchan's view, the most traumatic sequence of the film was when the mother, ignorant of her son's activities, is called upon to identify his corpse. Jaya, the actress, was faced with similar challenges in *Abhagi*, where such a strain prevailed right through the film. She has also portrayed the pain of a woman who loses her child in *Abhimaan*, and then in *Silsila*, when her fiance dies in the plane crash.



Jaya in *Abhagi*

Among Bachchan's all-time favourites include such 'Mother specials' as Mother India — "which actress wouldn't want to play that role" — and *Phagun*, a film in which she played Waheeda Rehman's daughter, "but I would love to play the mother now". The character is a rich woman estranged from her unsuccessful writer-husband, who relives her past again through her newly-wedded young daughter and her husband.

Guddi, however, has been an all-time favourite. Besides the character itself, she feels the entire household etched by Hrishikesh Mukherjee was tangible in its essential Indianness. "There was no gap between the audience and the characters on the screen. This was a complete Indian film," she says. "Besides, Guddi was second nature to me as well. I am a completely restless person and an extrovert. I enjoy good fun, and I hope I am fun to be with as well."

It was also on the sets of *Guddi* that Jaya met Amitabh Bachchan, her future husband. He was supposed to play the male lead opposite her, but by then *Anand* had been released and Bachchan had suddenly become a very saleable star, thus becoming inappropriate for the role.

Having grown up in the small town of Bhopal and having a journalist and writer, the late Tarun Bhaduri, for her father, Jaya says she has imbibed certain core middle class ethics which she has sought to pass on to her children.

Until recently, she would start every meal with a small course of plain rice and salt, only to prepare herself for any dire situation that might befall the family in future. Her sister had to cajole her out of it eventually. The Bachchans sent their children away to Switzerland and then to the US for school and college, to keep them away from the glare of showbiz. "There are two taboo words in the family — Bollywood and filmi," says Jaya. "It was important to secure their privacy and not expose them so early in their lives."

She considers the term Bollywood very derogatory, for it implies a second or third cousin status to Hollywood. "We have been around for as long as they have. What's wrong with the term 'film industry'?" she asks.

And she hasn't exactly been very 'filmi' in her lifetime, both on and off screen, either. Dressed in plain *sarees*, the *pallav* tightly drawn around her shoulders with little or no jewellery, she stands out in the wooden framed black and white pictures along the stairway of the three-storeyed Bachchan residence, Mansa. The stark difference between her and her trendily attired contemporaries like Zeenat Aman and Parveen Babi is all too evident.

Jaya's first break came as a child actress in the Satyajit Ray film, *Mahanagar*, but as an adult she was spotted by Hrishikesh Mukherjee at the film institute in Pune, when he was toying with the idea of *Guddi*. Mukherjee found her appropriate for the role since it meant simply "transporting her from one familiar situation to another".

Her screen name was to stick for ever. So much so, that *Mili* and *Abhimaan* came to be popularly referred as Guddi goes to college and Guddi gets married. Mukherjee simply puts it down to "the film being her first major break in the industry". But

Jaya would love to be given another opportunity to

Jaya insists that despite being close to life, *Guddi* was not a run-of-the-mill film even in those days.

The gaps in her career, she says, have been due to the fact that people stopped making films that she was comfortable doing. "I have never been much of a dancer, so wriggling and jiggling was out. And later, the characters that were being made for me were a rehash of *Kora Kagaaz* and *Abhimaan*," she says. "I could not bear repeating myself." She has much sympathy for Madhuri Dixit, therefore, "who is a fine actress, but was being written off as having become jaded, all due to over exposure".



The Bachchan family: Close bond

After *Guddi*, a spate of films followed — *Abhagi, Chupke Chupke, Kora Kagaz, Abhimaan, Anamika, Sholay* and *Jawani Diwani*, among others. And then she got married and withdrew from the arc lights. The roles one saw her playing were those of a mother and a housewife. After that she had her hands full with being a politician's wife for a while, and then the chairperson of the Children's Film Society.

What she has rarely spoken about is her involvement with a voluntary blood bank in Rajkot for 10 years, as a chairperson, and her handling the creative aspect of the children at the Indian Society for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped for 20 years.

Her most-talked-about role, though, has been that of a stoic wife of a superstar who was involved in an extra-marital liaison with his co-star, Rekha, in the '70s and '80s. Their marriage was said to be on the brink of dissolution several times according to the gossip magazines. But in the end, the wife triumphed when she nursed her husband back to health after an almost fatal accident on the sets of Coolie in the mid-'80s.

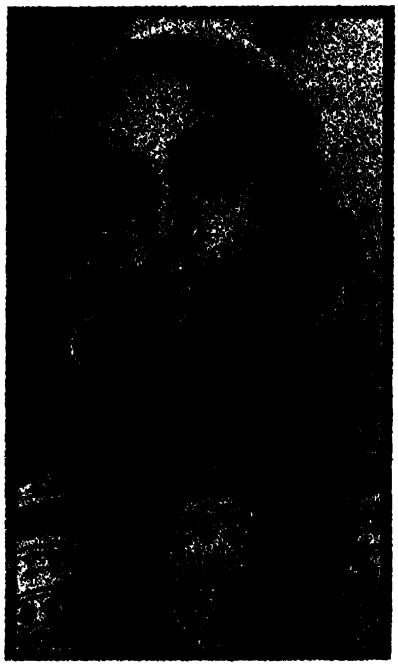
Film magazines then carried elaborate interviews of the other woman proclaiming 'I have handed over my man'. That was well over a decade ago, though. But recently, these rumours have surfaced again, only to die a quiet death.

"It would take us several decades now to be separated," jests Jaya. "After living in the industry for so long, one learns to shut your ears to all this."

Even when her husband once said in a radio interview that *Abhimaan* was indeed very close to their lives? "Oh, did he? He must have referred to that bit about us being in the same profession," she retorts. "We have never had any ego hassles otherwise."

And *Silsila?* Surely that was art imitating life? "That was a powerful role for me. Just like all other films, including *Sholay*, where I might have had a small role with him, but it was the meatiest that I have ever done," she says, avoiding the issue. "I have never played second fiddle to him on or off screen."

She says she would love to be given another opportunity to act with her husband in the future, "but something that suits my age". Even when her husband is busy playing a wannabe 30-year-old and romancing girls like Manisha Koirala and Shilpa Shetty in *Lal Badshah?* "But the *Dhanno ki aankh sharabi* is a catchy tune, right? We'll play it for Holi this year," she says. A moment's pause, and then she



CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

The important milestones in Jaya Bachchan's filmi innings

Guddi: Jaya Bachchan's debut Hindi film which won her instant recognition and fame. Directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee, the film has her playing a teenager who has a crush on a film star, played by Dharmendra.

Kora Kagaaz: Hindi version of the Bengali hit, *Shaat Pake Bandha*. Directed by Vijay Anand, the film explores the matrimonial conflict that arises between Jaya

act with her husband in the future, 'but something that suits my age'

adds, "Actually, the video is rather trite. I can't look at it."

Which have been her favourite Amitabh films? "*Saudagar*, where he plays the anti-hero," she says. "And *Mili*, where he carried the character with a lot of dignity, as also *Agnipath*." "She also likes *Mriytudata* and *Toofan*," Abhishek insists, to which he is subjected to another bout of maternal verbal overdose. "No I don't," she says soon after, as her son ducks for cover.

As a person who claims to have been her own extrovert self in *Mili* and *Guddi*, she has found that the child-Mili and child-Guddi are way divorced from today's urban Indian youth. She says that children today fall into two major categories, those in the pre-teens and those between 13 and 16.

Which is why when the mantle of chairmanship of the Children's Film Society fell on her, she quickly sought to build a platform for the two groups by re-naming the society as the National Society for Children and Young People (NSCYP). "They needed adequate space to express themselves and take a break from their overburdened school bags and regimented academics," says she.



Abhishek and Shweta : Mama's favourites

Which have been Jaya's favourite Amitabh films? 'Saudagar, where he plays the anti-hero', she says. 'And *Mili*, where he carried the character with a lot of dignity'

While in office, she attempted to bring about a change in the general attitude of the people who thought making films for children was child's play. She improved the budget of the movies which would earlier border on the fringes of Rs 3 lakh, and kept close guard on the scripts of the films that were to be approved. "Of the 30-odd scripts submitted, only one would perhaps qualify," says she. "Although, I cannot claim that all our films were of supreme quality."

With Shweta, her 23-year-old daughter married and the mother of a baby girl, Navvya Naveli ("Navvya was my father-in-law Harivanshrai Bachchan's choice while Shweta chose Naveli"), and son Abhishek on the showbiz launch pad, Jaya is on the look-out for "correct roles" to play, the edge being strictly non-filmi!
For the moment though, she is busy with the annual Bachchan do at their residence — Holi. It's an open house event, and the turn-out is close to 700. "It's completely rowdy and great fun, not filmi though. People know what to expect," she says.

This year too, the guests will guzzle jugs of *bhang*-laced *thandai* and shake a leg to the latest Amitabh ditties. But thankfully for Jaya, the video of *Dhanno ki aankh sharabi*, will be conspicuous by its absence. ■

(who comes from a rich family) and her middle-class professor husband which leads to their separation.

Zanjeer: This Prakash Mehra film was a breakthrough for Amitabh Bachchan who was then a newcomer in the industry and Jaya the only actress willing to sign opposite him.

Koshish: Great performance from Jaya and Sanjeev Kumar who play a deaf and dumb couple in this Gulzar film.

Mili: Jaya plays an ailing cancer patient in this Hrishikesh Mukherjee hit who finds some love and solace in her reclusive neighbour, Amitabh Bachchan.

Parichay: This is Gulzar's copy of the Hollywood all-time favourite, *The Sound of Music*. Jaya is at her playful best as the eldest of five orphaned children playing pranks on their tutor, Jeetendra.

Abhimaan: Story of how a celebrity wife falls victim to her husband's male ego. This Hrishikesh Mukherjee film has Jaya giving a memorable performance.

Sholay: A small but impressive role as the widowed *bahu* of Sanjeev Kumar who falls in love with the Amitabh Bachchan character.

Silsila: Yash Chopra's celluloid interpretation of the real life love triangle between Amitabh Bachchan, Jaya and Rekha.

Some Bengali films

Mahanagar: Her only film with Satyajit Ray where she plays Anil Chatterjee's sister.

Dhanni Meye: A tomboyish, orphaned village girl who has no one to love her, till her Prince Charming arrives in the shape of a football player from the city.



Part of the painting *Veena Player* (1885) by Raja Ravi Verma before and after restoration

HERITAGE

Caring for Art

It involves much more than just appreciating a painting; you also have to know how to preserve it. **Geeta Sharma** reports

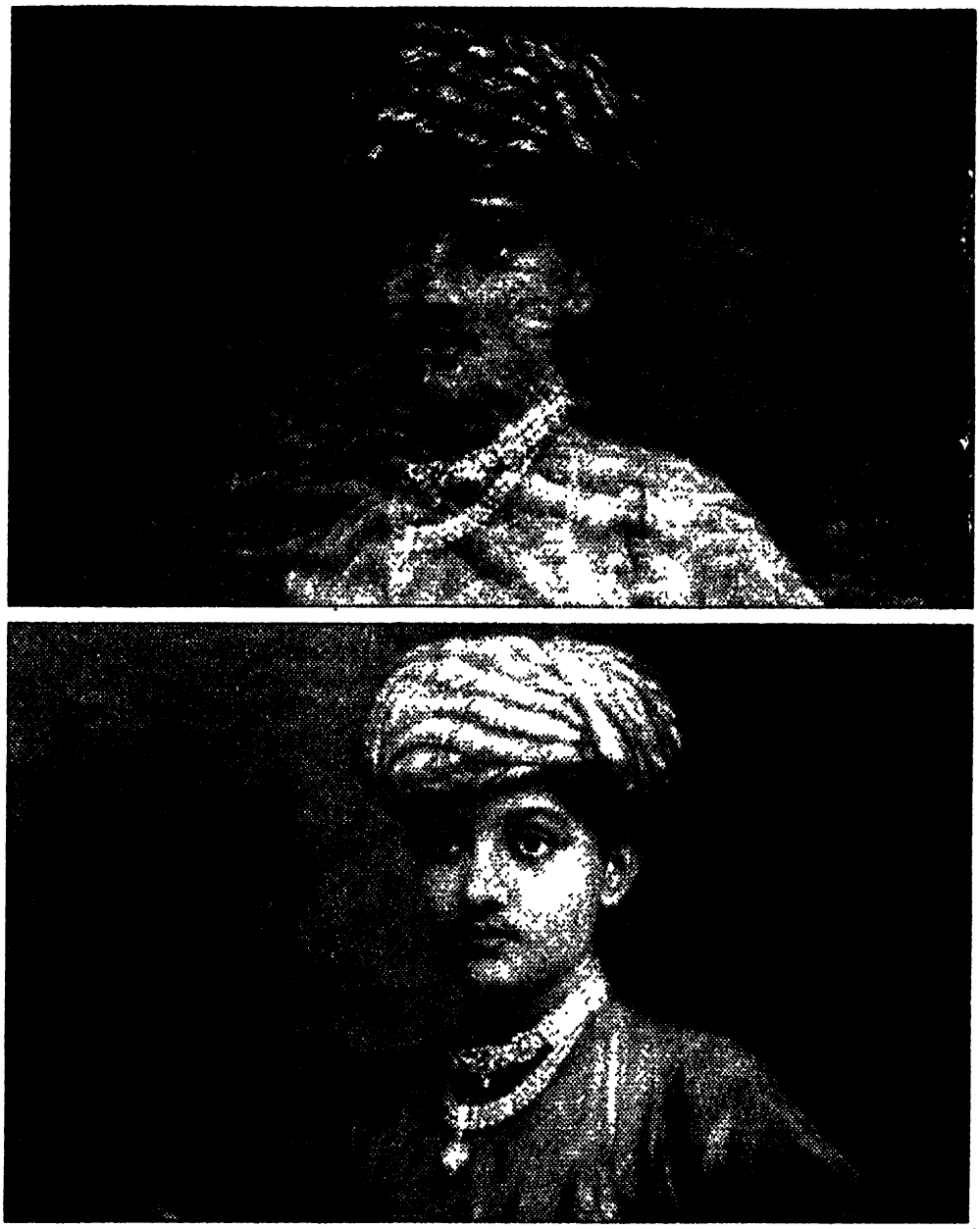
Imagine seeing a cherished painting, one of your most treasured possessions, suffering cuts and tears, flaking, moulding and showing signs of premature aging. You need not give it up as a lost case and relegate it to your store room.

The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in Delhi, has put together a major conservation effort that has virtually given a fresh lease of life to precious paintings in advanced stages of deterioration. By doing so, it has given hope to hundreds of art aficionados who, for want of expert restorers, are at a loss as to how to deal with their art treasures.

The conservators at INTACH, under the guidance of veteran restorer Sukanta Basu, have not only restored works with the limited wherewithal at its disposal but also developed their own new techniques in the process.

One such effort on show recently was the restoration of national treasures: the works of Raja Ravi Varma and Amrita Sher-Gil, on display at the National Gallery of Modern Art. The works, most of them over a 100 years old, have been in the process of repeated and erroneous restoration — mainly persistent over-painting. But thanks to the healing touch of the conservators, many of the works, such as Ravi Varma's magnificent 'Portrait of a Maharaja' have been restored to near original glory. Looking at the painting, it is difficult to believe that it had arrived in such bad shape with cuts and an unsightly coat of varnish.

Another work, 'Melody', executed in 1885, had suffered the scars of over-painting and had layers of thick gesso(a germicidal) settling over it. But the systematic and sensitive cleaning by the restorers has given it its original bright luminescence. The pres-



Detail of the oil painting of Ranjit Singh as a child by Abbey Altson before (top) and after (above) restoration

ence of bitumen in the paint used by Amrita Sher-Gil and the speed at which she used to paint, often not allowing one layer of paint to dry and painting another over it, have been the main cause of the decay of her works.

Among the methods used by the INTACH team is the infra-red technique that helps the restorer view the underlying layers of paint and strokes. Besides, it also helps them look into the artist's mind and understand his methodology.

As Sanjay Dhar, chief conservator with the Delhi chapter of INTACH says, the technique, for instance, helped them discover that Ravi Varma preferred to draw in detail on the canvas before he began painting, while Amrita Sher-Gil relied on this technique earlier but depended less on it in her later years. Also, Sher-Gil made a lot of changes to her original concept and the final painting very often was completely different. For instance in the painting titled 'Two Girls' the finished head was far lower down than was originally planned.

"If there is a line extending from a figure's hand in a painting, we don't just wipe it off because it is not meant to be there. The artist had obviously left it there and it hid behind the coats of paint. So we too let it remain," explains Dhar.

The conservators at the INTACH lab have experimented with a whole lot of enzymes, besides saliva, that have helped them clean the painting of stains and marks. Interestingly, the infra-red technique has also helped detect fakes. Usually the artist first put their signature and the coat of varnish over the painting. Also the painting should have a uniform fluorescence in accordance with time and material. So if there is any disparate colouring, it helps one establish and detect a fake. For stretching the painting, which is a very essential part of the conservation effort and for the life of the painting, the INTACH conservators have developed their own economical version of the cold lining technique.

Among the methods used by the INTACH team is the infra-red technique that helps the restorer view the underlying layers of paint and strokes

The paintings were earlier stretched with the reverse, hot lining technique that tended to affect the painted surface. For the alternate technique that requires a very expensive imported adhesive, the trust has found an indigenous substitute which has been successfully tested by the Shri Ram Chemical Laboratories and put it into use. They have also fabricated their own version of the cold lining table complete with all its components.

Dhar says 90 per cent of conservation problems are due to neglect and bad upkeep. He hopes that the exhibition and the conservation effort would make both the artist and the buyers more aware of the care required to enjoy a work of art.■

FOCUS

Conventional? Who me?

That's the question most young people ask these days. But despite the apparent permissiveness, says **Ghazala Wahab,** there's still a strong conservative streak to them

Minu Verma, (name changed on request) an animation artist, prides herself on being a sensible person. At 28, she has struck, according to her, a perfect balance between idealism and pragmatism. Her priorities in life are clear and this clarity in thought extends to her personal life as well. At least, that's what she hopes. And her personal life includes her relationship with a divorced colleague at the work place whom she hopes to eventually marry.

"I know," she says, "my parents will have a problem accepting my idea of marrying a divorced man with children, but we have decided to give them time to get used to it. I am in no hurry and there is no reason to rush into marriage."

Being a sensible person she understands the role of intimacy in any relationship. "It is only natural," she says with a shrug. But here comes the contradiction. She does not mind a degree of intimacy and has no problem in sleeping with him, literally, but she doesn't want to consummate the relationship just as yet.



Nafisa Ali

Reason: "I know my parents will be very hurt if they ever come to know," she justifies.

So, hurting them by marrying a person she wants to is fine, but hurting them by sleeping with him without the benefit of marriage is wrong? Minu doesn't want to go into the finer details. She says that it is all right if two mature, sensible individuals want to get into a sexual relationship, after all it is their personal life and nobody has any business interfering.

But this liberalism in thought doesn't extent to her own self or her sister. Again because of her parents. "You know, we are a very close-knit family and anyone's business is everyone's business." But then she doesn't have to tell her parents.

"No," she says slightly uncomfort-



'I would personally advise everyone to take up spiritualism because that is the only way to streamline your thoughts and actions'

NAFISA ALI

ably. "Nevertheless, I'd feel guilty about lying."

Contradictions. Confusions. Insecurities. That just about sums up the life of an average young person these days. You try to be nice, you end up being nasty. You try to please, you end up hurting. You try to be part of a group, you find yourself outside it. You say one thing, you do exactly the opposite.

The mind has moved with the times. It understands the importance of individuality, of living life on your own terms, so what if it shocks a few sensibilities. But the heart holds back. Not because it doesn't agree with the mind, but because it cannot disagree with the family. And also because it doesn't have the courage and emotional security for doing what the nuind says.

Caught between the head and the heart are individuals struggling to strike a balance. The influx of Western imagery and popular literature have changed the role models here. So much so that what were, till now, skeletons in cupboards have become objets d 'art in drawing rooms now. But only for a few. For every one person who flaunts his or her unconventional lifestyle there are three who squirm and try to be as "modern" as their friends.

"I call it the conflict between intellectual and emotional thinking," says Sadia Dehlvi, a media person. "Our social values are changing at a rapid pace, so even though our intellect has been able to keep pace with it, our emotions have not."

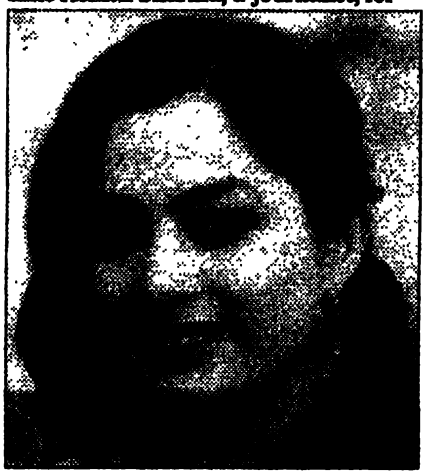
Western influences have generated a lot of conflict here, both emotional and intellectual. It has also added to the hypocrisy in society. A simpler form of this duplicity is people making sweeping statements for effect, but a more complicated aspect of this is when people force themselves to believe in values their heart has still not accepted.

"The reason for this," says Dr Sunil Mittal, psychiatrist, Delhi Psychiatry Centre, "is that awareness of something does not necessarily bring about an attitudinal change. So even though our intellectual insight professes a particular point of view for social acceptance our emotional insight won't react accordingly unless it has had some kind of an experience. Only with experience does one have the inside view of any problem."

But doesn't this gap between thought and action create psychological problems?

"Not really," says Dr Mittal. "But it sometimes leads to frustration which can manifest itself in different ways."

People who are sensible enough to understand the nature of their conflict find different ways to resolve it. Like Ashish Sharma, a journalist, for instance.



Sadia Dehlvi

"I know my limitations," he says, "I am basically a conservative person at heart who comes from a conservative family. May be because of the company I keep or other external influences, I have always been very liberal in thought. But at the same time I also know that I won't be able to act on my thoughts, whether it is the matter of lifestyle or relationships. My way of reconciliation has been separating perception from practice."

It is not that he doesn't believe in what he says but he cannot execute what he thinks. His inherited value system and perhaps the concept of right and wrong is so strong.

Nafisa Ali, former Miss India and a social worker, has another solution. She says, "I would personally advise everyone to take up spiritualism because that is the only way to streamline your thoughts and actions. You know, at any point of time there can be a hundred different thoughts passing through your mind, but spiritualism makes sure that your action is always what is right."

Says Patricia Uberoi, a sociologist, "Nobody acts like a free agent. There



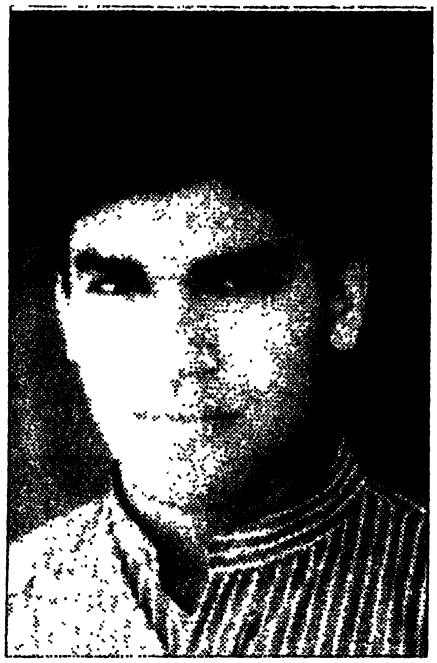
'Our social values are changing at a rapid pace, so even though our intellect has been able to keep pace with it, our emotions have not'

SADIA DEHLVI

are always social constraints and pressures which are not unique to India." Every society has a few people who live on the periphery and a majority who live in the middle never venturing anywhere outside their usual routine. "But it is wrong to call it dishonesty," insists Patricia. "I would rather call it a weakness. People who cannot reconcile their thoughts to their actions need to be empathised with. You know, it is not always possible to fulfil all your desires."

According to Sadia women are faced with more conflicts than men. "Unlike men, they have to resolve conflicts on three fronts: biological, emotional and intellectual," she says.

"They are in midst of chaotic choices. Apart from the social changes they also have the advantage of scientific changes. For example, earlier there was the option of having a child outside marriage, now they also have the option of having a child with or without the man. There are so many choices before them, so obviously they have more issues to reconcile with then men."



Ashish Sharma

'I know my limitations,' says Ashish Sharma, 'I am basically a conservative person at heart who comes from a conservative family'

ASHISH SHARMA



True, but haven't these options added to the chaos and consequent insecurity? Aren't people, both men and women — despite the facade of being in control — scared and insecure inside? Hence the widening gap between intellect and emotion?

Dr Mittal agrees with this. According him most of the time this reluctance to personally practice what one professes, particularly when it comes to pre-marital sex, is lack of security. Because in India, for most people, sex must necessarily lead to marriage at some point. So even when one is comfortable with the idea of having sex with one's partner the question of marriage or lack of it acts as a deterrent. The majority is always the mediocre, who hop through life from one anchor to another. They live by the parameters set by others and constantly look for approval whether it is the peer group or the family.

Besides, the age of experiment is over. There are very few things left to rebel against. Parents have become more accommodative and understanding. As Sadia says, they are better parents now. They are willing to accept more than their parents did. So when parents are willing to walk so much to bridge the generation gap, more children feel obliged to accommodate their feelings.

Again, it also has something to do with the West. After wrecking the family structure, after experimenting with every possible permutation of relationships they are once again coming back to the folds of the family. It not only acts as the emotional support system but also as the physical, and to a certain extent, financial one.

And like the earlier flower child images even these reverses are coming back to India, urging people to rethink. To return to conventions. And in most cases without giving the heart a chance to try what the intellect had been saying. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



You have to concentrate mostly on personal matters,individual concerns and private issues.Taking your loved ones/spouse/partner into your confidence will help you greatly at this stage-even otherwise,being upfront in relationships is a good practice.You will devote most of your time and energy to this.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Now that you've reached the rarefied heights,you may feel a jolt as the "real world",as yuppies sometimes call it,reasserts itself.Finances and funds,joint holdings,settlements,hypothecations,trusts ,even alimony and severance cheques- endless possibilities!You will be making good investments.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Your hunches will probably have caused you some anxious moments but now you'll find them more than paying off!What you have sown, so shall you reap.The five P's as I love to call it-- power,pelf,prosperity, progress and position—will be yours. Your child's career is bound to prosper.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



"A little bit of this,a little bit of that, and a little bit of every thing"—that sums up the week.There's nothing that is not clamouring vociferously for your attention—home,career,family,entertaining and money,of course.What emerges,however, as the clear winner is finances.Do not overspend.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



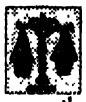
You've really worn yourself to a frazzle.Remember that relaxation,health care;periodic check-ups will not just be necessary but imperative.Financial matters one the one hand and love and romance on the other,both make equally heavy demands on you and may take their toll emotionally.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



It seems that Fate/Providence feels that you have been put to sufficient tests.You have certainly given a good account of yourself,if the rewards are any indications.Fun and games,partying and pleasure,publicity,ceremonies,functions,perhaps marriage—that's what you now get and enjoy.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



All the fun and frolic you've been indulging in has to be paid for,in more ways than one.You find that expenses are at an all time high and so are your health problems.You may have to be hospitalised or be admitted for a check-up,but medical bills have to be paid.Time for some serious introspection.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Its stock taking time for you and tradition,family, shared bonds assume significance.Your siblings,relatives—in fact all those near and dear ones-are all important.Education,information and things of the intellect now come to mean the world to you.Try to take care of your health, too

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



You are ready to take all kinds of chances,having renewed your strength of purpose.You resolve to cope, and cope beautifully indeed.Take precautions ,though,and guard against all eventualities.Taxes,funds,buying and selling deals make up an important trend.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



You not only work hard,sincerely and long,you do it in the best possible way.A proper code of ethics will not only be important for you,but form the basis of your very existence —"Greater glory hath no man than this".You are likely to achieve a new height of success which will surprise you.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



A strong shift in focus makes you keener on achieving peace,harmony,balance with yourself,your family,life,work and immediate and larger environment.Attachments,ties and bonds will be of paramount importance.Mighty pleasing fall-out in love and marriage I sigh in envy!

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Having restored your faith in human nature,and above all in yourself,you feel ready to take on the world in a splendid show of strength and valour.You come out strongly and unequivocally in deals relating to matters like land,property,building and construction.Take special care of your health

BIRTHDAYS

March 22: Sun sextile neptune:Ganesha says you will strive well on the professional front and achieve success.you begin to have unusual friends and relationships.

March 23: Moon sextile sunspells name and fame,popularity that's what Ganesha has ordered for you.Your creativity and talent will play all before you.Victory time!

March 24: Moon conjunctions Venus-Uranus:Gains will be registered and losses too and these will be dramatic and sudden.Contracts will be signed

March 25: Moon sextile Mercury-saturn:Friends,well-wishers and the big boss will take your side.By socialising you will use pleasure and profit and that's what life is all about. You will have opportunities galore,be it romance or finance..

March 26: Moon-jupiter occultation:A step at a time is best because too many demands will be made upon your time and heartstrings.Expenses will multiply.

March 27: Moon sextile Neptune:Great week for artists,astrologers,psychics and traders.Many of you will recover from depression and uncertainty.

March 28: New Moon:This new moon augurs well for professionals in all fields.Be confident that you will triumph because the sun connects superbly with Pluto..

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TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1120	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0550	daily	IC 772	1135	daily
9W 511	1540	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 769	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 2[illegible]	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W 302	0835	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC 102	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 512	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1005	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 776	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD 572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD 256	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
[illegible]					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
[illegible]					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
[illegible]					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
[illegible]					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
[illegible]					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
[illegible]					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
IC 155	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
IC-856	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
GP 126	1325	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1010	4			

IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0650	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2115	3	BI-110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
MOSCOW					
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0615	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
THIMPHU					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
BANGKOK					
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	1.15	Delhi Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17 00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed. & Sun., Arr Tues & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri. & Sat; Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep., Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06 00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Tookan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep. Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep. Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22 05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr. Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr.: Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03 30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a young good looking doctor. I have been a victim of unhappy childhood due to marital discord between my parents to the point of facing physical violence. It left a bad impression in my mind. I was involved with a man for a few years but it turned out to be unsuccessful relationship. I found him to be self-centred, egotistical who also emotionally blackmailed me. Right now, things are okay; I have a couple of friends whom I can trust but when it comes to marriage, I harbour negative feelings about it. What do I do? I would like to become a mother someday.*



Ruby K. Jamshedpur

A. Your negative feelings towards marriage seem to be due to the association you have formed in your mind because of your parent's marital problems. You have to let the child in you grow up and leave the past behind. It's true that not all marriages work out, but it's also true that some do and no marriage, or no relationship for that matter is smooth sailing. As for your relationship it is clear that your ex-boyfriend was obviously not the man for you. This does not mean that all future relationships are going to turn out like that one. You're young and good looking. You're going to meet a lot of more men and when you meet the right one, you'll know. When you are secure in a relationship your feelings towards marriage will probably change.



Q. *I got married to a working girl 10 months ago. After our marriage, she confessed having an intimate affair with her colleague. Since it was something about her past, I didn't really mind but now she keeps comparing me with her ex-beau; how he courted her, where they used to go and what they did. If I protest she says I am jealous. I don't know what should I do. Please advise.*

Saikat Biswas, Burnpur

A. Your problem can be easily handled. Your wife's womanly wiles are indicative of her need for attention from you. She's the one trying to make you jealous. The best way to deal with this is to ignore her little games. Rest assured that she's not really comparing you to her ex-boyfriend. She's trying to get some sort of reaction out of you. Instead of getting agitated about these comparisons, ignore them completely and pay more attention to her generally and try to make her feel more secure about your love for her.

Negative feelings towards marriage because of unhappy childhood? You have to let the child in you grow up and leave the past behind. It's true that not all marriages work out, but it's also true that some do



Q. *I am an unmarried 27-year-old Grade I officer in a government concern in Guwahati. My problem is that since the last six months I have fallen in love with the 16-year-old daughter of my executive officer. I am treated with a lot of affection and respect in his family and so far, have not made any expressions indicative of my love for her. I am afraid that they will be shocked and our cordial relationship will break down. She is only 16 and my superior hails from Tamil Nadu and is due for a transfer within a year. I cannot live without her and am terribly depressed about the state of affairs. Please help.*

B.D. Bharti, Guwahati

A. By no means should you approach her yet. You are right, any rash step could affect your present-day cordial relationship. But if you're completely certain about your feelings,

you could try approaching her father very discreetly. You could hint of your fondness for his daughter, and keep up your relationship with the whole family. After a few years, years in which you can test the intensity of your motions, you could bring up the subject again. Love is often a temporary fever and the passage of time will give you the opportunity to analyse and ascertain your own feelings towards her.

Q. ***I am a 19-year-old girl in second year BA. For almost a year I have been experiencing a strange kind of feeling — I imagine seeing goddesses around me and see myself sexually assaulting them. As a teenager I had tender feelings towards boys but felt it was immoral to feel that way and substituted them with goddesses in my dreams. Now I always feel guilty of offending the gods. I have spoken to my mother who keeps encouraging me out of it and I temporarily believe in her. But after sometime I start "seeing", what according to my mother, is not there.***



Saida, New Delhi

A. At the root of your problem seems to be your guilt and aversion towards normal, healthy relationships with men. You must try to cope with your unfounded guilt, try to understand its origins. As for your feelings, you have to train your mind to control your thoughts. Try a simple trick: substitution. Every time you imagine that you are sexually assaulting a goddess in your mind force yourself to imagine an alternative situation. For example, train yourself to think that instead of assaulting the goddess you are offering her a pure white flower. The mind has many mysteries, we cannot possibly understand everything around us. Try to be as happy, normal and guilt-free as possible. Soon you will be able to control your thoughts more effectively.

Q. ***I am a 16-year-old girl and was involved with a boy who was not financially well off; so he asked me to help him with money. But now he has become very demanding and wants more and more money. He was involved with another girl and I assume he befriended me only for money. I want to break off our relationship but I feel he might blackmail me with my cards and letters. Please help.***



Name withheld, Calcutta

Astrological predictions regarding your career? You can't let your future be jeopardised by baseless superstitions. Have confidence in yourself and work as hard as you would have had you not heard those predictions

A. The bottomline in dealing with such a person is that you can never appreciate a blackmailer. If you succumb to your fear of him you are immediately giving him an advantage. Never show him your anxiety. You have to take control of the situation and break up with him as soon as possible. You are smart enough to see that you are being used and I am confident that you're smart enough to deal with this practice.

Q. ***I am suffering from a peculiar dilemma. My mother is a working woman and I also wanted to become a governemnt employee. But while I was preparing for my competitive exams, my mother took me to an astrologer who predicted that I will never be employed in government services. I consulted two or three astrologers who made similar predictions.***

What should I do? Believe these astrologers and give up all efforts to get a government job or should I ignore their advice and go ahead with my preparations?

Papiya, Naihati

A. Of course you must continue your efforts! You can't let your future be jeopardised by these baseless superstitions. Even if you are a firm believer, the most rational thing would be to mentally prepare yourself for the worst case scenes. Don't allow a situation which you might find yourself bitterly regretting years down the line because you don't even try. Most important, give yourself some credit. Have confidence in yourself and work as hard as you would have had you never heard your astrologer's prediction. And for when you do make it, let me have the pleasure of congratulating you in advance. Good luck! ■

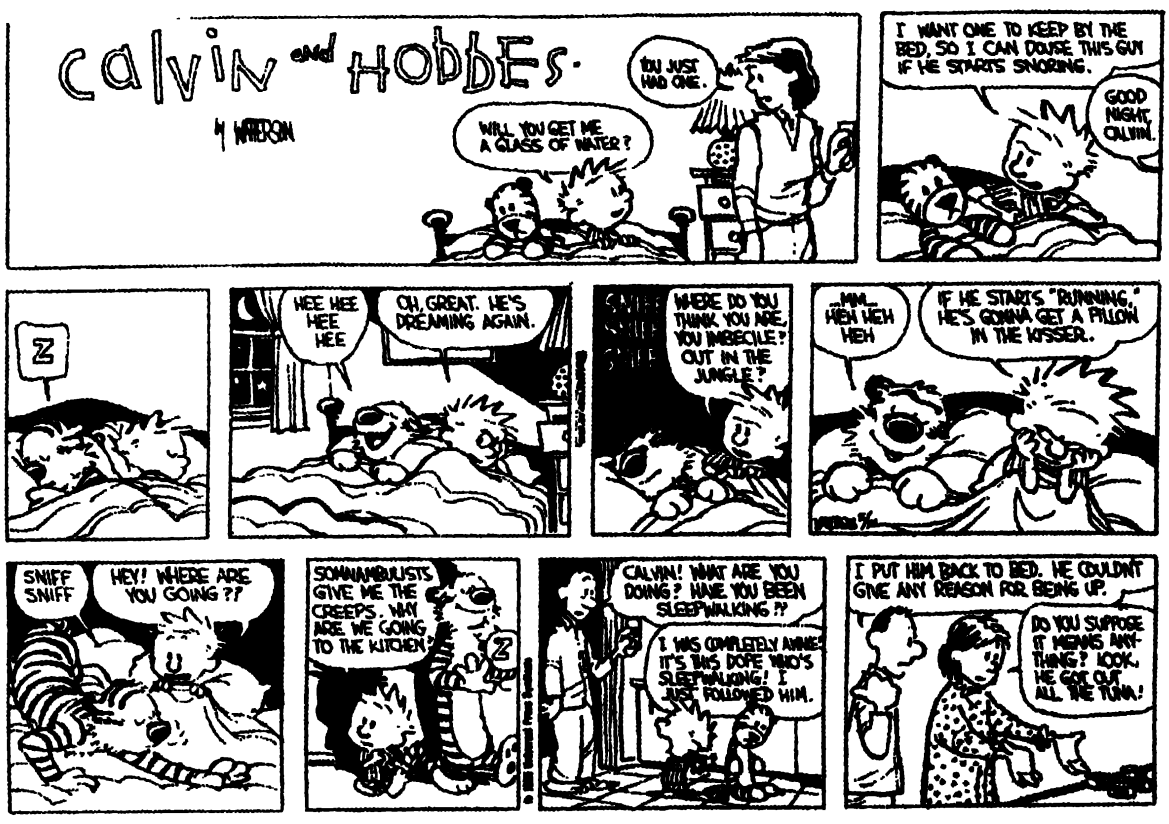


Illustrations : Debasish Deb

ARCHIE

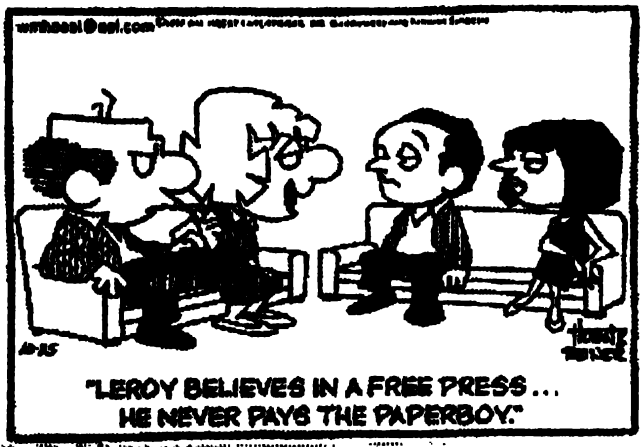


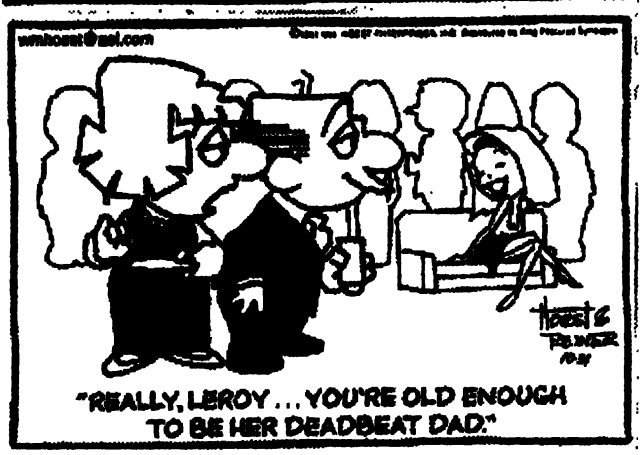
CALVIN AND HOBBES ❀ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

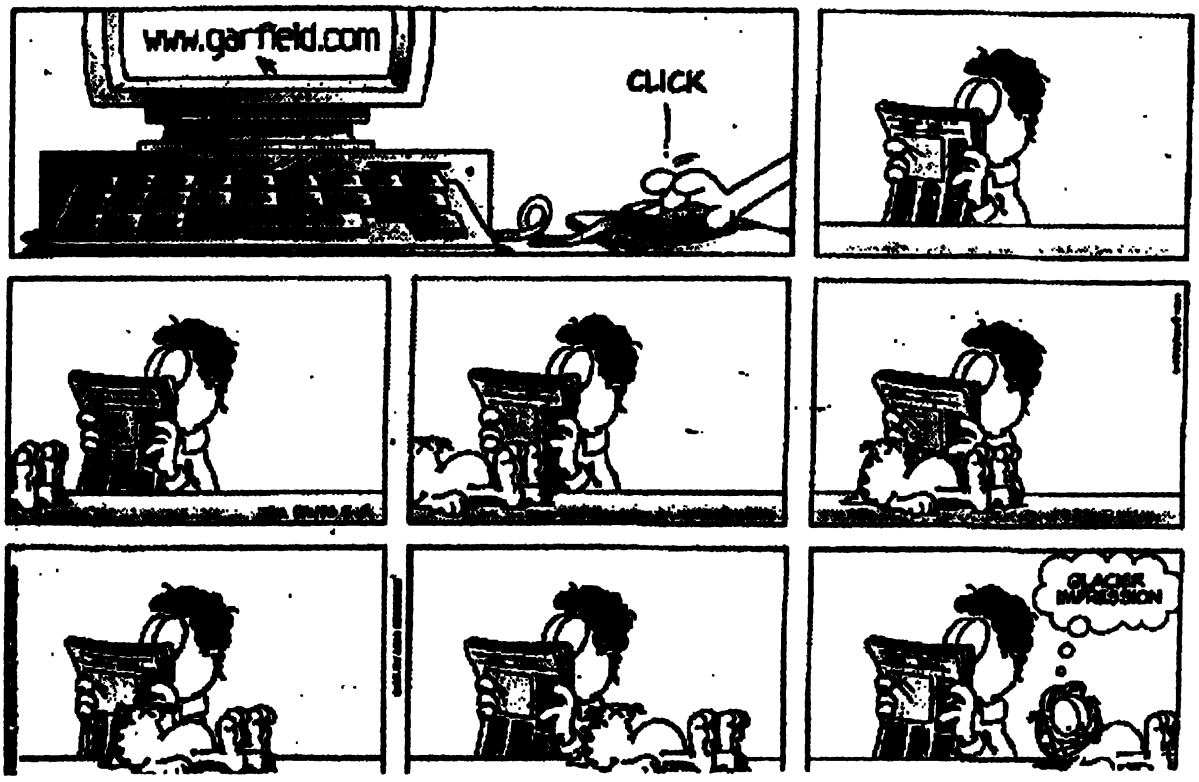








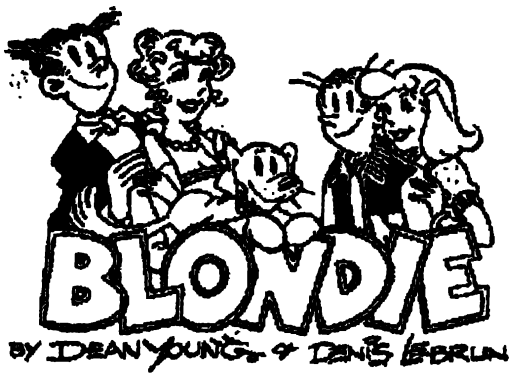
GARFIELD ▪ WATTERSON

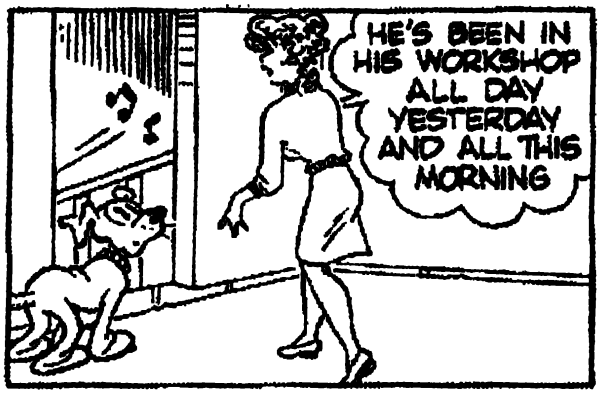


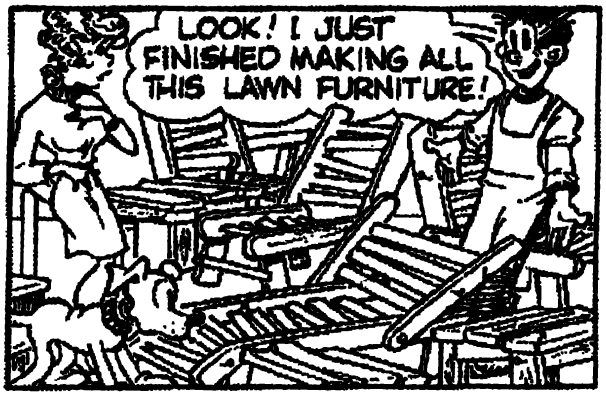
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



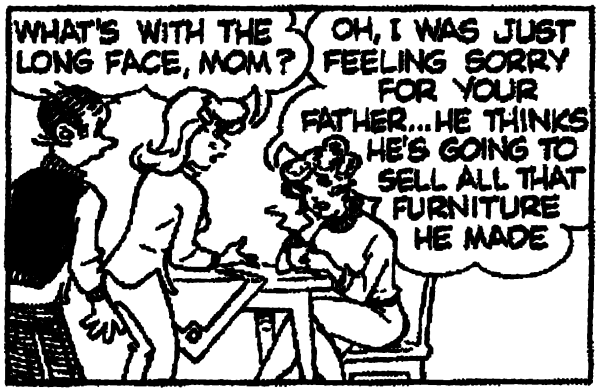
BLONDIE ❀ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE











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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q ***My problem begins with the onset of summer—excessive sweating and bad odour. I bathe at least twice a day and use a mild deodorant. What should I do?***
Vivek Sharma, New Alipore, Calcutta

A Try adding your favourite cologne into your bath water and then after a bath use a deodorant. Drink at least 12 glasses of water and avoid fried and heavy foods. Food heavy in ghee and sweets is to be avoided. These basic things will make a difference and leave you feeling fresh and fragrant much longer. Try to avoid wearing synthetic clothes and nylons and give preference to cottons, muslins and khadis. Basically, these are little things that one do not pay much attention to but if you give it a serious thought, take a little trouble to restyle your lifestyle, things will become easier.



Q ***I am 37 years old and getting wrinkles and laughter lines around my eyes, nose and cheeks. I want to know whether all these revitalising, age-defying creams available in the market are effective? Will***



they have any side effects if I try them out? Please clarify.
Rita Mathur, S.P. Mukherjee Road, Calcutta



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To remove black marks caused by ill-fitting shoes:

■

Apply warm coconut oil and use a pumice stone daily

A You should be feeling great with these lines slowly trickling in age gracefully. Yes, they do make a difference but whatever I have seen they are temporary and sometimes they do have side effects like darkening of the skin. You must understand that anything that is chemically based will have side effects. The cosmetic market is definitely filtering in with a lot of these products. Why not treat yourself naturally with the gentle massage of almond oil followed with a face pack of cold egg white. Leave it on to dry and you can actually feel the skin tightening. The massage should be done daily but the face pack should be done once a week.

Q ***I am a 29 year old woman. I wear a lot of heels and other fancy shoes with straps. Recently black marks started appearing on the area above my heels specially the region around my ankles. Please suggest a remedy.***
Hemali Sharma, Beckbagan, Calcutta

A Go in for a professional pedicure at least once a week and start to use a pumice stone around the areas. Avoid tight fitting sandals and straps. Massage the area daily with warm coconut oil and then use a pumice stone daily before bathing. After a bath apply a generous amount of nourishing cream before you get into your daily footwear.

Q ***I am a 21-year-old student. I had a lot of pimples earlier and I used to squeeze them and take out a dark coloured blood and pus. Now I have marks all over my face and my skin is extremely oily. Please advise.***
Kumari Varsha Doshi, Tollygunge, Calcutta



A I must say that you have been extremely careless by squeezing at the pimples. This is

bound to leave marks. I would advise you to wipe your face with cold rose water to reduce the oiliness. Also, make the following pack and apply on face if there is no pus in the pimples: Two teaspoons *chokker, besan,* sandlewood powder, the juice of half a lemon and two teaspoons ground *masoor daal.* Mix with cold water and leave on to dry. Dab with water when dry and start to scrub off in a circulating movement. This should be done at least thrice a week for two months.

Q ***I am 14 years old and feel that my lips are getting thicker and also cracking. I use vaseline daily but without any results as my lips continue to crack.***



Anindita Gupta, Dum Dum, Calcutta

A Your lips are so badly chapped and cracked that they appear to be thicker than usual. Do not bite your lips. At night, apply sesame seed oil mixed with almond oil and leave it on your lips overnight.Also you must take a high-protein diet with lots of milk, butter, cheese, fruits, almonds, meats, eggs etc. Applying mustard oil on the naval at night will also help. This must be done daily.

Q ***I am 24 years old and my problem is that I have greying hair. I am allergic to henna. Please advise as to what I should do.***
Gargi Chatterjee, C.I.T. Road, Calcutta

A I would advise you to eat one amla (green amla) a day in any form. Also take a one cup of amla powder and boil in an iron vessel. Apply this water to your scalp and hair roots like you would oil and leave on for about two hours. This is to be done three times a week for at least three months for results. Also a high protein diet is advised. You should also start to oil your hair with an amla based hair oil.

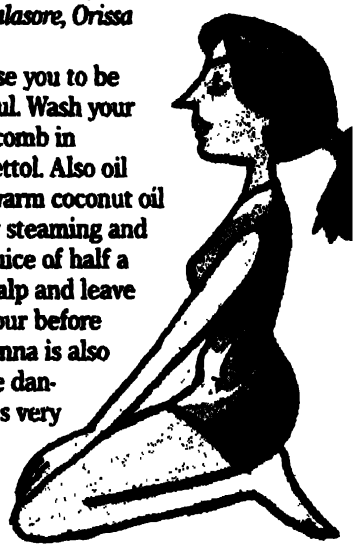


For smooth lips:

■

Apply sesame seed oil mixed with almond oil and leave it on overnight

Q ***I have a lot of dandruff in my hair which refuses to go. I have used a lot of things on my hair like ghee, curd, etc but to no good. Please help.***
Vindhya Puri, Balasore, Orissa



A I would advise you to be extremely careful. Wash your hair brush and comb in shampoo and dettol. Also oil your hair with warm coconut oil followed by hair steaming and also apply the juice of half a lemon on the scalp and leave on for half an hour before shampooing. Henna is also known to reduce dandruff. Also diet is very important—ten glasses of water daily, lots of raw food and a regular exercise programme all go towards a healthy skin and hair.

Q
I am 29 years old and have always had an acne problem because of which I have a lot of marks on my face. I also have a lot of blackheads and whiteheads. When I have a facial, they become clear but reappear after a few days. Please suggest a simple remedy to reduce this problem.
Sushma Bhatia, Loudon Street, Calcutta

A
Blackheads, whiteheads and acne are all a result of an excessively oily complexion. I would suggest that you realise that good skin cannot be created at parlours alone but has to be made by you and a regular skin care programme at home. Cleansing your skin should be on a top priority. Make the following *uptaan* for the face: *multani mitti,* lemon juice, *chokker,* sandlewood powder, dried peas powder and curd.

Apply all over face and leave on to dry. Srcub off with milk. It is important to understand that too much cream should not be massaged on the face even when you have a facial done as the skin is oily and blackheads and whiteheads are caused due to the accumulation of hardened oil in the pores. Wipe your face with ice cold rose water and avoid chocolates, sweets, fried foods and oily dishes.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

TRAVEL

Eastern Sojourn

Singapore and Bangkok are emerging as great holiday destinations for Indians, says **Susmita Banerjee**

Shopping and eating. That's what they are always doing. Anywhere you go in Singapore you will encounter towering shopping malls where giggly teenagers and nattily attired young mothers are splurging dollars and zipping off in their swanky Japanese cars loaded with large shopping bags overflowing with goodies.

With such beautiful shopping plazas stocked with just about anything you could ever want to buy — from the latest wonders in electronics to diaphanous lingerie to Swiss chocolates and designer clothing and toiletries — it's quite possible to end up spending all your foreign exchange even before the vacation was over! And given a choice tourists would rather skip sight-seeing itineraries and spend their day on Orchard or Tanglin Road feasting their eyes on the mindblowing merchandise just waiting to be bought.

Singapore is truly a shoppers' haven and its all-time carnival mood can be quite infectious. Subir Guha, CEO of Travelogue, Calcutta, who has been operating tours from West Africa to the far east, southeast Asia, and Europe for years now, couldn't agree more, "Singapore, Bangkok and Pattaya are proving to be the most sought after destinations by Indians now and the first thing they ask me is how much dollars they should carry with them for their shopping."

Indians, with their insatiable appetite for electronic shopping never seem to get enough of Sim Lim Square or Raffles Boulevard or the North Bridge Road famed as good sources for cameras, calculators, audio systems and video cameras. How they will manage to sneak past customs is a thought farthest from their minds even as they return to their hotels carrying bagfuls of view CDs or a microwave cooking system.

Indians, however, are most comfortable shopping at Mustafa & Shamsuddin on Serangoon Road, an everything-under-one-roof kind of a departmental store which sells anything from umbrellas and garments to gold and gems.



The royal palace in Bangkok

"Gold is one item which Indians simply cannot resist buying in Singapore although gold prices are falling drastically in the global market," says Guha. It is in perennial demand here and Indians go berserk at the sight of the glittering metal displayed lavishly in shop windows here. A trip to Singapore's famed South East Asia Gem Factory would leave anyone breathless at the sight of the electronically censored show windows encasing priceless ornaments embossed with diamonds and other precious stones.

The Merlion in Singapore



Singapore being the melting pot of many cultures, has pockets of ethnic life in the city that have remained unchanged for generations quite impervious to the pulsating cyberlife outside. Of its three million population, the Chinese constitute the majority followed by the Malay, Indian and minority communities. Chinatown, crisscrossed with narrow lanes and bylanes, but impeccably clean like other parts of Singapore, and overrun with people selling silks and trinkets, are a palpable reminder of Singapore's large Chinese population.



But never aim your cameras at them. The Chinese abhor being photographed. It means death for them.

Similarly, Little India on Serangoon Road offers glimpses of Indian life in all its colour and vibrancy. The familiar smell of incense sticks and marigolds emanating from temple interiors will give the feeling that you are not really away from home.

With its mixed heritage, Singapore has become a virtual gourmet's paradise where you will find on display cuisines from almost all corners of the globe (including idlis, dosas, egg curries and chappatis) which often come as cheap as Singapore $ 1 or Singapore $ 2. Fish is the staple of most of the cuisines available here and among Indians the spicy fish head curry is a must-have for lunches. Places like Newton Food Centre and Chinatown complex are quite famous for their mouthwatering street food specialities: hot soups, chilly crabs, oyster omlettes, satays, curries and noodles.

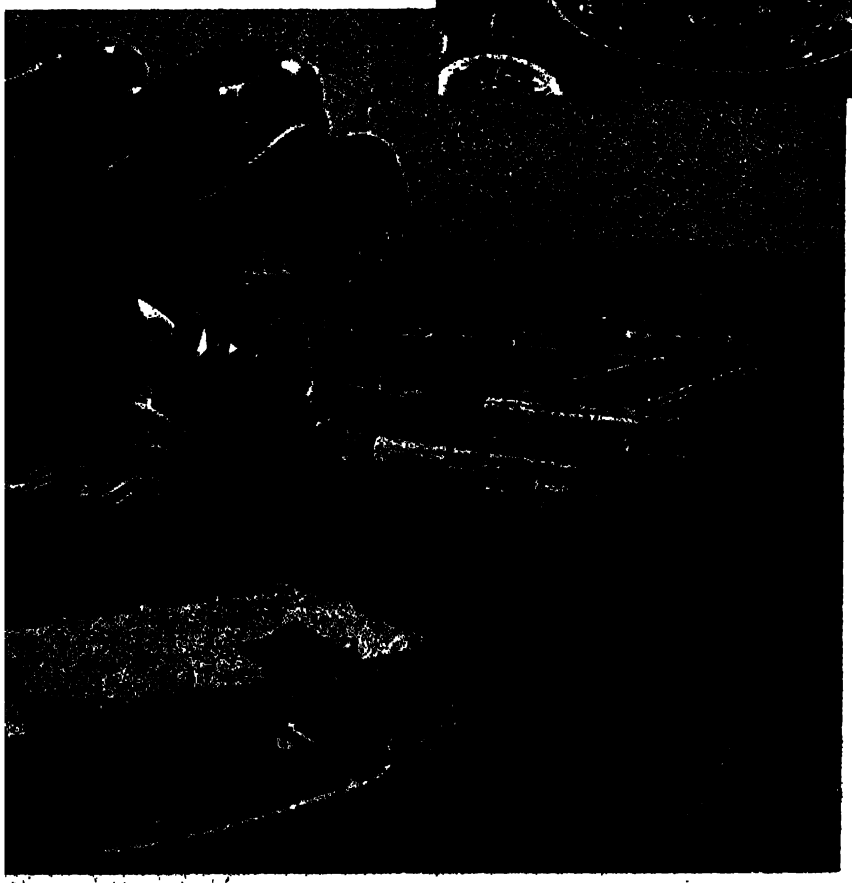
Cleanliness is something this island republic has woven into the psyche of its residents. You get a taste of their clean habits (and efficiency) right at the Changi International Airport which is unbelievably clean and green. In minutes the immigration formalities are over and you are welcome to continue your journey to your hotel through unending passages of floral delights.

Singapore has taken to beautifying the city state with a real vengeance and not one corner is spared; there are flowers and fountains and greenery everywhere, even as towering office blocks and condominiums vie for space. Try littering the streets and you'll have someone tapping on your shoulder and levying a hefty fine. Try breaking traffic rules and you'll be made to feel really sorry. Try honking the way you do on Chowringhee and you'll have the cops after you. Neglect the facade of your house and you'll have the government confiscating it.

"I think Singapore offers the traveller the best value for money," says S.M. Dev, chairman, Travelogue, "where he can have a budget package vacation: stay in Singapore for two-three days and then fly to Bangkok and Pattaya."

Mouthwatering Thai cuisine and (below) Singapore





Travelogue organises regular tours to Singapore, Bangkok and Pattaya from Calcutta and will be now bringing in tourists from Singapore and Thailand to Indian holiday spots like Darjeeling and Doars, says their public relations coordinator, Arun Ganguly.

There are so many things to be seen in Singapore that it is difficult to choose some and miss others. Sentosa Island, for instance, is a fun place where you get an opportunity to come eye to eye with sharks, stingrays and moray eels as you move past a submerged acrylic walkway in the underwater world. The cable car ride from the 17th floor of the World Trade Centre to the Sentosa Island is breathtaking because you get an aerial view of the city — the river, the harbour and its spectacular highrises.

But the finest attraction of Sentosa is the giant 37 metre tall Merlion — the half lion, half fish-shaped tourism mascot of the city — which comes alive in different colours at night during a light and sound show called Rise of the Merlion. With colour lasers shooting out from the Merlion's eyes to synchronise with the dancing water fountains, it is an absolutely exhilarating experience.

For nature lovers there is the

Jurong Bird Park and the Reptile Park and those who like wild adventure can participate in a night safari. You must visit Mount Faber, the tallest point of Singapore, the legendary Raffles Hotel, the Supreme Court and the City Hall, the Sultan Mosque, the Civilian War Memorial, fondly called chopsticks by the locals because of its four pillars representing the state's multiracial origin — Chinese, Malay, Indian and the two per cent minority community.

If you are in Singapore you must visit the kingdom of Thailand or more precisely Bangkok and Pattaya. The latter is a literal leisure paradise where all you need to do is just eat, shop and sunbathe in its blonde beaches. And perhaps also allow your taut muscles to relax under the expert fingers of a Thai masseur.

Bangkok doesn't hold much attraction for Indians as a city they would like to explore save for its gormandising and shopping pleasures. As in Singapore, eating is a sort of a national obsession here too. Indians freak out on the hot and spicy fare that Thai restaurants are justifiably famous for. Very few come back without tasting local delicacies like tomkakhai (a chicken preparation in coconut water and garlic), tomyam (hot and sour soup), namprik (chilly garlic, ginger fish sauce).

Unlike Singapore, Bangkok offers real budget shopping opportunities to visitors who would be content to pick up Polo or Lacoste knock-offs from the roadside for 200 baht rather than go for the original. Roadside vendors hawk almost everything but you have to be incredibly credulous to buy sleek 'Omega' wrist watches for 300 baht or a bottle of perfume for 500 baht. Since language is a problem in Bangkok, the vendors have an ingenious way of communicating with buyers: the moment you ask the price they extend a calculator quoting the figure. So there is no need to bargain verbally. Do it on the calculator!





Bangkok at night and (below) Singapore : Fun holiday

There are a couple of good departmental stores where you can do some heavy duty shopping like Robinson on Sukhumvit Road, the Central Department Store on Pleonchit Road and the World Trade Centre. The Indira and Pratunum Markets are also favourite haunts of Indians and Europeans where you can bargain and still not get cheated.

Most tourists generally end up paying at least one visit to parlours offering 'traditional Thai massage'. These places have such alluring names as Cleopatra, Emanuel, Victoria, Chao Phya and Churen. And given what kind of service you opt for, you could end up spending between 400 to 3,000 baht.

Pattaya is a different experience altogether; an idyllic Thai Riviera for revellers and holidaymakers; a city of pleasure parlours, restaurants and shopping plazas. There are at least a thousand restaurants in Pattaya specialising in French, Italian, German, Mexican, Spanish, Chinese and Indian cuisine with lavishly illuminated and decorated exteriors. At night the city looks beautiful when the lights come up and the restaurants buzz with life and laughter.

There are very few tourists who will not get seduced by Pattaya's notorious night life. Most male vacationers will be seen accompanied by clinging, pretty Thai girls from one of the ubiquitous 'exclusive escort and entertainment services' advertised in the guide brochures. Even handsome boys and transvestites are available on request!

There is no trouble getting a tan on Pattaya beach as you sunbathe and enjoy a plate of spicy papaya salad or hot chicken creoles as a local Thai beautician works on your nails and hair. If you would rather indulge in some adventure, then there is parasailing and jet skiing for you. Having exercised, you can gorge on some fabulous sea food on the beach. The evenings could be given over to souvenir shopping or going to one of those adult gogo shows that Pattaya and Bangkok are famous for.

"The Singapore, Bangkok and Pattaya package gives the tourist everything he looks forward to during a holiday : a lifetime shopping experience in Singapore and Bangkok, a taste of royal life in Thailand and a beach holiday in Pattaya," says Dev.

True. And it's a less-than-four-hour flight away from Calcutta. So the next time you are planning a holiday why not extend your vision beyond the shores of India? Singapore and Thailand are great getaways and at affordable prices, too.

Planet Bollywood

Comes to India in a series of theme restaurants called India Talkies; **Pallab Dutta** reports

Creating an Indian Planet Hollywood was never going to be easy. Especially given that the required professionalism and sophistication is absent in the Indian entertainment industry. So a clutch of Indian promoters have decided to meld the best of Indian culture, Indian cuisine and Indian cinema in order to launch a series of theme restaurants christened 'India Talkies'.

Premier event management outfit, Wizcraft Entertainment Agency and G.S. Entertainment along with a string of reputed consultants such as chef Sanjeev Kapoor, art director Nitin Desai and architect Shakti Parmar are promoting this international chain of colourful, multi-ethnic and multi-cuisine restaurants. And lending their name to India Talkies will be some of the biggest names of Bollywood such as Salman Khan, Govinda, Karisma Kapoor and Mahima Choudhary.



Govinda



Karisma



Sunjay Dutt

The basic 'ingredients' are all in place for a delectable fare of Karisma-e-korma, Mahima murg masala, Salman surmai or appetisers like Pardesi paratha, Kebab-e-khalnayak. India is acknowledged as the premier producer of movies and potboilers in the world, while Indian cuisine has its followers all over the globe.

As Viraf Zardari, director, Wizcraft, says, "India's multifarious culture is only too well-known. We have managed to get the right parties and more importantly specialists interested in this grandiose venture which will promote the cause of Indian culture, Indian movies and Indian music in a big way. The first of these hotels will be opened in Mumbai. Other restaurants are being planned for Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Lucknow and Hyderabad."

Every step is being taken to see that the restaurants recreate the ambience and decor of Indian films with the right props, memorabalia and merchandise. Each of the restaurants are expected to accommodate about 300 people. The restaurants will serve pre-plated popular Indian cuisine. The clientele being upmarket, prices for a full meal will start at Rs 350.

Stars will be lending their names to this venture besides coming for various promotional activities like movie launches and album releases

Says Guneet Walia, director, G. S. Entertainment, "The stars won't be having an equity in this venture unlike Planet Hollywood but they are entitled to receive their share from the actual revenue generated. For starters, they will be lending their names to this venture besides coming for various promotional activities like movie launches, album releases."

Chef Kapoor says that to make the restaurants still more attractive, he would concoct dishes personally preferred by the stars. "But the endeavour will always be to keep reworking the menu; maybe to suit the flavour of the season or maybe even match them with the launch of movies. Combining traditional delicacies with the magic of Indian cinema will indeed be a challenge."

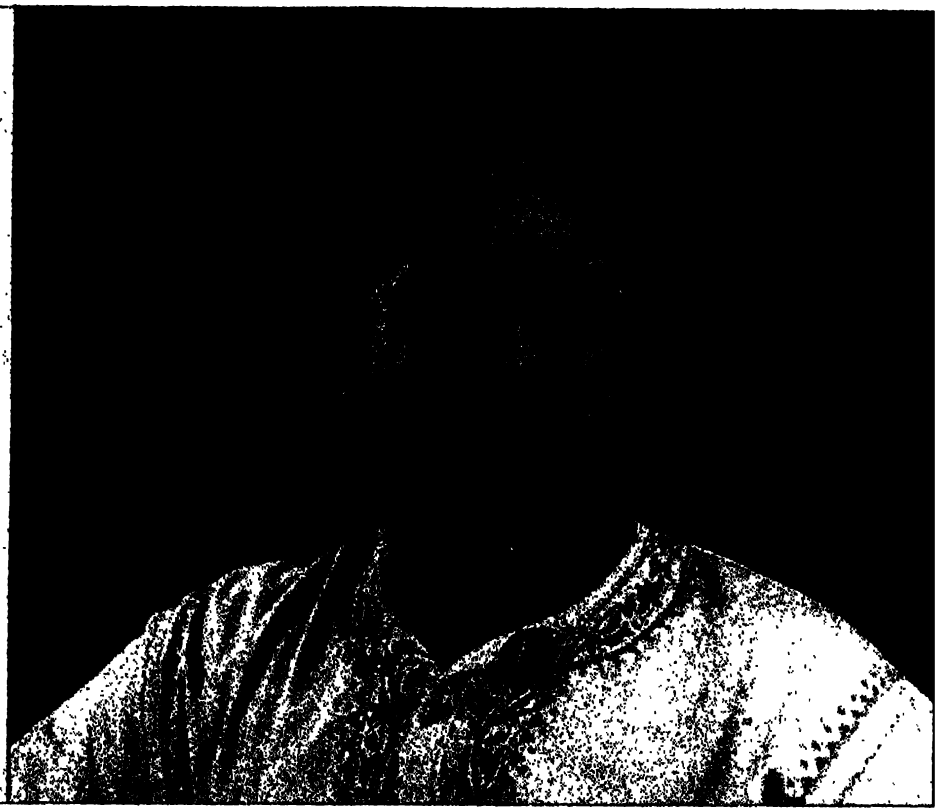
Other schemes being planned are sudden appearances of the stars, sit-down dinners, a date with a particular star and even autograph sessions. The promoters are confident that a lot of revenue will be generated by merchandising such items as caps, key chains, leather jackets, helmets, pens, T-shirts and belts. Merchandising of Hollywood star items is big business in the West and the promoters want to use this as a marketing tactic to entice people. Reportedly, several international organisations are ready to take the franchisee rights for India Talkies in Britain, USA, South East Asia and the Middle East.

Initial financing of the venture will be through joint and institutional financing. Profits are expected in the very first year with the promoters expecting the Mumbai outlet itself to generate Rs 40 crores in five years. The franchise royalties would generate about Rs 300 crores, while the merchandising outlets are expected to generate Rs 30 crores in five years. Incidentally, the stars have signed a contract to promote India Talkies for a minimum of five years.

So if you have always fancied a rendezvous with either Karisma or Salman in your wildest dreams, India Talkies gives you the chance to meet them and 'eat' them too. ■

My Personal Style

Guitar maestro Vishwamohan Bhatt likes entertaining with traditional Rajasthani delicacies and jokes



Divine Pleasure



FOOD FOR THE GODS:

As for food and other things served, ours is a strictly vegetarian fare. So whenever we have people over, it is our typical vegetarian Rajasthani food — *Dal, subzi, paneer,* with *Dal Baati Choorma* being the special dish. Drinks, too, are not served in our house. Only soft drinks do the rounds, and somehow, even our guests do not seem to mind.

I like to entertain and have friends over. But I am rarely ever at home in Jaipur to be able to do so. My concert tours keep me away from home, away to various Indian cities and abroad for a major part of the year. Nevertheless, whenever I am in town, I make it a point to entertain because in my part of the world, guests are like god. We have this saying in Rajasthan that goes like this: *Kesaria Balma Aao, Padharo Mhare Desh* and *Athini Devo Bhava* (Guests are like God) so in our family too, we welcome friends like we would welcome god.

My friends range from the chief minister to a fledgling artist. Among the people I have entertained recently, are my guru Pandit Ravi Shankar and his family, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat and just recently, my dear friend, Zakir Husain.

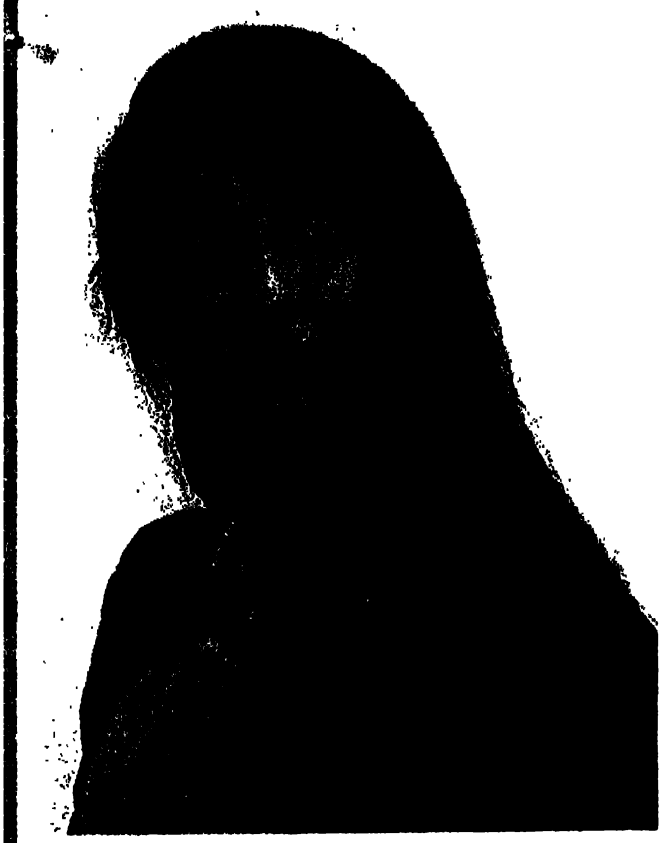
Music is the mainstay of our conversation. Normally it is about any of my new works, concerts and my son's work since he, too, is a music composer. Also, I like to keep every one happy so there are lots and lots of jokes that I regale my guests with. In fact, once we begin with the jokes session, it goes on till late at night and can even stretch to the early hours of the morning.

As for food and other things served, ours is a strictly vegetarian fare. So whenever we have people over, it is our typical vegetarian Rajasthani food — *Dal, subzi, paneer,* with *Dal Baati Choorma* being the special dish. Drinks, too, are not served in our house. Only soft drinks do the rounds, and somehow, even our guests do not seem to mind.

When I am in the US where most of my concerts are held, I stay in hotels. So, if I have to entertain there, I usually entertain in the hotels itself. But I don't enjoy it much because, personally speaking, I loathe hotel food. I only eat enough to keep me going while I am there. That is why I don't entertain too often while I am abroad.

Nevertheless, entertaining to me is important because we have only one life and we should learn to make the most of it. I try to do so by not only remaining happy but by trying to spread it in whatever little way I can. And I really mean it when I say that whenever I entertain or have friends over, there is something that I am seeking from them — it is *dua* or *ashirwaad* whether they are young or old — for these are the greatest blessings that one can earn.

As told to Geeta Sharma





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- Hair Falling
- Premature Hair Greying
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I wasn't born a princess.
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POST MORTEM

Dream Designs

Shahab Durazi is one designer who has a very practical approach to his profession ('Tailor-made', February 15). He believes in reaching out to the people. For a creative person that should be the ultimate aim instead of confining one's talent to a handful of elite clients. His accent is on comfort and looking good in a simple way. No wonder Indian women go crazy to pick up a Durazi outfit no matter what the price.

Debarati Saha, Calcutta



With his half-Arab, half-Iranian parentage, Shahab Durazi has acquired a real handsome visage. It's a pity the Mumbai film industry could not lure him to the silver screen. Of course he is just 35 and who knows, he may change his mind!

Sharmila Bose, Calcutta

I agree with Durazi that a fashion designer's ultimate recognition comes when his clothes get sold off the rack or "it curtails the growth of a designer". I think he is the only frontline designer who has something in his wardrobe for everyone, the least expensive being Rs 3,000! With their universal appeal, Durazi's outfits are always in demand in India's fashion stores like Ensemble and Ffolio.

Sourav Ghosh, Calcutta

The Holy River

The article, "Dead Man's River" (February 15) made me feel sad thinking how we pollute our rivers despite the religious attachment most Hindus have towards them. Indians are least conscious about their environment and all talks and seminars on pollution control ultimately fall on deaf ears. The Ganga, considered the holiest of rivers in India, should have enjoyed the status of being the most unpolluted and clean river. Unfortunately, the government is as indifferent (despite those much hyped Ganga action plans) as the people in keeping the river clean. I appreciate the noble efforts of Rakesh Jaiswal to make the Ganga a pollution-free river and I wish him all success.

M.S. Quraishy, Calcutta

Government action is not enough to make the Ganga clean, we need awareness at the grassroots level; where people will have to be made aware that they cannot make the river the dumping ground for pious waste. Any odd object that is considered sanctimonious and needs to be disposed off is immediately thrown into the Ganga. No wonder we find garlands, petals, leaves, clay lamps, banana leaves floating down the Ganga. This practice has to be stopped.

Subhasish Chatterjee, Howrah

Tasters' Choice

Thank you so much for the write-up, 'Celebrity Cook-in' (February 22). For food lovers like me who are always looking for new ideas to experiment with in the kitchen, the the recipes were great. I think you should make it a regular column.

Sonali Mitra, Calcutta



PAGE 4

Suspense Account

After 10 years in the advertising world, he turned to writing. He's written a short spell-packed works like *The Ten Dead Admen*, *The Last Bid*, *Murder and Champagne*, *Execute, Say Not*, *A Mountain of Sky* and *Ashok Banker*.

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Reality: The Natural Way

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Ad Man Out

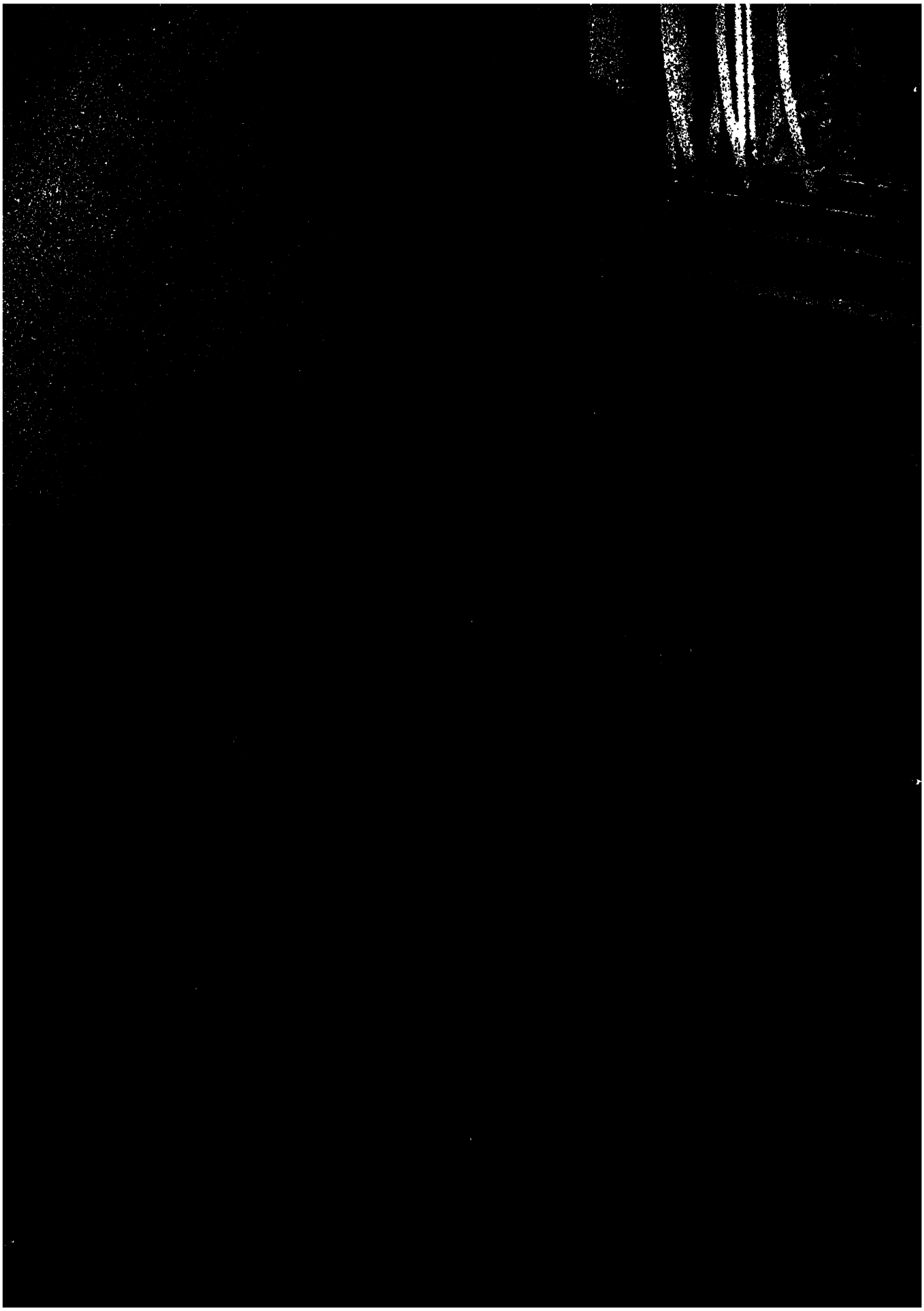
Alyque Padamsee may be a very busy man now with his new assignment as creative advisor to the world's largest ad agency, Mccann Erickson India, but he never forgets theatre. *Begum Sumroo* is his latest passion.

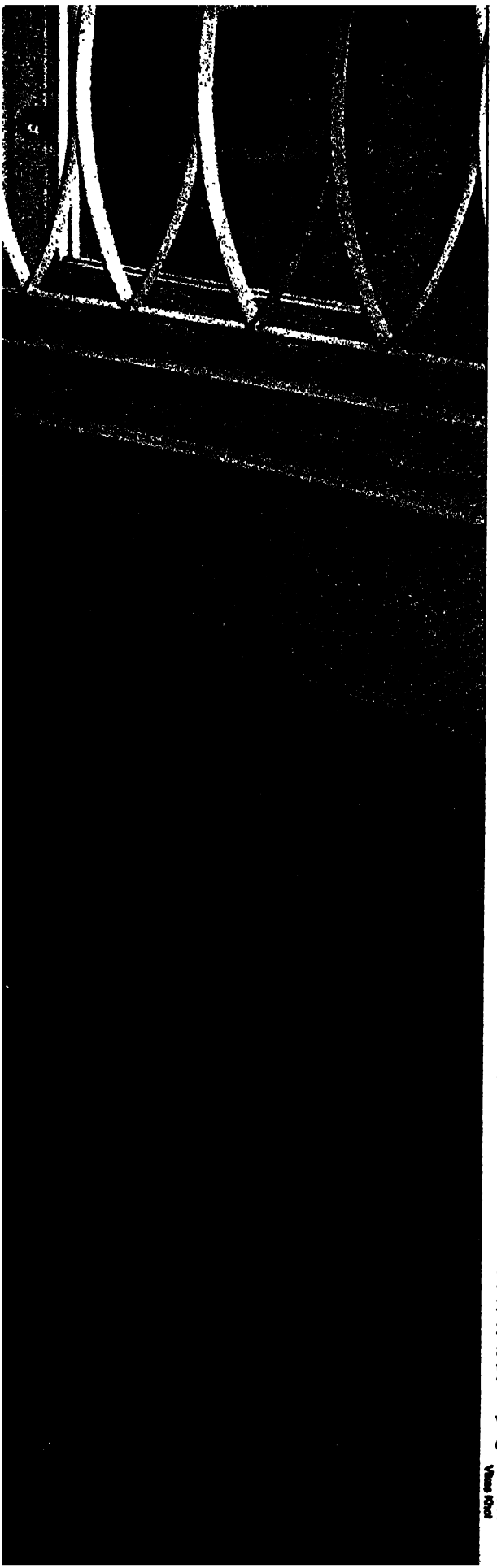
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First Papers

Varsh ke ye anterrang, khushkismat shaam kuch early oscars.

Cover: Vikas Khot





COVER STORY

Suspense ACCOUNT

Don't go by his name; Ashok Banker is the king of the *desi* whodunnit. **Sudipta Basu** tries to unravel the mystery surrounding him

What does a contemporary Indian English writer do when he is running out of themes? Easy. He switches to television. And what does he do when he learns how utterly incestuous the medium is? Ah, then he has a story to tell.

Ashok Banker is using precisely such an opportunity to write a thriller — his preferred genre — which is also a dark satire on the television industry. *Airtime*, which is due for release next month, was simmering in his mind even when he was plunged deep into the making of *A Mouthful Of Sky*, the country's first offer of an English soap.

"That was the genesis of all the trouble — the making of the soap itself. I had scripted a thriller, which I turned into a 64-episode serial on the insistence of Amit Khanna of Plus Channel," says he. "But the producers eventually decided that they wantED an Hinglish *The Bold And The Beautiful*. So, the 64 episodes stretched into 223, till it was called off last year."

The serial took its own course in the hands of three directors, and the "last straw was when actors Ranjeev Mulchandani and Shiuli Subaiah tried to correct my grammar". Eventually, what one got to watch bore very little resemblance to the original script, claims Banker.

"Let it be said then, I wrote a serial which hasn't been produced," says Ashok. This rings of the old times when as a copywriter, a simple line, 'Real pleasure can't come in an instant,' assumed an enigmatic innuendo in the hands of his boss, Kailash Surendranath. For a moment there he even sounds as helpless as he did about seven years ago when he desperately sought to extricate himself from a job that he had come to loathe.

After 10 years of being an adman, Ashok came to realise that all he was doing was spewing a lot of hot air 14 hours a day, "which translated into big ideas for a bunch of idiots". Says Banker, "Advertising, I learnt by then, was like taking away a lolly from a spastic child. They pretend to put their head on the board, only to have their manicured fingernails gently clipped. After nine years in the industry, I was now



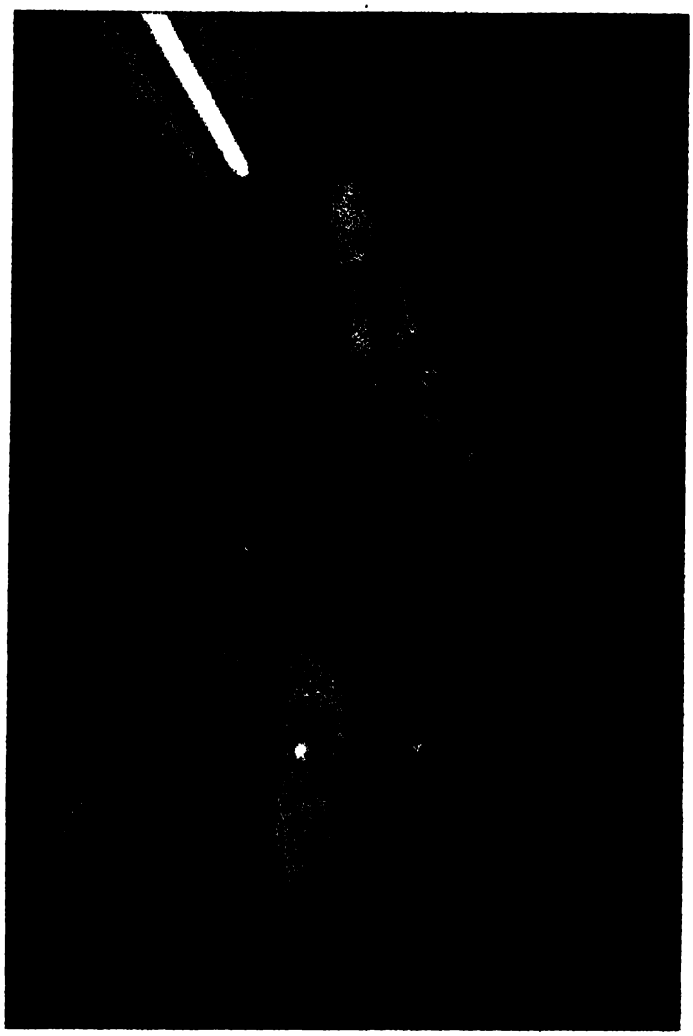
While Ashok lived through his mother's horrific marriages, he also knew as a teenager that she was kidnapped and gangraped. She was high on drugs, men and drink

desperate to put my entire anatomy on line."

Ashok was pushed into working for a living when he was just out of Hill Grange High School. By then he was saddled with a neurotic and alcoholic mother who had broken away from her second husband. He is not bitter about not having been to college. In retrospect, he is grateful to his mother for having been wise with her investments, "unlike both her Sindhi husbands, and leaving me this house", he says spreading his hands.

His mother, Sheila Ray, a model in the '60s, married Anil Banker, a businessman at 16. The groom was 34. The marriage lasted precisely six months. Ashok was born the following year. After a few years, she married Sudhir, a small-time actor. But this marriage was also aborted because both were by then alcoholic, emotionally unstable and completely reckless.

Apart from memories of drunken brawls and wild parties at home in Worli, Ashok also recalls Vinod Khanna, Sunil Dutt, Feroze Khan and a host



Ashok Banker: From traumatic childhood days to happy adulthood

Interest to date

A quick look at Banker's output over the years

* Trilogy of science fiction books, *Man Machine*, *The Ultimatum* and *The Last Of The Robots* (written when he was 15, unpublished). A set of futuristic thrillers, set on planet earth, which has been ravaged by a nuclear religious war. The planet is peopled with individuals who follow their own tenets, sourcing them from existing religions.

* *Scream* (unpublished, because "the publishers thought a less than 200 page book is too small for print"). A biting satire on the world of advertising, the story of an adman who turns out to be a madman. He has a psychic self named Steven King, which he uses to purge all his anxieties.

* *Ten Dead Admen* (published). A serial killer leaves an obituary in *The Times of India* of 10 ad men, and goes about killing them the same day.

* *The Iron Bra* (published). Mystery thriller, a thriller ensuing from a private eye's skirmish with the underworld.

of other industry people, who were so much a part of their lives. "On location Laila, Feroze's eldest, and I would play together, kiss and eat sweet calcium tablets," says Ashok. "They are dominating flashes from the past and yet now they seem so remote. I have little or no connection with showbiz now."

What seems to be permanently etched in his mind, is what he calls "a refreshingly original childhood". While he lived through his mother's horrific marriages, he also knew as a teenager that she was kidnapped and gangraped. She was high on drugs, men and drink by then. "She was a woman of large appetites, which proved to be her bane," says Ashok.

Still later, she completely came in the grip of psychosis. Consequently, some times the boy-Ashok would have to stay locked up in a room for some days without any food, because his mother would forget that she put him there in the first place. At other times he would have boiling hot soup forced down his throat, or chilled beer run over his head because it was good for the hair.

Sheila Ray breathed her last after living though nine nervous breakdowns. "I reacted to those situations much later, for when I was living through them all of it was so upfront that I was completely benumbed," he says.

At such times, Byculla, where his grandparents lived, seemed like an oasis in the middle of a storm. Memories of those days have been etched in *Byculla Boy;* although Ashok claims that he has only skimmed the surface of his tumultuous childhood here. "If I were to recount all the details of my childhood, you would be blown off," he says.

Around the time *Byculla Boy* was published, Ashok Banker was also the subject of discussion in Mumbai's literary circles for what was considered his sassy views on people, particularly men. His statements like "Indian men are bastards, and my father is a giant bastard," or "You do not simply become a man because of that appendage between your thighs," or "All Indian men are tied to their mammas' apron strings till they breathe their last," were tossed around.

"You can take this from me, when men get together at leisure, conversation inevitably veers around 'it'," laughs Ashok. Much of his hatred for the species stems from the sour experiences with his father. Anil Banker has actually filed a suit against his son for making radical statements against him.

"But my stand still holds," says Ashok. "I think, as men we are biologically extinct. The male constitution is designed for aggression which was in use in pre-historic times. Today there is no use of that energy, and hence we are crippled by that excess, thereby putting us one million years behind in time. Women are better equipped than men here."

Critics blamed Banker for using the sorry state of his mother's life and his own traumatic childhood as a suitable marketing apparatus to launch himself as a writer. Today, he confesses that after quitting his job in an advertising agency, he was raring to express all



Memories of Byculla days have been etched in *Byculla Boy;* although Ashok claims that he has only skimmed the surface of his tumultuous childhood here. 'If I were to recount all the details of my childhood, you would be blown off'

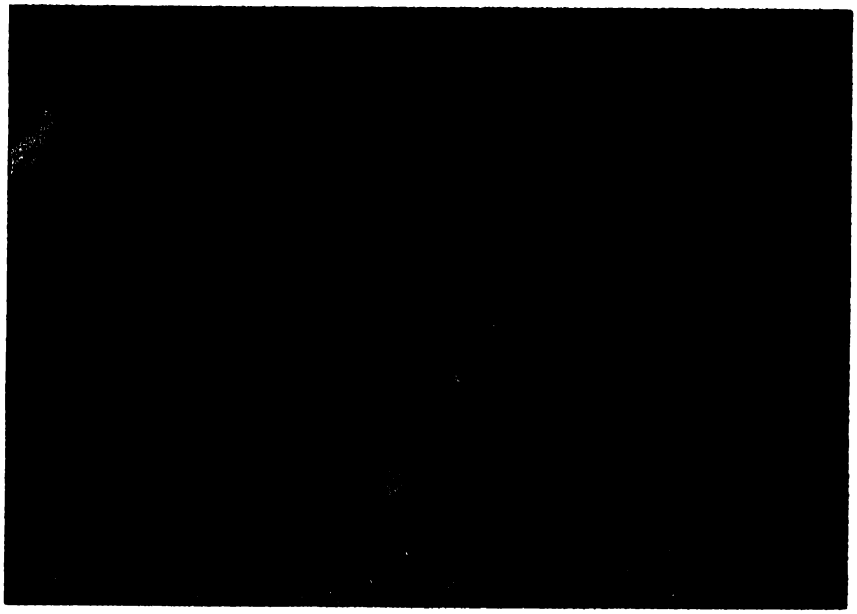
A still from the TV serial, *A Mouthful Of Sky*



Vikas Khot



'I am much calmer now,' says he. Yet, Mumbai and Byculla are like an emotional second skin for him. 'I am a product of a certain place and milieu'



Vikas Khot

the agony of growing up that lay bottled up inside him.

"I was trying to exorcise my traumatic childhood then. I am much calmer now," says he. Yet, Mumbai and Byculla are like an emotional second skin for him. "I am a product of a certain place and milieu. I am very aware of my surroundings, and the corollary to writing about the city and Byculla is through them, one becomes externalised," he says.

Today, as his son Ayush and daughter Yashka wail for turns on their father's multimedia, with Bithika, his wife of 12 years trying to reason with them, a happy sequence of domesticity seems to play itself out. Which again has not come easy for the family.

After giving up his job at HTA eight years ago, to take up writing full-time, the couple — with an infant then — were plunged in dire straits.

They had to sell off part of the house that

Media War

This is an extract from Ashok Banker's book, *Airtime*

Diwali is Christmas time in India. Perhaps this is why, when the Christian festival arrives a month or so later, the celebrations continue with almost as much fervour and enthusiasm. As if, in India, Hindus and Christians have come to a tacit understanding. You celebrate my festival, I celebrate your's. After all, this is the only country in the world where 5,000 gods co-exist in relative harmony.

But there is one new god in this forest of deities who disdains October and its festivities.

A god whom all communities worship with equal fervour and passion all through the year. The god of kitsch and melodrama. Who sits in every home. Who demands to be paid obeisance not every Diwali or Christmas, but every night and day. The god with the single glass eye. Who marks her worshippers with enormous nylon dishes set on the rooftops of the city, aimed at the distant orbiting contraptions that beam down her messages from above.

She cares neither for marriages nor festivals. For births nor deaths. She has her own clock and calendar, and it is marked off in little half-hour segments, recurring weekly. Times of worship.

She demands that you place her before family and friends, lovers and business associates. That you seat yourself before her altar and gaze adoringly upon her

village. And there you stay, hypnotised by her flickering images, half-hour after half-hour, night after night, week after week.

My mother believed in worship. She called it a science. She [illegible] the world. [illegible] the world, call it what you will — the [illegible] in the world. The destruction of humanity as we know it will take place through [illegible] of [illegible] through [illegible] through [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]



Vikas Khot

his mother had left him, Bithika's jewellery and his first computer. That situation prevailed for some years. "But my wife had faith in me. She knew we would overcome this," says Ashok. In those years he published his first series of *desi* whodunnits including *The Iron Bra* and *Ten Dead Admen*. "The most exciting part of writing a suspense thriller is mapping the psyche of an individual in a predicament, and then exploring the dead end and coming back alive from that melee," he says.

Following *Airtime*, he has another novel in the pipeline, titled *In India We Do It With Mirchis*, also sourced from urban Mumbai life. It will be ready for release by October this year. "It is a book about my generation, about midnight's grandchildren," is all he will say now.

The biggies in the publishing industry have the writer completely frustrated. To prove this, he fishes out a copy of *Byculla Boy*, published by Penguin, which opens with the opening pages of Taslima Nasreen's *Lajja!* Then, just six months after it hit the stands, all the editions were pulped.

This time Banker will take no chances, and will have *Airtime* released by a small house, Angel Books. "Writers in Mumbai don't have it so good. Delhi is still traditionally considered more respectable. Anurag Mathur would not have done as well had he been stationed here," he says.



Having brushed aside the big names, Ashok is banking on a London agent's instincts who thinks *In India We Do It With Mirchis* might be another *God Of Small Things* in the making.■

'The most exciting part of writing a suspense thriller is mapping the psyche of an individual in a predicament, and then exploring the dead end and coming back alive from that melee' says Banker

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Ganesha says, the new moon of March 28 makes of you a lover of haute couture, haute cuisine and high society. You will have to exercise finesse and tact. Marriage, collaborations, trips and ties are fated. Hard work and sincerity will definitely fetch you handsome rewards. do not take undue risks.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The right time to fish for a job, hire/fire employees and pursue hobbies.You will also lean towards social work and that will be appreciated. Those in sales, beauty salons, modelling, jewellery and fashion designing are bound to do well. You will, however not be lucky regarding matters of the heart.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



The law of averages will work in your favour, so , you can take calculated risks. More importantly, your creativity will win you plaudits and money. Actors, writers, teachers, researchers, lovers and musicians chirp with joy. A family gathering is in the offing and will be a source of pleasure.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Partnerships and relationships play a dominant role in your life. This is an excellent time to make changes in the domestic frontier. A lot of attention will be needed to soothe ruffled feathers. Buying/selling will prove lucky.A home away from home is also possible.Health needs attention.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Mercury sextiles Venus- so it will be a heady combination of love and money for you. You will also be at peace with yourself and at parties. At work, you will make a special impression Originality and endeavour should be your buzzwords for the week. A journey is on the cards.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Your chance to rule the world because you will have tact and charm,money and good friends to help you. It would be an excellent idea to have a bash or a swinging party at home. It is also a favourable time to endeavour to enhance your personal image or the image of the company you work for.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The new moon in your sign, just makes it right to initiate enterprises, start ventures, spearhead movements, hold debates , conferences and meets. Be expressive if you wish to win the game of life and love. Also an important week for negotiations, mortgages and settlements.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Be a real Scorpio and go in for the cloak and dagger stuff! Mars in your sign favours it.In any case, expect a lot of behind-the-scene activity.Your dear ones and you could be travelling. Expenses will mount, but they will be for a worthy cause. you will be charitably inclined and will be in the good books of everyone.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Time to be hospitable, generous, kind, philanthropic and open your arms to the world. It is certain that you will be loved and made much. The name of the game is love. Marriage is definitely on the cards.Tensions will ease and friends and colleagues will be a constant source of inspiration.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Ganesha says you will do the impossible, well almost! Those in business will gain the most, but even employed Capricornians, prove their mettle. Your home will come under your keen survey. This week will also have a ripple effect in April.You will feel a sense of well being.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



You will probably be in a pugnacious state of mind, because the new moon and Mars , both work like Trojans for you. Be adventurous. Love blooms, friends pitch in, people back you up, the right time to start the wheels rolling for any major activity in life. This is also the time for some serious retrospection.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Joint-finances, loans, funds, investments and hot passion is what the week is all about. The Moon-Pluto trine means plenty of movement, say, import-export, immigration, a shift or at least a change of scenery. Children will definitely be a source of comfort. You are likely to meet old friends.

BIRTHDAYS

March 29: Sun trine Pluto;Ganesha says, despite a false start or two, you will end up brilliantly. If depression or bad health plagues you, it will only be for a temporary period.
March30: Moon sextile Jupiter: The accent will be on finance and entertainment.You succeed in social work and in helping the needy. Children take top priority.
March 31:Mercury conjunction Mars:Obstacles notwithstanding, you will move ahead.Those in business, sports, law, commerce and trade win laurels.
April 1:Sun sextile Uranus: Ganesha says, the name and fame of the sun unites with the sheer power and originality of Uranus to give you the energy for pleasure and pursuits. Position and pull will be yours.
April 2: Mars conjunction Neptune:This combination ensures health and contentment. You will have money and excellent intellectual stimulation. Death of a loved one is a possibility.
April 3: Moon's last quarter:The accent is on home and family matters. The family or a child may need to gain their your full attention.
April 4: Mercury square Mars: Caution could be exercised this week. You will have to put in more efforts to succeed.Be firm, meditation and physical activity might alleviate the situation.

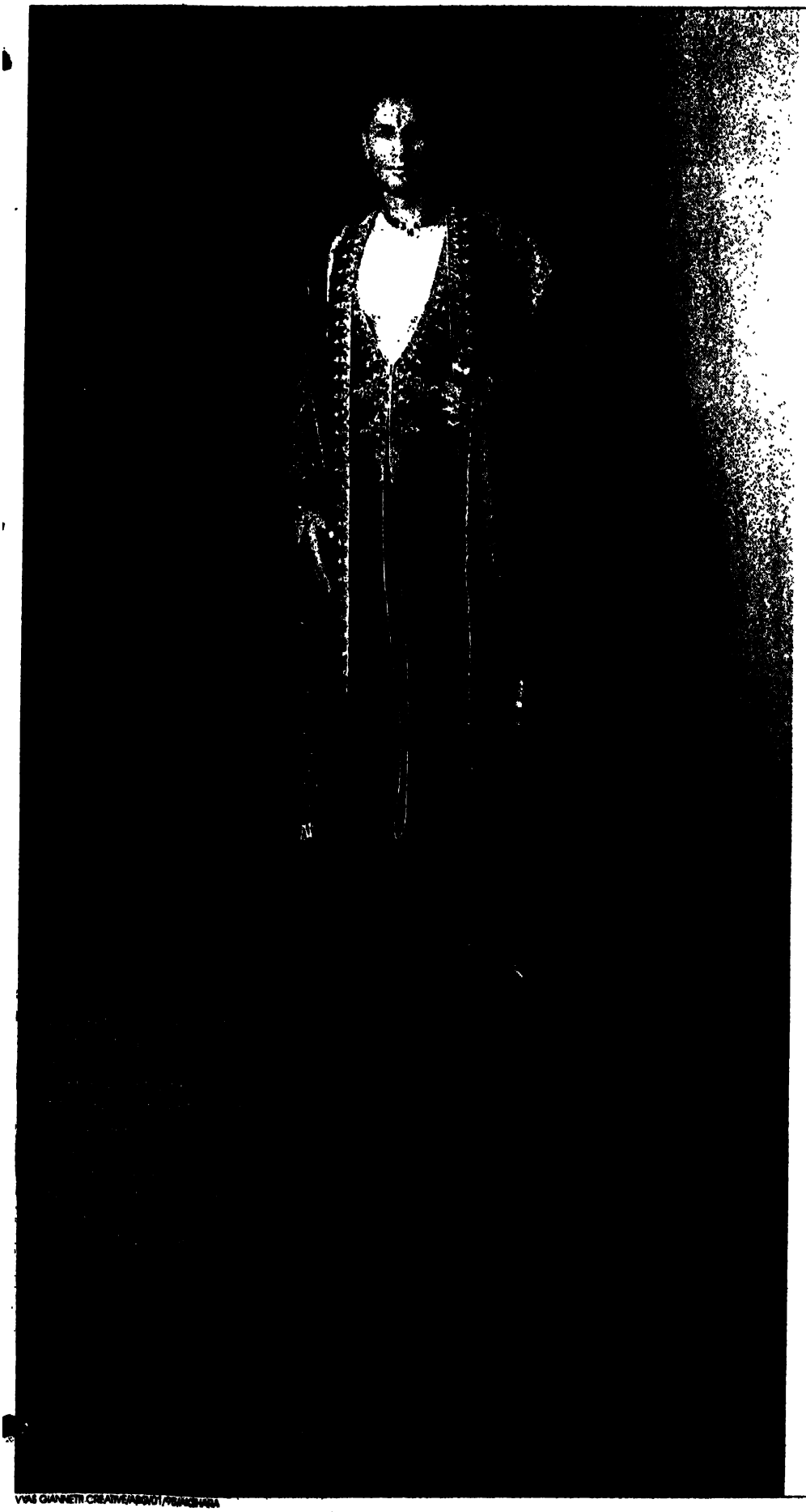
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PAST 35 OF

THE WORLD'S

BEST LOOKING MEN.

GRAVIERA
SUITING

VIAS GIANNETTI CREATIVE/ASSOCI/FRANCHARA

SCIENCE

Dreams Die Last

Some people, in fact, even claim to see the future in them.
Ghazala Wahab reports

Shehnaz was alone in her kitchen garden. But instead of vegetables the garden was full of dense bushes and trees lending it the eeriness of a jungle. As she tried to make her way through a particularly thick thicket a black snake hissed at her. Startled, Shehnaz backed off, but there was another snake behind her. Screaming, she tried to run away, but there were snakes all around, chasing her. Her small garden had become a huge jungle.

She searched frantically for the pathway leading to the house but could not find it. Then, gradually the snakes started closing in on her. By this time, Shehnaz had lost her voice. She screamed and screamed but no sound came and nor did any help.

At that moment, she woke up. Not scared, but worried. Dreams like this are no longer nightmares for 36-year-old Shehnaz Shameem, a housewife. They are premonitive. Snakes, and at times, monkeys are her usual dream partners or symbols. She is scared of them in her waking hours but at night they are her friends warning her of some mishap.

Shehnaz is among the few who not only remember their dreams but take them very seriously. "I think they started just before my father's death, about 12 years ago," she says. "A few days before his death I had this weird dream of a house being constructed and my elder brother laying the bricks. I felt very uncomfortable next morning. I had never had such a vivid dream before. My father was unwell those day. So I told our family priest and he asked me to offer some prayers, feed a few orphans and forget about it. One week later my father died."



Prem Usha

Pallav

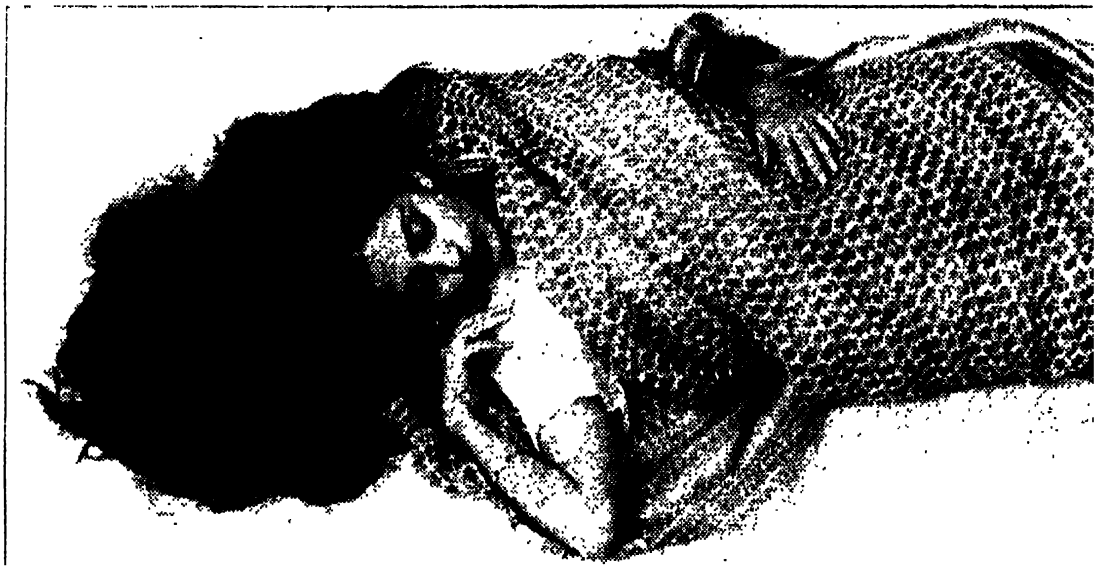
In retrospect, as she thought more about her dream, she decided that the building of a house signified the building of a grave. Over the years, she has evolved her own symbols. She doesn't need a dream analyst to interpret her dreams. She says. "I can do it myself. Earlier, I understood my dreams only in retrospect, but now I can understand their significance before the event."

Does it mean that she can predict what is going to happen? "Not really," she says hesitatingly, "I get the inkling. I suppose if one concentrates on it then perhaps they can be predictive. But since I can't do all that because of my household responsibilities I only know if something bad is going to happen."

It's another story that no one, not even her family, takes her dreams seriously. "People have become very cynical," she argues. "They only want to believe on evidence, and that is the reason they can't feel or perceive anything."

According to Dr Avdesh Sharma, neuropsychiatrist, "Dreams were supposed to be a gateway to an individual's spiritual world. Psycho-analysts have used dreams to understand the psyche of individuals and helped people get rid of their irrational fears."

Sigmund Freud gave a lot of importance to dreams. He had devised a complete mechanism of interpreting dreams, using various symbols which



were divided into two categories: phallic symbols and female symbols. Says Dr Sharma, "You won't dream of sitting here and talking to me. Dreams are not like films with some continuity, they are like images," he says. "The interesting part is they are usually monochromatic. One rarely dreams in colour."

According to Freud dreams were reflective of a person's repressed or suppressed sexuality and hence could be used as an effective tool to correct psychological disorders. Explaining that Dr Vijay Bhatt, psychiatrist, says, "Whether premonitive or recurrent, dreams usually are a manifestation of collective experiences." According to her, the school of psychoanalysis considers dreams to have some symbolic meaning.

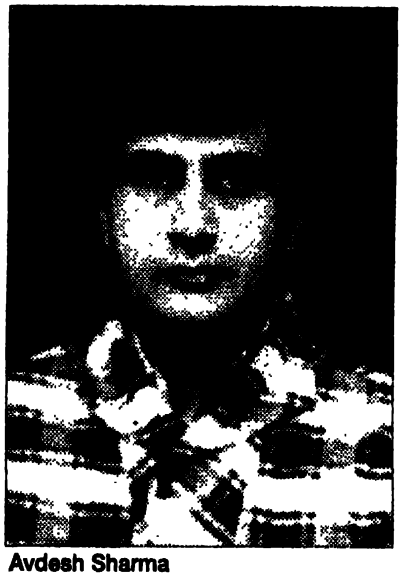
But symbols cannot be used universally as their meanings change from culture to culture. Freud considered snakes a phallic symbol denoting sex whereas in other cultures they are considered a symbol of impending danger. This is one reason why dream analysis never became a serious subject of study.

Science recognises dreams as a phenomenon which merits study but only as long as they are used to understand human behaviour. However, the premonitive nature of dreams is not recognised by psychiatry and has no explanation except what believers put forth.

Says Raveen Mago, 25, an interior designer, "There are so many inexplicable things in the world. I think premonitive dreams are one of those. Since they are usually warnings, I believe it is some protective spirit which is fond of me."

Raveen used to have vivid dreams about her family when she was staying in a hostel during her college days. Narrating one such dream she says, "I saw that my father was very ill. I had this desire to meet him immediately. I called up home the next morning but nobody told me anything. Later I was told that he was undergoing a bypass surgery in Delhi at that time."

Ma Prem Usha, a tarot card reader,



Avdesh Sharma

laughs off such explanations. "I believe," she says, "that dreams should not be given any importance at all. They are just an extension of our waking life." Ma Prem Usha says that all of us are intuitive by nature as we carry our past, present and future with us. Some are more sensitive than others and listen to their intuition more than others. The so-called premonitive dream, according to her, is nothing but intuitive insight which people tend to tuck away at some other level of consciousness during their waking hours.

Dr Sharma carries this argument further saying, "Just because we live time linearly doesn't mean that time is linear. We are conditioned by repeatedly being told that what is important is 'now.' This reduces our sensitivity. What we don't pay attention to is that this moment 'now' could mean different times at different places. Indian 'now' will reach United States 12 hours later, and what is 'now' for them had been ours 12 hours earlier."

So, according to him, since time is not linear, it is possible that extra-sensitive people can break the linear cycle and get a vision of future, the 17th century astrologer, Nostradamus, being the most famous example.

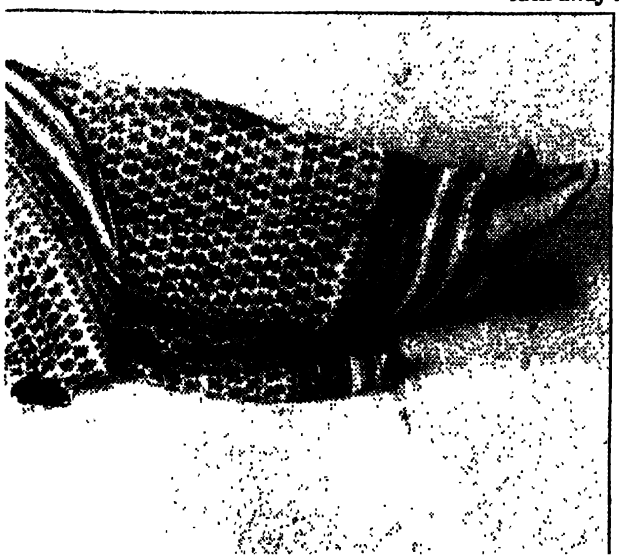
Talking of premonitive dreams, Dr Sharma says that sometimes negative dreams come true because of negative thinking. "For example," he says, "you are worried about your exams and you dream that you have flunked them. This generates negative feelings and consequently you are not able to concentrate and actually flunk the exams." In this case there is nothing premonitive about the dream.

Ma Prem Usha debunks the theory of astral travel too, which some people use to explain premonitive dreaming. "Astral travel," she says, "is very difficult. Not everyone can do it. It requires a very different level of consciousness. And when one is travelling astrally then other people can feel their presence, like I do. I sometimes feel the presence of Osho next to me."

Psychology puts human consciousness at three levels. Consciousness, sub-consciousness and unconsciousness. The state of dreaming is the subconscious state. Ma Prem Usha describes the levels of consciousness in a different way: individual level of consciousness, collective level of consciousness and the cosmic level of consciousness. She says that astral travel is possible only when a person is able to connect to the cosmic consciousness.

Whatever may be the explanations for dreaming, the fact is that it is very essential for sanity. Research has shown that people who were prevented from NREM (Non Rapid Eye Movement) sleep which is the deep sleep when one doesn't dream show signs of fatigue and irritation but people who were prevented from REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep which is when they dream they show signs of senility. Dreams work like an iron for tangled emotions, they help put things in perspective.

Says Dr Sharma, "Dreams, particularly the premonitive ones, need to be studied. But what makes research difficult is the lack of sufficient data as most people don't even remember their dreams." ■





MEDICINE

Nature Cures

Don't pop pills the next time you're ill; look through your kitchen shelves instead for a remedy, says **Sujata Pandey**

When the doctor takes his time reaching you and your toothache is driving you up the wall, just rummage through your kitchen shelves. Chewing on a clove will give temporary relief from the nagging pain till you can reach the clinic. And this spice will probably be more effective than any anti-inflammatory tablet you could have popped.

Not all kitchens are geared to be portable clinics but the smart ones have almost anything that one would want in a medical emergency. But there may be the occasional herb or spice that may not be found normally in an average kitchen. How many of us, for instance, stock up on alfalfa? This is a herb worth keeping close at hand in case you suffer from sciatic pain as it is a natural pain reliever. Brewed in tea and taken at bed time it relieves arthritis, rheumatism, colitis, ulcers and anaemia.

Cooking lentils with a pinch of asafoetida or *heeng* is common in most communities all over India. This spice helps in the digestive process by softening the lentils and making them easier to digest. It also removes toxins and relives pain. If one suffers from the embarrassment of flatulence asafoetida is wonderful in controlling the problem.



Rajma, beans and *channa* cooked with baking soda makes them lighter, softer and facilitates the cooking process. Baking soda also functions as an antacid. A pinch with one cup of warm water mixed with the juice of half a lemon relives acidity, gas and indigestion. As a beauty aid half a cup of baking soda in the bath helps circulation and makes the skin soft. It is also good in treating infections of the skin and helps in maintaining the over-

all health and hygiene of the skin.

Cardamom smells and tastes heavenly. Eaten after meals it is a super mouth freshner. It is aromatic, stimulating and refreshing. It freshens not only the breath but also helps clear the mind and stimulate the heart. The astringent, sweet and pungent taste of cardamom can only be savoured in small quantities sprinkled in tea, sweets dishes or in savoury cooking.

Castor oil—every child has had a taste of it and hated it—is a safe and effective laxative. It is also an anti-rheumatic herb because it is a natural pain reliever. An infusion made with the castor root is good in treating arthritis, sciatica, chronic backache, muscle spasms, gout. This tea also acts as a decongestant.

The fieriest healer is cayenne pepper or *lal mirich*. This is pungent and hot and is used in cooking. Apart from giving sweat attacks to those who are not used to it, it enhances circulation and destroys worms and parasites and is good for colds, coughs and congestion.

Another rather pleasant aromatic herb is cinnamon. It is a stimulant with antiseptic and refreshing properties. The taste is slightly pungent and the action on the body is hot. It is a good detoxifying herb creating freshness and strengthening and energising the tissues. It is a pain reliever, promotes digestion and has a natural cleansing action in the body. It is good for relieving colds, congestion and coughs. Tea made with cinnamon, cardamom, ginger and clove is super in clearing congestion caused due to colds and is an aid to promoting digestion.

The humble *dhaniya* or coriander can be used fresh or in the dry seed form. It is stimulating and cooling and aids in digestion.

Cumin or *zeera* smells good but tastes slightly bitter and pungent. Not only does it improve the taste of food and help in digestion it also aids the secretion of digestive juices. It is also good for reliving pain and cramps in the abdomen. Roasted cumin powder is effective for the treatment of intestinal disorders.

Ever tried to eat a pod of raw garlic? Well this is one spice containing oil and is hot, bitter and pungent. It is good in controlling cases of flatulence, helps in digestion and absorption of food and is also a rejuvenating herb. People who have a cardiac problem also are told to have a pod of garlic every day. Now this process has become easier with the availability of commercially manufactured garlic products.

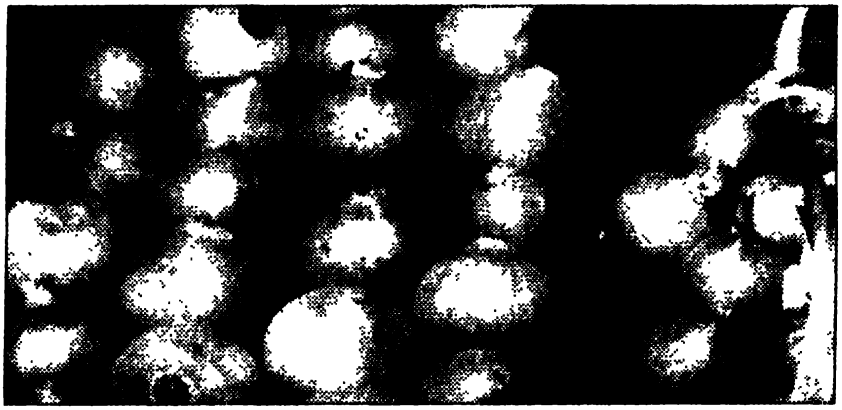
Ginger is the most versatile plant. It can be used in cooking, it can be pickled, added to tea and can be applied as a poultice to relive aching joints. Ginger can be used both fresh and dried although fresh ginger contains more water and is milder whereas in its dried and powdered form it is stronger and has more penetrating action. It is a stimulant and a carminative.

Fresh ginger tea with a spot of honey is good for the treatment of inflammation of the throat, the common cold, congestion and sinus problems. Some alternate healing therapies also recommend a ginger bath. This bath is said to relive pain and has a refreshing and relaxing effect.

Mustard is an excellent analgesic and reduces muscular pain. It is a carminative and also relives congestion. It is very pungent, hot, sharp, penetrating and oily. A paste of mustard and water applied to a cloth and placed next to the skin gives relief to painful joints. It may also be used as a fermentation to relive muscle spasms. The seeds of the plant mixed with water relax the muscles. It is also good for indigestion, distension of the abdomen and to relive discomfort caused by improper digestion.

Mix a pinch of nutmeg in a glass of milk or a cup of tea and the taste improves—this is because nutmeg is aromatic and stimulating. Taken with milk it serves as a tonic for the heart and brain. It is a relaxant and induces natural sleep.

The onion has a strong smell and is pungent to taste. But once one gets used to eating it raw in salads it becomes an indispensable part of the dining table. Onions help in digestion, in reducing cholesterol and are a good tonic for the heart.





Onions help in digestion whereas turmeric is a blood purifier and also acts as a tonic

Every kitchen has turmeric on the shelves. This golden spice is used in almost everything —from face packs to cooking. Turmeric is aromatic and a stimulant and it has many helpful functions. It is a good blood purifier and works as a tonic to aid digestion and relive congestion. It has a soothing action on respiratory ailments.

Turmeric is also an anti-bacterial. It aids in the digestion of high protein foods, reduces inflammation of the tonsils and congestion. It also has anti-inflammatory properties and can be used mixed with water and applied locally to reduce swellings, soothe abrasions or bruises.

So if there is a problem that needs attention till you can reach a medical unit help is always at hand—just look into the kitchen and heal yourself! ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1320	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1230	1	IC 742	1440	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1525	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0550	daily	IC 772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W 902	0835	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W 911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC-202	1525	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
9W 621	0950	3, 5	9W 622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

BAHRAIN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC 732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
DHAKA					
BG-698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC 723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG 093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG 094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA 214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA 142	2100	6	BA 143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
MOSCOW					
SU-538	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
PARO					
KB 106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI 110	10300	4	BI 109	2045	3
SQ 415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6 45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16 '5	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues., Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs, Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat. Arr Mon., Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep. & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep. Tues., Wed & Sat; Arr Tues, Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr. Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7 00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13 10	Amritsar Express	15 30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep. Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7 55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun., Wed & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri, Arr: Tues	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11 45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6 55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15 30	2859
2021	6 00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr: Except Saturday	21 00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10 45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16 20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10 20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6 15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15 30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday Arr. Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11 05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10 40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14 10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03 30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13 45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry)



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am a student of class XII. My problem is that I hesitate a lot to speak to my friends, relatives and even cousins who visit my place or vice-versa. I don't have a personality. I am quiet, shy and short-tempered. I rarely smile and can seldom relax. I think I have developed a complex against smart, outspoken people. Please help me and develop my confidence.***



Name withheld, Purulia

A. Your problem can easily be dealt with if you are willing to take it head on. Only, you can help cure yourself of this complex. The first thing you must do is control your short temper, and try to increase your tolerance where other people are concerned. Remember, in order to make friends, you have to make yourself more easy to be with and often, a book is judged by its cover. First impressions do make an impact and you will have to work on giving out more friendly vibes to the people around you.

Another thing you could do is take up a hobby or a sport. This will serve two purposes. You will have something to make you feel good about yourself and you will end up meeting a lot of new people. Lastly, you mentioned that you rarely smile. Well that's not too hard to deal with.

As Mathew Sweeny says: "Show those teeth some sun!"

Q. ***I am a 30-year-old wife and a school teacher. I have a six-year-old daughter. My husband, a medical practitioner, is a perfect casanova. He gets attracted to any girl/woman who would care to give him any attention. I have tried to dissuade him for the past seven years and even attempted suicide five years ago. I am working for the past three years in the same school where my daughter studies. My husband has a transferable job and has threatened to sever all relations with me if I do not accompany him. I am afraid that if I leave this job, I may not get a job again. What should I do?***



Name withheld, Calcutta

A. I think the relevant question here is not giving your job a try but giving your marriage a try. My advise to you would be to give your marriage a fair chance, especially since there is a child involved. You could take leave from your present job and apply for one in the place where you are going to be moving.

That way, you will have two options. But you have to protect yourself from the emotional hurt you are being subjected to by your husband at this point. Shield yourself against his immature behaviour so as not to let him hurt you. For the time being concentrate on bringing up your daughter and succeeding in your new job.

His callous attitude may reduce with the passage of time, particularly, if you prove yourself strong and able to cope with it.



How to acquire girlfriends? Women are almost always attracted to confidence, and confidence is something that can be achieved, enhanced, and even faked whichever is the most convenient option

Q. ***I am a 16-year-old studying in a boys' school. I do not have a single girlfriend unlike my friends. They are constantly teasing me and making me feel depressed. I don't know how to approach a girl. I become very nervous and cannot speak to girls. I don't even have a sister to help me out. Can you offer me some guidance?***

Abhishek, Calcutta

A. Your problem is a common one, faced by multitudes of young men who suffer from the misfortune of not being able to understand the rather complex female mind. Here is a quick insight. Women are almost always attracted to confidence, and confidence is

something that can be achieved, enhanced, and even faked whichever is the most convenient option. One thing is for sure. Confidence is usually a surface trait and almost never proportionate to a person's actual self-image. You must work upon your social skills as well as your self-esteem.

Confidence generates confidence. Learn to be sociable, to talk, to listen, to smile. Try not to be self-conscious, and remember, women make good friends, and if you try to relate to them as human beings, rather than purely objects of desire, you are bound to make some headway.



Q. ***I am a 32-year-old government employee and after a year of marriage I came to know that my wife had had an affair with someone before our marriage. She had a sexual relationship with her lover. I hate her and don't want to live with her. But she is not agreeing to a divorce. Now she threatens to commit suicide and her parents plan to slap a legal case against me. I am a very unhappy man.***

How can I separate from my wife and lead a normal life?

Ramen Ganguly, Asansol

A. Your first step must be to make up your mind if you really want to end your marriage. Does your wife continue to be promiscuous? Or is she truly sorry for her adulterous behaviour? If she is truly repentant then you might want to give her one more chance as almost anyone deserves at least one chance.

But if you feel that your marriage is headed nowhere do not let her get away with the kind of emotional blackmail she is putting you through. If she continues with her threats to commit suicide take her to a psychiatrist who might be able to rectify her unreasonable behaviour.

If necessary, you might have to call her bluff, for there is no reason that you should allow yourself to be emotionally blackmailed because you are a man.



Q. ***I am a 17-year-old student of Class IX. My problem is that I cannot concentrate on my studies because I am madly in love with Ajay Jadeja. People call me mad but I want to show them that where there is a will, there is a way. I cannot live without him.***

Can you suggest what career I should pursue in order to reach him?

S. Afridi, Calcutta

A. At the risk of seeming cruel, I have to advise you to take a reality check. At your age it often happens that one falls in love with an image rather than a real person. And that's what seems to have happened in your case. You are enamoured by the persona, the public image of Ajay Jadeja.

My advice to you would be to treat this as a harmless infatuation and be smart enough to know where to draw the line. As for your career, perish the thought of trying to pick a career solely because it might present an opportunity to meet your hero. Heroes often tend to have feet of clay — if at all they are to be worshipped, it would be better to worship them from a distance.



Q. ***I am a 24-year-old working girl. I had been a very outgoing person and for the past 6 to 7 years I have had many relationships with boys and was physically involved with all of them. Now I am going to get married and I am worried about my future husband discovering my past. Should I tell my husband everything about my past before we get married?***

Reena Chabbra, Calcutta

A. You neglected to mention whether yours is an arranged or a love marriage. In the event that it is a love marriage, I would advise you to be honest with your fiance. If you two share a trusting and secure relationship, he will understand and it will hopefully avert any hiccups in your future together. But if you are going to have an arranged marriage, you must realise that you have to sever your past from your future. This is a most delicate situation and you must handle it with utmost care. Forget your past and concentrate on sincerely giving your marriage your best shot.

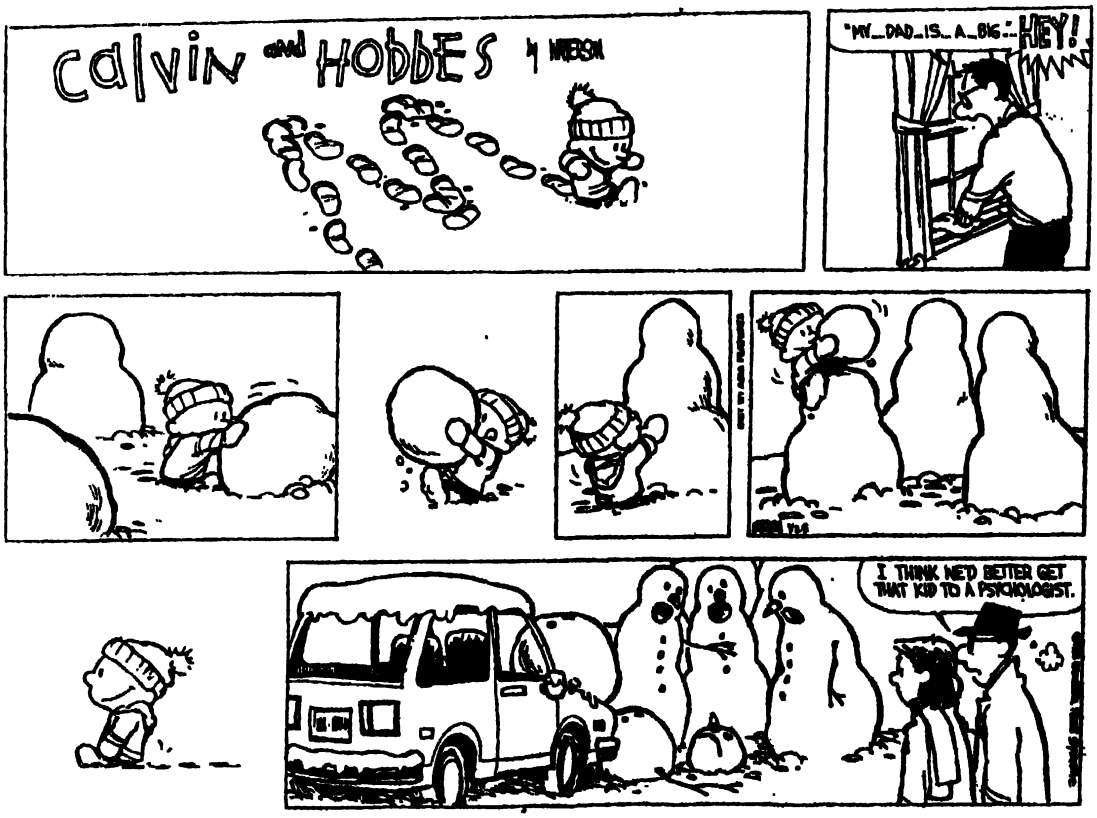
Illustrations : Debasish Deb

In love with a cricketer? You are enamoured by the persona, the public image of the cricketer. My advice to you would be to treat this as a harmless infatuation and be smart enough to know where to draw the line

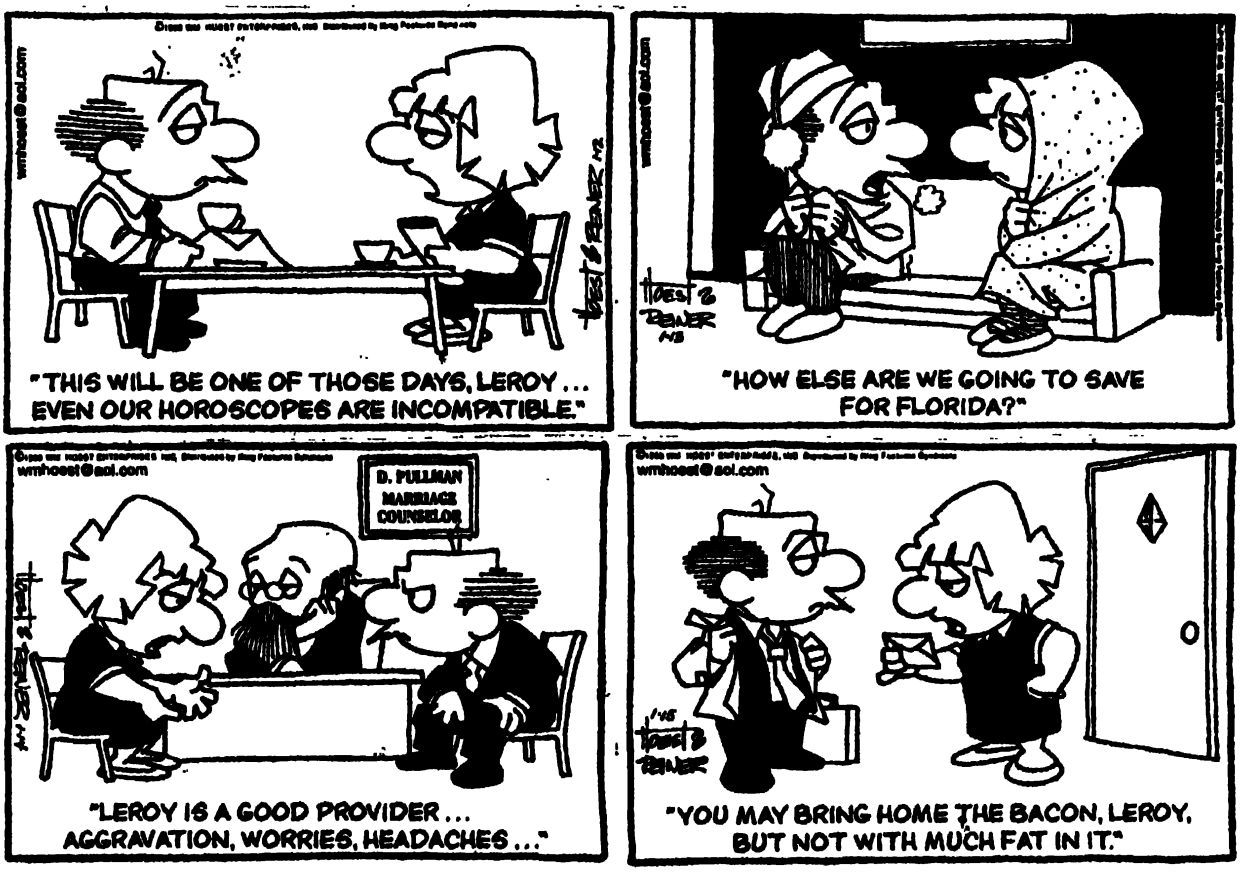
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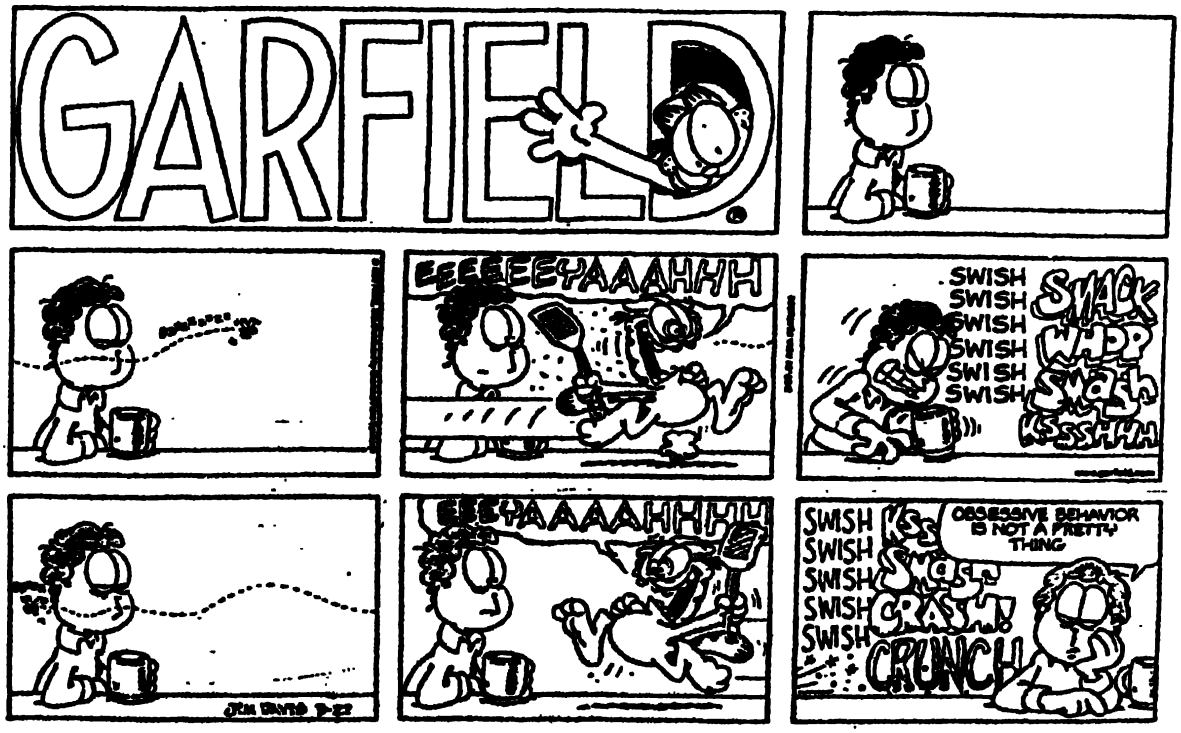
CALVIN AND HOBBES © WATTERSON



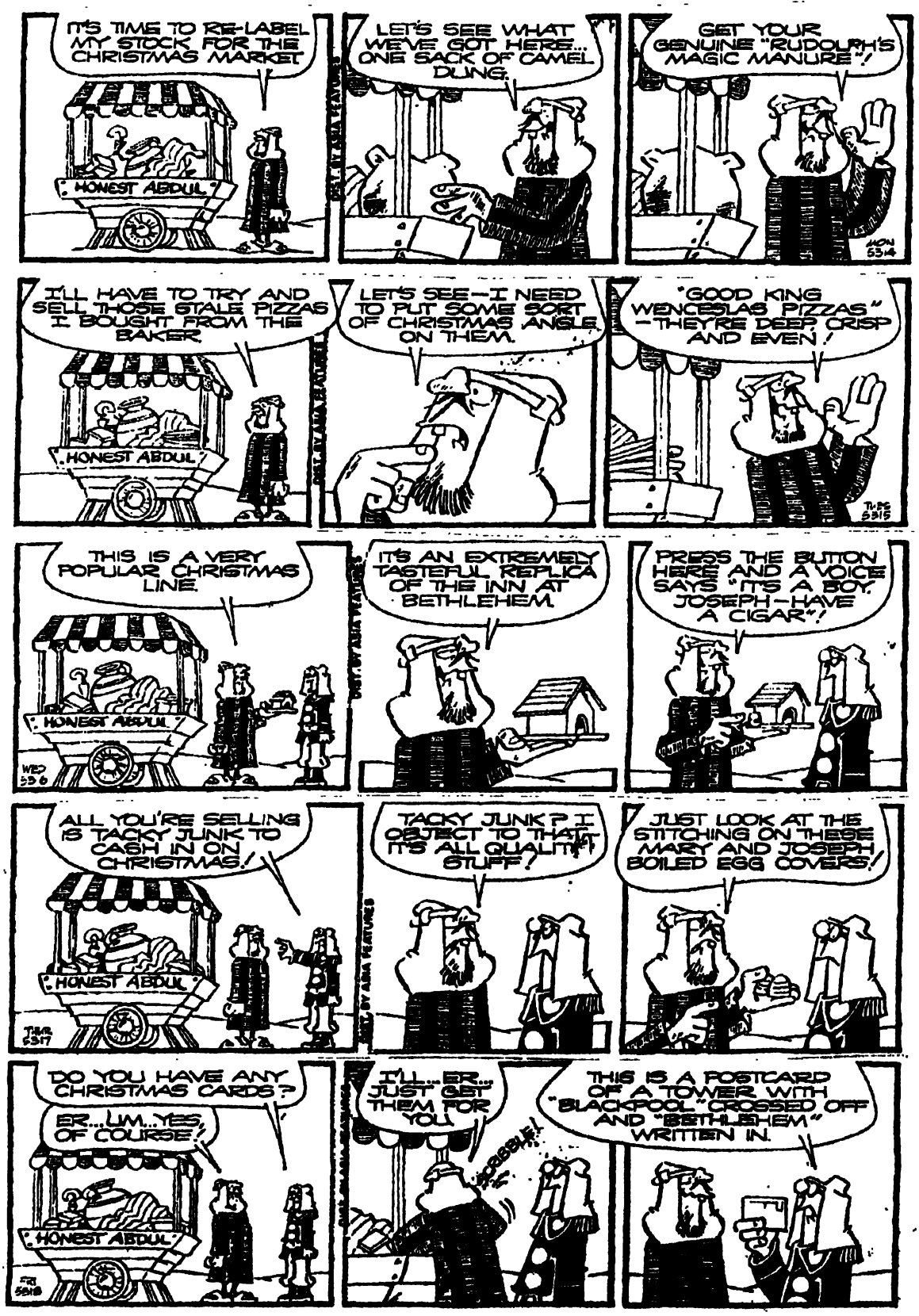
THE LOCKHORNS



GARFIELD © WATTERSON

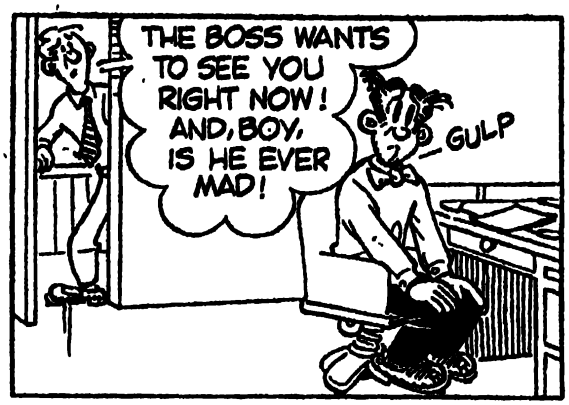


THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



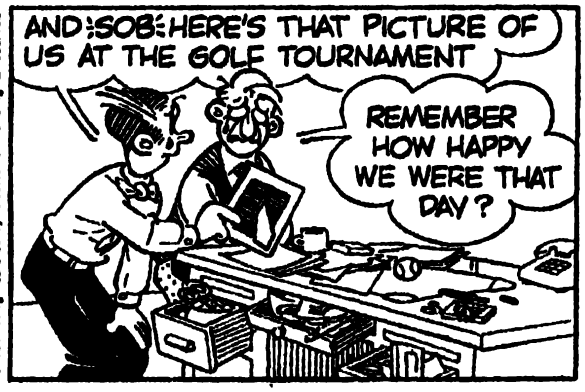


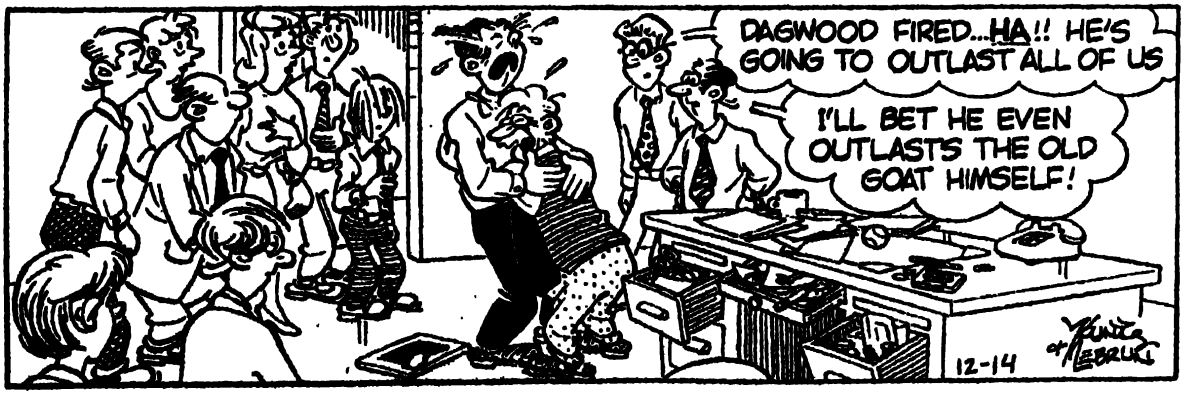






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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Q ***My problem begins with the arrival of summer; excessive sweating and bad odour. I bathe twice a day and use a mild deodorant. What else should I do?***
Vimala Rani, New Alipore, Calcutta

A We all dread summers for the same reasons. Try to add your favourite cologne into your bath water and then after a bath use a deodorant. Drink at least 12 glasses of water and avoid fried, heavy and fatty food. These basic things will make a difference and leave you feeling fresh and fragrant much longer. If possible, avoid wearing synthetic clothes and nylons and give preference to cottons, muslin and khadis. Basically there are many basic things that one would not be thinking about but if you give it a thought and take a little trouble to restyle your lifestyle, things will become much comfortable.

Q ***I am 21 years old and having medium complexion but both sides of my nose are very oily. I wear spectacles with frames made of carbon. With constant use, there are brown spots and prominent lines on my nose but I cannot work without spectacles. What should I do?***
Chanda Das, Hooghly, West Bengal

A It is quite obvious that you have a combination skin and there's not much that you are doing in terms of keeping it clean and oil-free.





Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To have shiny, lustrous hair:

■

Use a henna based shampoo

I would advise you to wipe the entire face regularly with cold rose water several times a day, specially around the nose area. Apply a pack of fullers earth, ground cloves and neem paste. As for the use of spectacles, I think you have realised by now that you need to change the frame and get a better quality one that does not scar the face or leave unwanted marks. A good optician will always be careful about this because once the marks settle in, it is very difficult to get rid of them.

Q ***I have medium length hair. I used to apply henna but I think it does not really suit me and neither does amla or shikakai. I am having a lot of dandruff and have tried many herbal shampoos and curd and egg but to no avail. My hair appears dull. It is oily from within and dry at the ends. What shampoo should I apply?***
Shalini Sahaney, Asansol, West Bengal



A I would advise you to start *hennaing* your hair. You must understand that there is no permanent remedy for making the hair look lustrous and shiny and just as you brush your teeth daily, your hair, too, requires regular looking after. Oil your hair with hot coconut oil followed with steam and apply the juice of one lemon on the scalp and leave on for about half an hour. You can also add two tablespoons vinegar in warm water and apply to the scalp which will help reduce dandruff. This has to be done at least twice a week for proper results. Use a henna based shampoo. Also rinse your hair with strained tea water to which you have added the juice of one lemon. This should be done after shampooing to give your hair lots of body, bounce and shine.

Q *I am 18 years old and have small blackheads on my back and face. Please suggest a remedy.*
Sharmila Sarkar, Tollygunge, Calcutta

A You will have to go to a professional to get the blackheads removed. Also when bathing, use a loofah or a back brush whenever having a bath. You must keep your face clean and remember to wipe it several times with ice cold rose water for results. Get someone to wipe your back with ice cold rose water pads. Avoit eating fried, oily foods, sweets, chocolates and colas and increase your intake of water and raw foods with more emphasis on fruits and salads.



Q *I am 26 years old and have many blemishes on my face left by pimples alongwith open pores on my cheeks. A bout of chicken pox has left a scar on my nose. Please advise.*
Rakhee Hazarika, Guwahati, Assam

A Use a face scrub made of the following ingredients: orange peel powder, gramflour, powdered lentil, milk, potato juice and the juice of one lemon. Apply all over the face and leave on for 20 minutes. Start to scrub with milk and wash off with cold milk. This should be done daily for a month for results.

Q *I am 19 years old and have marks on my skin as a result of pimples. Please advise a remedy to get rid of them.*
Parul Kaushik, Cuttack, Orissa

A Pimple marks can be very depressing. I hope you have not squeezed at the pimples as this can often lead to permanent skin damage. Make a pack of the following ingredients: ground masoor dal, turmeric, lemon juice, grated potato, chokker and sandlewood powder. Mix it with curd and apply all over face. When dry, dab with milk and scrub off in circular motion. Wash with ice cold water and then wipe with rose water.

Natural substitutes for perfume:

■

Natural oils such as sandlewood, khus, rose and lavender can be used

Q *I am 18 years old and a regular reader of your column. I have sagging skin and my mother too had sagging skin from an early age. Can I do something like joining a gym to get a firm body or will it be harmful for my health?*
Vithika Gupta, Calcutta

A Whoever said exercise and toning is bad for the body? On the contrary, I would think it would be fabulous idea to start to tone yourself up from the age of 13. Start with light stretching exercises, toe-touching, arm exercises, sit-ups, cycling lying down, brisk walking and even jogging.

It is important for you to understand that any exercise must be gradually increased and has to be a regular routine before you actually start feeling better. Start now and you will see the difference in your body and your overall look very soon.

Q *My problem is that I am allergic to perfumes. What natural substitutes can I apply when going out in the evenings?*
Anita Desai, Calcutta

A Unfortunately, I am one person who firmly believes that a whiff of one's favourite perfume can make one feel much better. However, there are a number of natural oils that can be used instead of perfumes and they smell absolutely fabulous! Afterall, most perfumes tend to use some herbal or floral extract or the other as their basic ingredient. Sandlewood, khus, rose, geranium, lavender, citrus...all of these natural fragrances linger when applied to the pulse points.



Every individual has his own personal preference as far as natural fragrances is concerned and may even have special favourites for the day and more sensual and stronger aromas for the evening. So what you choose is your decision.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



Sudip Acharya

SHOBHA DE
Writer:

Normally I use only cheap throw-away pens. So I don't really have much preferences. But designer-wise, I like Cartier pens because they are beautiful. Owning them is like owning a piece of jewellery, they are more like objets d'art. May be, one day I will do a book in long-hand with a Cartier pen and lets see what it turns out like.

ALI SARDAR JAFFRI
Poet:

I have three pens which I really cherish. The first and the oldest among them is this Parker pen, that I had bought for Rs 12, almost 34 years ago in Aligarh. I also have a Mont Blanc, that was gifted to me by a Delhi Boutique last year and a Sheaffers, but it is the Parker that I treasure the most.



Vikas Khot

The Write Choice

Despite the technological revolution, the humble pen remains as popular as ever, says **Geeta Sharma**

Remember the last time you chucked away the ubiquitous plastic pen and didn't shed as much as a tear when you couldn't find it? Not many of us do. After all, in this disposable age of ours, there's nothing quite as disposable as a ball-point pen.

It wasn't always like this, though. There was a time when writing — in long hand, of course — was a primary means of communication and the pen — the instrument used for it — was deemed something personal and duly treasured. "People would choose a fountain pen — a shape, a pattern, a colour — with as much care and precision as they might choose articles of jewellery," recalls eminent poet and writer Ali Sardar Jaffri. In fact, pens were often engraved with names or initials and cherished as an extension of one's personality and individuality.

With time, however, a new consumer-orientation came to dominate the civilised world and expediency came to take precedence over quality. There emerged the concept of 'planned obsolesce' where commodities were designed to last only for a limited duration.

With the proliferation of typewriters, calligraphy ceased to matter and the ball point marker or roller came to suffice for the odd jottings that one needed. Today, however, with computers and word processors imposing an ever-more tyrannical uniformity, people have begun to realise that somewhere down the line, something seems to have got lost. And during the last decade, the pen has undergone a renaissance.

India, too, has witnessed this renaissance. Fountain pens and their new evolutionary counterparts, ball points and highlighters, now rank among the upmarket products on the Indian shopping shelves. According to industry estimates, sales of the Indian pen industry amount to nearly Rs 400 crore every year and are growing at an impressive rate of 12 per cent per annum.



BULBUL SHARMA

Illustrator:

When I was a child, I would draw with these dip-ink pens and then also began writing with them. And then I discovered that my handwriting, which was otherwise quite horrible, actually looked quite nice! These pens are not too practical but then they are my best choice.



According to Mr. Vivek Bali, Vice President (Marketing) Luxor Writing Instruments Company, "Factors contributing to the upswing in the pen industry have been growing literacy, liberalisation and the consequent infusion of better technology."

Also the growth of the gift market, both personal and corporate, has helped the pen occupy a safe niche in this segment. The use of snazzy and slick advertising has acted as a growth driver and increased interest in this market among the discerning and savvy consumers.

Indigenous pen manufacturing in India can be roughly divided into four categories: fountain pens, ball points and accessories, which account for a giant 65 per cent of the sales, hi-tech modern writing instruments, and mechanical pencils and highlighters which account for another 10-15 per cent of the total sales turnover of the industry.

The major players in the Indian writing instruments front are Luxor, Reynolds, Rotomac, Stic, Montex and Flair. D.K Jain, who heads the Indian Writing Instruments Association, says the Indian pen industry has entered a competitive field with a price war at the lower end of the market. The prices at this end range between Rs 3-7.

Luxor, one of the pen leaders, manufactures and exports a whole range of sketch pens, sign pens, fine liner micro tip pens, fluorescent highlighters, roller, metal and plastic ball point pens. Luxor which manufactures almost 200 million pens an year, is the only Indian pen company that has exported its produce to 50 countries as a Brand Equity product.

Interestingly, the ball point pen, which was invented only in 1939, has now outstripped the demand for the more traditional fountain pens. The ball point pen has become a preference for all age groups. Besides its overriding convenience value, the ball pen has been able to make it big in the pen market since the early Seventies when its use began to be accepted on official documents and bank cheques. The result has been its rapid upgradation from the cheap Rs 2 to Rs 3 poor quality product to a more expensive Rs 6 to Rs 8 higher quality pen. The more snazzy one's vary between Rs 150 to Rs 800.

This stands in sharp contrast to the upmarket and equally competitive brand and price range of pens, mainly the imported variety that have price ranges of Rs. 3,000 and above.

In fact, pen lovers in India have a wide choice in the pen market which is replete with a host of international brands — Waterman and Sheaffer of the US, Parker of Britain, Mont Blanc Simplo of Germany or S.T Du Pont of France. These pens, ink and ball point, are available at select outlets and showrooms.

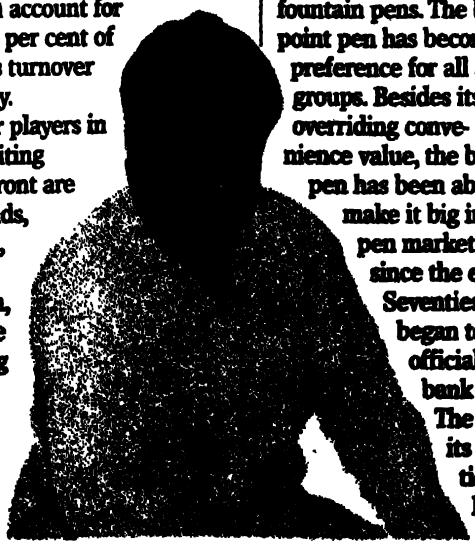
The most prized and sought after among them is the Parker, which has tied up with a major Indian player, Luxor for sales, marketing and sharing of ancillary technology. So also are the Cartier pens from France, known for their refined, elegant bodies, electroplating with precious metals and surface and hand polishing. The German-made Mont Blanc, which has played a major role in the pen industry worldwide, is another favourite among many a pen collectors. A sales executive at the Ravissant showroom in Delhi points out that people who come to buy these designer pens, either as gifts or as collectors items, are choosy only to an extent. "They are clear about what they want — a fountain, roller, ball-point pen — and the finish — gold, enamel, lacquer or what have you — but they are certainly not price sensitive."

But while innovations in today's technological age have rendered state-of-the art communications obsolete overnight, the pen with its varying styles, colours and materials, has continued to fascinate pen lovers and collectors worldwide.

JAVED AKHTAR

Writer and lyricist:

When I was a child, I used to think that the best and the most expensive pen in the world is a Parker and would fantasise that one day I would buy it. By the time, I could, everyone was talking about Mont Blanc pens so I bought one and promptly lost it. I am in trouble again because my wife, Shabana (Azmi) has gifted me another Mont Blanc! Nevertheless, it is still my favourite.



PROFILE

Ad Man Out

He's eccentric, quirky, slightly mad, but a genius in his own way. **Geeta Sharma** meets Alyque Padamsee

He is a man of ideas, and he doesn't waste much time before making that clear. As he settles down to chat with you in his new office — McCann Erickson, the world's largest advertising agency, you understand — tea and biscuits are served. Says Padamsee, pointing to the tray, "You don't have to look for ideas. They are just there." If you have to promote tea over coffee, simply tell the consumer, "What is it that you like about your tea? Coffee is great, but can you dip your biscuits in it?"

With these lessons on tea over coffee, you realise that it is not for nothing that Alyque Padamsee is the only Indian to have made it to the international Clio Hall of Fame (the Oscars of World Advertising). Today, in his present avatar as creative advisor to the world's largest advertising agency, MacCann Erickson India (besides heading A.P Associates, his own marketing and image consultancy firm) he is as matter of fact as ever. "I was getting bored and restless after my last job (with the Indian Express group) and was looking for a change and an exciting place to work in." The search took him to Sorab Mistry, CEO of MacCann Erickson, "who is as crazy for ideas as I am."

But before he dwells on his role as an ad man, the communications guru wants to tell you about his latest creative endeavour — *Begum Sumroo*. It is a much acclaimed full-length historical play about the life and times of the Begum, the legendary builder of the Basilica at Sardana near Meerut. Written by noted novelist and playwright Pratap Sharma, it shows how a girl metamorphoses into a soldier (while retaining her femininity) under the British East India Company. The play raises questions of love, duty and betrayal and explores the human heart, love and passion versus duty and honour.

With a impressive cast of Gerson daCunha, Hosi Vasunia, Aly Khan and Tara Deshpande, Alyque says *Begum Sumroo* is not a play about the past for the past's sake. "It shows to the Indian woman of today, what she can do with life if she is determined and has the guts."

Padamsee's penchant for offering a new perspective and a fresh viewpoint has helped him make a success of his efforts, be they in theatre or in ads



Asked about the choice of play, Alyque says he likes characters who change the times they live in — Evita, Mirabai, Gandhi, Jesus (Christ Superstar) Tughlak. You respect them because they wanted something better and different, he says.

Billed as a leading director of *avant garde* theatre in the country, he feels that all his plays are contemporary, even if they are based on historical characters. Take Evita, for instance. Everyone loved it for the music. But more significantly, it shows what happens to a woman in power. Also, as he points out, "In my production, I have used a lot of slogans which were reminiscent of Indira Gandhi's Emergency regime — like Evita is Argentina and Argentina is Evita. So, in that sense it was contemporary."

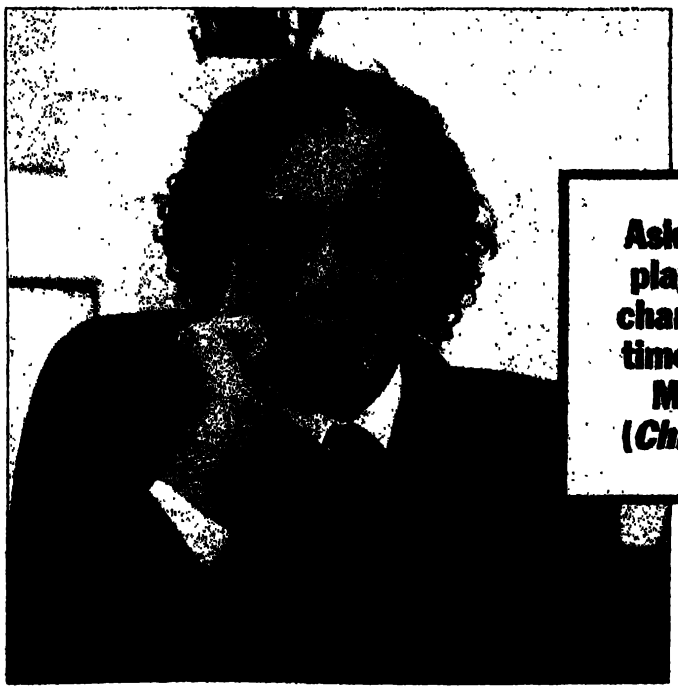
Known for his professional and slick productions, Alyque says there are some things over which he makes no compromises in his plays. One is the sets. "Often the directors of today, tend to neglect the visual aspect of their work and keep working hard with actors. I prefer to have good elaborate sets. Like in *Begum Sumroo*, there was a large fort and a palace and there were special effects with the cannon firing over the heads of the audience!" Also, he pays due attention to lighting, be it for spartan or elaborate sets.

Padamsee likes to describe his theatre as a theatre of ideas (the other is the theatre of entertainment — *Bottoms Up* and *A Bed Full of Foreigners* variety). "Theatre I believe is not only to see but also to think about. I cannot spend three to six months of my life producing and rehearsing a play that only entertains my audience. I want

enlightenment and reactions too," he says.

Padamsee debunks the notion that theatre in India is on the decline. "During the British rule, we would perform to an audience of 500 or so, today we perform to a 5,000 crowd. So how can we say it is not doing well?" As for original home-grown scripts, he says with just 50 years of independence behind us, it would take some time to have an indigenous stock of internationally qualified playwrights. But the promise is already there in the likes of Mahesh Dattani, Zubin Driver and Pratap Sharma, says Padamsee.

It is perhaps Padamsee's penchant for offering a new perspective and a fresh viewpoint that has helped him make a success of his efforts, be they in theatre or in ads.



Asked about the choice of play, Alyque says he likes characters who change the times they live in — Evita, Mirabai, Gandhi, Jesus (*Christ Superstar*) Tughlak

Nothing could exemplify this approach more than his famous Liril soap ad. "If everyone shows a woman having a bath in the bathroom, I show a woman having a bath in a waterfall. And it is just not that, it's a viewpoint — of freedom and freshness for a woman who can be herself in the moments she is alone."

Padamsee says he believes in replacement therapy and a positive attitude. "My approach is not 'Don't do this,' but 'Why you should do this.' Take the government's family planning slogan '*Ek Ya Do Bus*.' I think it's rather negative. Instead, I devised a simpler message 25 years ago where I showed two tomatoes in a bottle. The moment the third was pushed in, all of them got squashed."

Similarly he points out, instead of saying don't drink and drive, why not say, "Your child uses the roads and so do you. Next time, smell you breath before you drive, may be there is someone else's child on the road."

Little wonder then that this man, who has served Lintas for a marathon 30 years, 14 of them as its Chief Executive, has had a career strewn with awards and achievements. Having learnt the ropes of advertising from British guru J. Walter Thomspon, Padamsee moved on to Lintas — to be their film executive, copy chief, creative controller and finally chief executive. As he says, "Lintas was a learning experience for me."

With each successful campaign, his image in the ad world grew and so did Lintas' fortunes. Among these were the creation of Hindustan Lever's top-selling brands such as Rin and Liril. There were also campaigns for Dalda, Wheel, Surf and Fair and Lovely, each looking into the consumer's psyche — an area that had long been neglected.

Public service advertisements are also close to Padamsee's heart. These have included short films for the anti-dowry and anti-cancer campaign, and on such themes as national integration and family planning.

Padamsee, who says he likes to think of himself as "an agent of provocative ideas," modestly admits that it's the synergy between the two overlapping careers — advertising and theatre— that has moulded him into a master-communicator. Much of it is in his book called *A Double Life* in which he talks about his theatre and advertising careers, which is being published by Penguin.

Besides directing impressive star casts for his plays, Padamsee is also a bit of an actor. The high point of his career as a actor, of course, came with his role of Jinnah in Richard Attenborough's award winning film *Gandhi*, which was much appreciated.

A much married man, with four children, Padamsee has an interesting perspective to offer on his personal life. "There is a basic restlessness that has made me look for something more and something new and I guess that has also reflected in my personal life and marriages. So there have been changes there too. But I must say I have very good relations with all the women in my life — Pearl Padamsee, Dolly Thakore, and my wife for today and I hope for ever, Sharon Prabhakar." But he laments that he has been a poor father and because of his hectic work schedule has been unable to devote much time to his children — a daughter and a step-son with Pearl Padamsee, a son from Dolly Thakore and a daughter from Sharon. "I have made a New Year resolution this year, that I am going to try and become a good father and spend more time with my children."

Then there's the obvious question: why is he called God by those close to him (though others refer to him as a legend in his own mind)? Explains Padamsee, "I have nurtured a lot of talent — Kabir Bedi, Shyam Benegal, Dalip Tahil and, of course, Sharon, and they had chosen to call me Godfather and then shortened it to God. But let me tell you personally I hate the title and would rather be called the Devil's advocate."

And why is that? "Because I always offer the opposite point of view. If everyone says condoms are for protection, I say they are for making love!" ■

My Personal Style

That's the dictum that dictates Khushwant Singh's entertaining



Early to Bed



SCOTCH ONLY:

I thoroughly enjoy my whisky over which I have made so much of a noise that people make it a point to serve me only scotch ...When I am at it, I am fussy about my cutglass crockery. Once, a Sardar in Long Island, New York, threw a party in my honour but served scotch in paper glasses. I refused to have mine till they got the right glasses from home.

We have cut down on entertainment at home because people are not punctual. I am fussy about timings—be it eating my dinner at seven in the evening or getting back home by 8:30-9 pm. People don't take kindly to the conditions I lay down. In that sense, our socialising has become restricted.I don't eat out unless I have been invited. Firstly, it is too expensive and secondly, with the years catching on, I cannot drive. We invite people once a week though it is now mostly for drinks.

We have a light breakfast of toast and a mug of tea. Our lunches are simple, consisting of a *daal* or soup and some *dahi*. We take gourmet food for dinner. The preference is always for European cuisine since I find Indian food indigestible. We have a Garhwali cook who follows my wife's instructions as she reads out the French or Italian recipes from books. We tend to have a lot of Italian Lasagna and pasta—the parmesan cheese and olive oil comes from my frequent trips to Italy; some of my acquaintances get us sauerkraut from Germany and I do manage to procure French and English mustard.

WIth the exception of *idlis*, my cook is pretty good even with South Indian food. When the Hyatt had once invited me to the opening of a fancy Italian restaurant, I had told them my cook can do better. There are exceptions, though. Like when I was twice invited by a friend at the Oberoi Grand in Calcutta. One can get good food at the Zodiac in Bombay Taj and the only eatery that qualifies in Delhi is the Dum Pukht at the Maurya Sheraton. But I find their food a little heavy when I am working.

I thoroughly enjoy my whisky over which I have made so much of a noise that people make it a point to serve me only scotch. I don't indulge in the institution of friendship—it is time wasting. The pattern of guests keep varying; I entertain more frequently to return hospitality. When I am at it, I am fussy about my cutglass crockery. Once, a Sardar in Long Island, New York, threw a party in my honour but served scotch in paper glasses. I refused to have mine till they got the right glasses from home.

My cook is not very good at making desserts for which we rely on ice creams from Khan Market or have the regular *gulab jamuns* with ice creams. Dinner is served with a bottle of Indian wine. I always serve Black Label or Chivas Regal to my guests which is picked up from the duty-free shop at Delhi airport.

My style of entertaining has to be European gourmet. It is modest but well cooked unlike those Punjabi weddings where two dozen dishes are laid out, mostly inedible, because they don't have the confidence to carry off a one-dish meal.

As told to Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya



Hair Problems !



- Dandruff
- Hair Falling
- Premature Hair Greying
- Alopecia areata

SOLUTION

First time in the World

Dr. Sarkar's

Result Oriented Invention

ArnikaPlus C TRIOFER

TRIPLE ACTION HAIR VITALIZER

ArnikaPlus

Oil Free Homoeo Hair Vitalizer to stimulate Hair Roots

TRIOFER Tablet

Oral Homoeo Hair Tonic. Cures Liver & Stomach Troubles to eradicate the root cause of hair problems



ArnikaPlus C TRIOFER

- Stops excessive hair loss
- Helps to grow new hair
- Removes dandruff from the scalp
- Resists premature hair thinning/greying

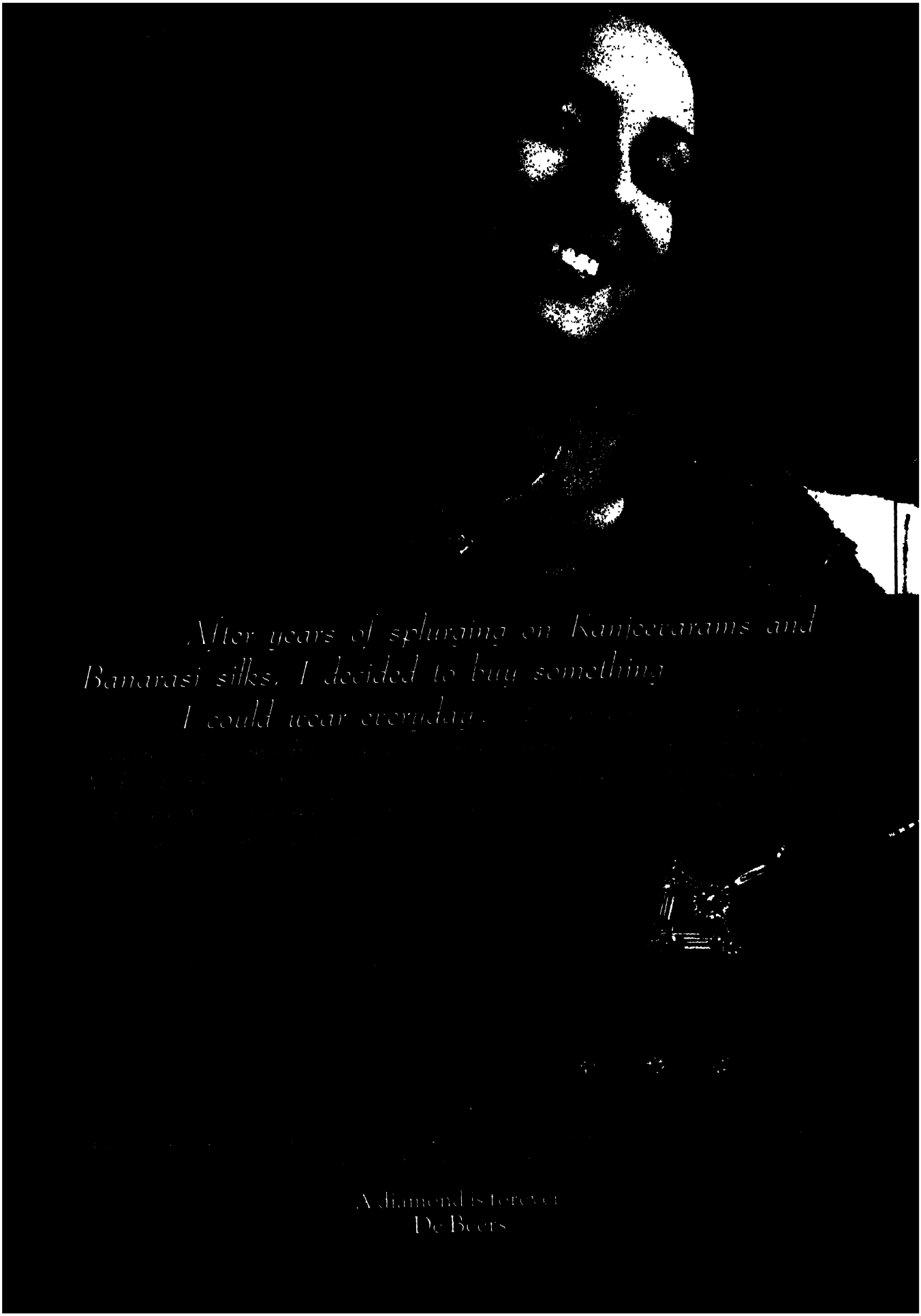
The tested & trusted Homoeo medicine to treat Hair problems. Not a cosmetic product.

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Dr. Sarkar Group
Serving for a better future

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After years of splurging on Kanjeevarams and
Banarasi silks, I decided to buy something
I could wear everyday.
A diamond is forever
De Beers

POST MORTEM

Saviour Sonia

Thank you for the wonderful cover story on women who have made a difference to the electoral process ('Election Eves', February 22). Sonia Gandhi's foray into politics stems more out of her need to keep the Nehru-Gandhi family name 'alive' rather than restore power to the Congress bastion. She has boosted the Congress morale. Any misgivings raised by the BJP have been thwarted by Sonia as she has been determined to pursue the dreams of her slain husband, Rajiv Gandhi.

Rajesh Dutta, Purulia



Of all the women who have entered politics, can one be described as a woman of substance and true integrity? All of them are opportunists, cashing in on their images for their own selfish gains. No one things for the nation.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Will Priyanka Gandhi emerge as the next Mrs Indira Gandhi? One has only to look at her to realise how much she reminds us of the late Mrs Gandhi. Her boundless energy, her rapport with the crowds, the care she takes to dress in a sari typical of the region, her choice of life-partner. Even the cover photo bore a striking resemblance to her illustrious grandmother.

T.R. Anand, Calcutta

Mamata Banerjee, in spite of her unfortunate expulsion from the Congress party, will remain a crowd puller since she is sincere and committed to her ideals. Mayawati, though bereft of any ideological commitments, will remain active in the politics of Uttar Pradesh because of her bold populist overtures.

M.S. Quraishy, Calcutta

Thank you for the new-look *Magazine* of February 22. I was so thrilled to see the comic strips in colour! I would really appreciate it if you could keep it up.

Shabeeh Fatima, Bhagalpur

The first page of the February 22 issue that I turned to was Blondie and it was a pleasure seeing my favourite comics page in colour. I hope you continue to go all colour.

Kallol Chatterjee, Calcutta

Quiet Flows the Ganga

The photograph of corpses floating down the Ganges will shock any Hindu ('Dead Man's River', February 15) since every Hindu's last wish is to have a few drops of its water before departing from this world.

Manoranjan Das, Jamshedpur

Thanks to toxic industrial effluents discharged into the Ganges, the main lifeline of our country, our environment and ecology are under threat. It is time the Ganga Action Plan fund was fully utilised. We cannot afford to lose our priceless natural resources because of callousness. Everyone must get togther to save the Ganges.

Nirmalendu Chakraborty, Cooch Behar

The Telegraph

6 APRIL 1998



PAGE 4

Poet Patriarch

In his youth Athar Husein Naswi was fired by the freedom struggle and finally joined the communist movement in the country. There was another passion burning within him : poetry. Which in later years helped to establish him as a noted writer, poet and lyricist. Meet Kaifi Azmi.

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Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 26

It's all in the Jeans

For generations, it's been the most sought-after outfit.

PAGE 28

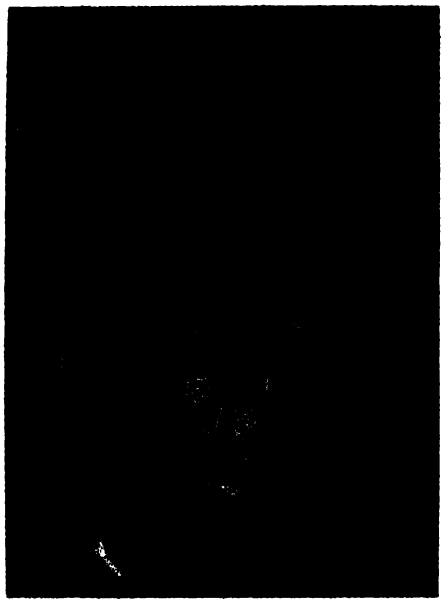
Rooted in Art

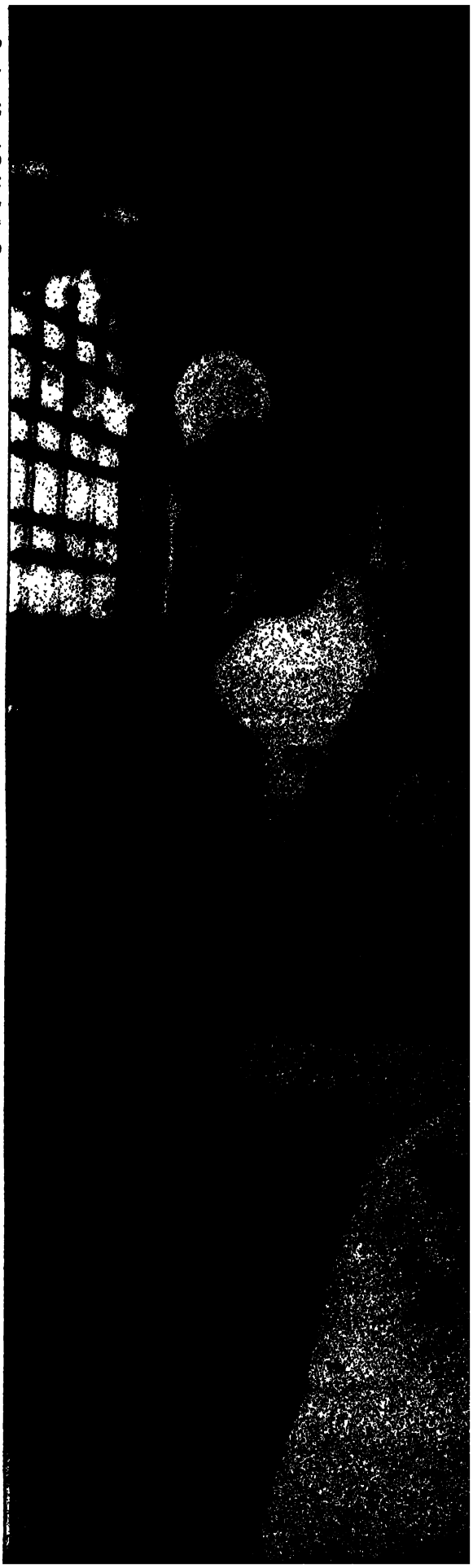
Profiling India's best-known art historian, Sarayu Doshi.

PAGE 30

First Person

Jatin Kochhar likes collecting coffee mugs wherever he goes.





Courtesy : Vinayak Prabhu/Indian Express

Jis tarah hans raha hoon main pi pi ke ashq-e-gham/ Aise koi hanse to kaleja nikal pade

COVER STORY

POET PATRIARCH

The flesh may be weak, but the spirit is still as vibrant as ever. **Ghazala Wahab** profiles Kaifi Azmi

The year was 1942. The country was responding with unprecedented fervour to Gandhiji's cry of Quit India. Young Athar Husein Naswi, son of a zamindar of Mijwan, a small village in the Azamgarh district, was disgusted with the unequal distribution of wealth in his country. He was also appalled at the way the powerful used religion to suppress the weak.

When he couldn't bear it any longer he mustered courage and told his brother that he was extricating himself from the family lega-



cy of zamindari and religious teachings to join the freedom struggle. "My brother laughed," remembers Kaifi, who changed his name from Athar, with amusement. "I was always considered a mild-natured, unassuming sort of a boy with no sign of rebellion in me."

But the mild-mannered exterior was deceptive. Kaifi — who had by then adopted Azmi (from Azamgarh) as his pen name — had a passionate flame burning inside him which was tempered only by wit and determination. But despite their disappointment, his family did not stop him. Fighting for freedom was, after all, a matter of pride even if it threatened the zamindari. In any case, the family had long since decided to move to Lucknow. "My father had fallen in love with the idea that a city was the place for education and upbringing of children," says Kaifi.

What they had not bargained for was that when Kaifi spoke of his love for freedom, he meant freedom not only from foreign yoke but also from suppression of all hues. And that in an effort to achieve this he would join the communist movement.



In his youth : Fighting for freedom

That was 56 years ago. Yet the fire that shaped Kaifi's youth has not lost its force. Age mellows most people, but in Kaifi Azmi's case it has increased his zealousness. Despite failing health, which has hampered his movements, Kaifi is never too ill or too busy to attend *mushairas* (poetry recitation sessions), or to meet enthusiastic admirers.

Because of his latest stroke, Kaifi Azmi cannot walk without the help of a stick. Even with that his movements are painfully slow, and for a person who is meeting him for the first time, slightly uncomfortable. But he shuns support, not offensively, but in a comfortable tone which doesn't embarrass the host. His wife, Shaukat, unlike most spouses, doesn't fuss over him. Instead, she lets him be, even if it takes him 15 minutes to climb four steps!

These days, ensconced in his small house, Janki Kutir, a green haven in the concrete jungles of Mumbai, Kaifi is working on a script for Shyam Benegal. Films have become a part of this poet's life: his wife is a noted actress, his daughter Shabana is one of the finest actresses of Hindi cinema and his son Baba is a successful cinematographer. But despite these connections with the movies, poetry remains his passion.

Kaifi Azmi's initiation into poetry took place in his feudal household, where his father and brothers were deeply interested in the subject. Like all budding poets, Kaifi's early forays began with romance. He wrote his first ghazal at the age of 11 and by the time he was 18 he was quite well-known for his poems. One couplet from his earlier days became synonymous with him and in *mushairas* his name was often announced with this couplet,

Jis tarah hans raha hoon main pi pi ke ashq-e-gham/ Aise koi hanse to kaleja nikal pade (The way I am laughing despite my sufferings/ If somebody else does it, he would die).

But Kaifi's romance with romantic poetry did not last long. Poetry, according to him, has to be reflective of

I was always considered a mild-natured, unassuming sort

Kaifi Azmi with his actress wife, Shaukat : Similar interests



Courtesy : Vinayak Prabhu/Indian Express



Courtesy : Lal Nehru / Sikand

gion, the way it prevented people from questioning, from wondering why, from thinking as individuals.

Many years later, in the 70s, when he survived a stroke which left him crippled, he wrote *Zindagi*. In that *nazm* he wrote about the supremacy of science over religion. Scared of death, the man turns to various religions, worships different deities but none could save him from death. In the end, it is (medical) science which defeats and throws death out of his hospital room's window.

But that was many years after Kaifi Azmi arrived in Mumbai on the instructions of the Communist Party of India (CPI), of which he was a card-carrying member. What was supposed to be an official assignment for some time kept getting extended, and Mumbai became home for many years till the soil of his native Mijwan beckoned Kaifi again.

While Mijwan provided him with his roots, Mumbai gave him the space, despite the cramped room of the commune where he lived, to let his creativity flower. Poetry got divided into two. One for the body, one for the soul. Film lyrics were his bread and butter, poetic sessions and books were his sustenance.



of a boy with no sign of rebellion in me'

changing times. It cannot exist in a vacuum where nothing but the poet's imagination lives, but must hold a mirror up to society.

So, it wasn't surprising that Azmi's social concerns and his anger — tempered by good language and a sense of humour — started shaping his verses. The freedom struggle, class struggle, gender struggle, everything started finding its way into his words. At a time when poets were writing that it was time for struggle not romance, Kaifi was writing that both have to co-exist.

Says Kaifi, in his recently released audio book, "People all around were saying that we have so many battles to fight on so many different fronts, we don't have time for love now, so we'll come back for that later. But I said that you have to take the beloved with you, she has to struggle every step as you do."

Progressive was perhaps a mild word to describe this man, who was breaking all the rules. He didn't care if people thought his poetry was mere sloganeering, devoid of emotions. What they didn't understand was that emotions were poured into everything he wrote, because he did not write for writing's sake, he wrote about what he believed in.

Religion was another subject which was always close to his heart and took shape in many poems, culminating in a book, *Awara Sajde*. One *nazm* from that book, *Pir-e-Tasma Pa*, was banned because it was perceived to be very provocative and anti-religion. In that particular poem Kaifi calls religious stories *jahalat ki baatein* (illiterate talk). He mocks the stories related to faith and compares them unfavourably with science and scientific advancement. For a poet, his faith in science is amazing. Later, he won the Sahitya Academy Award for that book.

Perhaps it was the close association with religion in his formative years that exposed the chinks in faith's armour. Later, as he was exposed to the communist dictum, his dissociation with religion became deeper. He opposed the all-pervasiveness of religion.

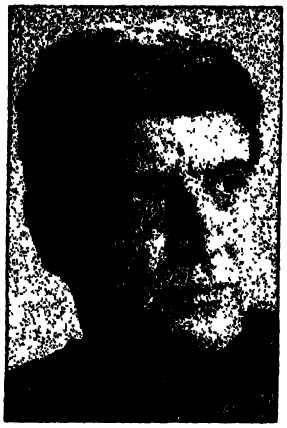
With film lyrics came the question which every poet must have faced at some stage of their film career. What should come first, the words or the tune? Says Kaifi, "Writing film songs is like searching for a corpse to fit in the already dug grave. Sometimes the head pops out, sometimes the feet."

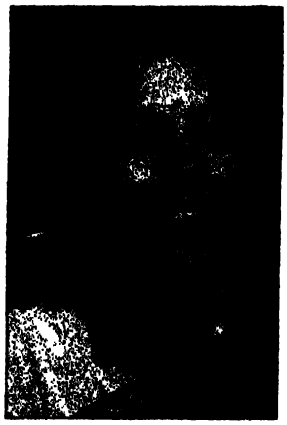
Perhaps this was the reason why despite writing memorable songs like, *Waqt ne kiya kya haseen sitam, Matlab ki hai duniya saari bichchde sabhi bari bari, Chalte chalte yunhi koi mil gaya tha, Duniya kare sawaal toh hum kya jawab de, Tum itna jo muskura rahe ho*, Azmi wasn't as prolific as some other song writers. Besides, writing songs did not give him the space he craved for. Everything had to fit in the para-



Courtesy: Neeraj Priyadarshi / Indian Express

'I will leave my children with no religion, but my ideolog





Javed Akhtar : Poetry is his passion, too, and Shabana who is married to Javed

metres set by others. Yet despite the limitations, sometimes lines would just pop into his head.

But his words weren't just restricted to songs. Kaifi also wrote the story for the film, *Garam Hawa*. "M.S. Sathyu had written a story. He brought it to me and asked me to improve upon it," says Kaifi Azmi. "I told him that I can't improve upon it, I can write another story."

The film chronicled the predicament of a Muslim family in Agra during Partition, capturing the nuances of a Muslim household torn between nationalism and self-preservation. It also reflected the understanding Kaifi has of human emotions: their weaknesses and strengths. It was this sensitivity which shaped his character in Saeed Mirza's *Naseem*. Though Kaifi had been offered film roles many times before, even one opposite Meena Kumari, he had refused them all. "I am a poet not an actor," he maintained.

But *Naseem* was different. The subject was one close to his heart: communalism and the way it changed equations between Hindus and Muslims. The character was more or less created for him: a sensitive teacher who is charged with nationalism. Handicapped by his responsibilities he devises his own ways of protest. The film climaxes with the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya and the death of Abbajan, the character played by Kaifi Azmi.

The Ayodhya episode was one which left a deep imprint on Kaifi. The demolition of the mosque was, for him, the fruition of the seeds of hate sowed during the last decade of the freedom struggle. Moved by the communal bloodbath which preceded and succeeded the demolition, Kaifi wrote *Doosra Banwas*. The theme of the poem was that the mindless killing of innocents has banished Lord Ram forever from the hearts of the people. Ram stood for peace and here people had used his name to kill.

Anguished, Lord Ram says in that poem: *Rajdhani ki hawa aayee nahin raas mujhe/ Chheh December ko mila doosra banwas mujhe.* (The air of the capital does not suit me/ On sixth December I was exiled again).

Azmi's long journey through life, which saw the crumbling of many dreams, was made more joyful



and secularism, which has been my faith'

because he shared it with a companion who shared not only similar interests but also added spice to life with her vivacity whenever the going got tough.

Kaifi met Shaukat during a *mushaira* in Hyderabad. It was his rebellious streak which endeared him to her. Unmindful of the Nizam of Hyderabad, he recited a poem, *Taj*, against autocracy. But their romance took a while to culminate in marriage.

Shaukat's parents were not sure if their daughter, brought up in luxury, would be able to live with a communist poet in a commune. They tried to dissuade her, but she was adamant. Finally they got married in 1947 a few months before Independence.

According to Kaifi, the secret behind the success of their marriage was that they treated each other more like comrades. They shared everything, from tangibles to intangibles. Contrary to her parents' misgivings, Shaukat not only adjusted to the commune, she actually adopted it as a way of life. Even when they moved out to their own place, the sense of an open house remained. Today, Kaifi Azmi has finally reached full circle. The soil of Mijwan called him and he listened, returning to it a few years back. Now, barring the winter months which he spends in Mumbai, Kaifi lives in Mijwan. The village, which did not have a road, now has one named after him. There is a school, a post office and other amenities of a modern township.

All this has been made possible because of the relentless efforts of a man who cannot walk without support. Yet, he seeks no help, managing everything on his own. Even climbing the grimy stairs of government offices in Lucknow to get recognition for Urdu or to get something sanctioned for his village. Mijwan, today, is fulfillment of his dreams.

Born in the second decade of this century, Kaifi Azmi has lived like a true communist. Despite the failure of the experiment in Russia and elsewhere, his faith is unwavering and that will be his legacy for his two children. "I will leave them with no religion," says Kaifi. "I will leave them with my ideology and secularism, which has been my faith throughout." ■

P.V. Narasimha Rao confers the Deshkottama award on Kaifi Azmi



INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The partnership and bonding trends of the last 15 days will be even stronger and more effective, be it in personal or professional fields The strong influence of Mars also favours marriage, ceremony, ties, publicity, conferences and meets Try to exercise tact and caution in your dealings with others

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Last week s shifting of gears mentally and physically con tinue unabated this week as well Chop and change will be the trend Uranus helps you in matters connected with loans and finances Expenses will also mount It would be advisable to get ready to travel and to meet people

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



It is the ideal time to start working with a vengeance because Mars connects superbly with Neptune Mars is energy and Neptune signifies imagination and you should, thus succeed in carrying out your plans Children and education are once again important items in your agenda for this week as well

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Though a better week than last, you may have to contend with some opposition However, you will find more motivation to meet life's challenges head-on and some of your wishes might be fulfilled On the work front you will savour success provided,of course, you don t let lethargy overcome you

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Communication, contacts and journey are the key words for you Inspiration and exultation may seize you As these are happily infectious expect excellent co-operation from those around you This is a fine week for artists and scholars as new projects fall into your lap This is not a favourable week for love

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Finances and family are the duo ruling your life It would be a good policy to be tolerant and caring instead of carping or fault finding Complications and misunderstandings can be solved atl least partially You will be wining and dining in style Expenses will mount but it will be for a worthy cause

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Keep an open house for friends, relatives and well-wishers as this will give you a lot of satisfaction You may strike a business deal From March 6, Venus enters your sign, according to Western astrology, and you could thus expect pleasing events and happenings by the end of this week

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Time to seriously commit yourself to work or marriage, as the case may be It is also the right time to travel and generally make your presence felt Monetarily, you are definitely moving into a better phase This will continue right till November and so you could make your plans accordingly You can cultivate new hobbies

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Expenses and danger of accidents are forecasted for Sagittarians You should take every precaution to avoid the same Gigantic projects religious rites, fanfare and publicity are strongly indicated You will notch up success in whatever profession you may be in You cannot however, afford to relax

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Once again, it is going to be a busy week for you because everybody wants a part of you You will be in a position and mood for fun and games Sweethearts and friends will unconditionally lend a helping hand.Do mix pleasure and business in the right measure, dear Capricornians!

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



This week will be a mix-n-match of happy events Jobs assignments, contracts and commitments are destined for Aquarians You have been neglecting your health for quite some time and have got away with it You are advised to go in for a health check-up right away or it might be too late!

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



This week could well be a happy one for Pisceans with regards to money related matters The Sun is in superb placing with Uranus, giving you some freedom of action Unlike the past few months, you suddenly find yourself with a lot of spare time Use it fruitfully Children will be a source of joy

BIRTHDAYS

April 5: Moon trine Pluto. Ganesha says this placing helps government officials, artists and artisans, scientists and researchers. Spiritual encounters are predicted.
April 6: Sun conjunction Mercury: You will give and get love in ample measure. A year to go places and climb the social ladder Your popularity will soar.
April 7: Moon trine Mars: This placing gives you a lot of energy and enthusiasm to get things done Those in defence, engineering, designing and mechanics get extra mileage.
April 8: Moon square Pluto: It would be best to be practical and level-headed. Student will have to work extra hard if

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Padmini Kolhapure with husband Pradeep (Tutu) Sharma

LIMELIGHT

We're going to make you a star!

Well, at least, Padmini Kolhapure will certainly try her hardest with her new acting school in Delhi. **Samita Bhatia** reports

Do you crave to play hero or villain? Or do you dream of running around trees playing heroine, vamp, character artist, or simply gyrating *philmi istyle*? Would you like to explore your histrionic abilities, all the way from farce to satire? Forget the technicalities that come part and parcel with film-making and go for the reel hot-stuff.

And now you could learn it the Padmini Kolhapure way. If Delhi's Hauz Khas Village has over the years metamorphosed into a melting-pot of haute couture and haute cuisine it promises to get glitzier.

The Padmini Kolhapure School of Acting, Modelling & Grooming, located at a prime spot in the Village, got off to a star-studded start, with an equally starry expert panel. Kolhapure's producer husband Pradeep (Tutu) Sharma, brother-in-law Shakti Kapoor, directors Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Ramesh Sippy, Umesh Mehra and Sanjay Leela Bansali, make-up stylist Micky Contractor and glamour photographer Gautam Rajadhyaksha are gearing up to make heroes of zeros. The school promises to help out aspiring actors and actresses with every nuance of acting—from their diction to body language.

The actress, whose 15-year career saw her go through the motions as child artiste and then as heroine, has made Delhi her third halt. After opening similar schools for acting in London and Kathmandu, she opted for Delhi rather than the obvious choice: Mumbai.

Explains the actress to whom pathos, romance, effervescence and comedy came easily, "It's primarily



With co-star Mithun Chakrabarty in the film *Sagar Sangam*

because I have been able to find dedicated people to run the schools for me at these locations. The managers of the three schools, like Richa Wahi in Delhi, are all motivated people who want to do something for aspiring actors and actresses." Besides, Delhi is the first place that directors and producers from Mumbai scour for fresh talent after they've scanned Bollywood.

The school in Kathmandu may be a franchise, but Kolhapure hastens to dispel any doubts that it suffers a lack of personal attention. She says, "I go to Kathmandu often to keep a check on the students' progress and to watch them perform. I don't conduct the classes myself — though at a push I have done that on occasions — I tell them where they are going wrong. My role is not restricted to anything specific." She juggles her time well, flitting between London — the school targets the Asian community there — Kathmandu, and now Delhi.

Kolhapure, who in her heyday worked with industry stalwarts like Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand, Nasir Hussain and Subash Ghai, "wants, through the school, to open the doors of the future, enriching the talent of tomorrow with my experience."

She is aware of the travails of aspiring actors and actresses who arrive in Mumbai with very little to hold on



Padmini

Enter The Padmini Kolhapure School of Acting. The Rs 29,000, three-month acting course, if nothing else, will help the students decide whether they are cut out for films

to in the film industry, giving up their jobs and leaving behind their families. She says, "They come without an idea of what to expect and without any experience in acting. They have no friends or contacts in the industry, but scour around for 'the' big break that never comes."

They struggle in this new environment and when they eventually fail to make a mark, they are disappointed and return with bitter memories of having being exploited.

Enter The Padmini Kolhapure School of Acting. The Rs 29,000, three-month acting course, if nothing else, will help them decide whether they are cut out for films. She says, "At the end of their basic training they can gauge for themselves where they stand. Isn't that better than rushing off to Mumbai, spending a small fortune and discovering the truth the hard way?"

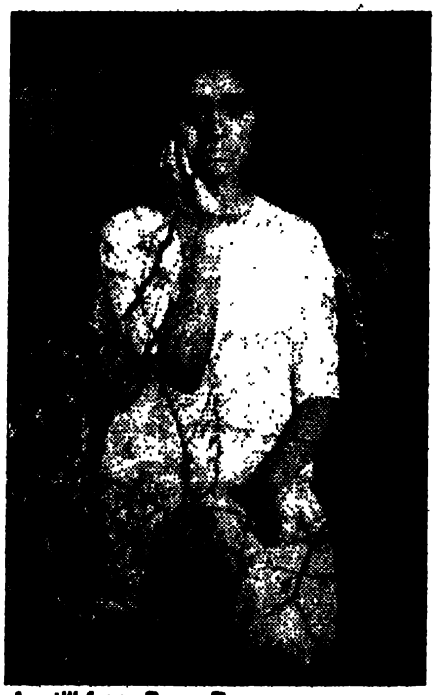
Obviously people don't want to find out the hard way as the 25 seats available per batch filled up within the first week of inviting applications.

Notwithstanding the steep fees? Says Padmini defensively, "The course

is career-oriented and if people want to be coached to enter a line which will eventually pay much more than they've invested, I think it's worth it."

Undaunted by the fact that most modelling and grooming schools, like Barbizon, shut shop within months of opening up, Kolhapure's school in Delhi offers courses in both.

For an actress who quit films some 11 years ago, are her schools of acting an indication of the fact that she misses the camera lights? Not quite, as the last decade has been spent devoting herself full-time to her family. She says, "But now that my son Priyank has grown up and is all of nine I felt myself craving for creative satisfaction — apart from acting."



A still from *Prem Rog*

She doesn't intend to make a comeback just yet, quite content to bask in the distant memory of her performance in *Prem Rog*. "That was my favourite film and was a role that an actress dreams of playing some day. What I liked best about the role was the fact that there were so many shades to the character. Working under the RK banner I had everything going right for me."

If her repertoire included a host of women-oriented films like *Woh Saat Din* and *Insaaf Ka Tarazu* it was probably because she could "portray those kind of roles convincingly," she says with a laugh.

For her own students she has charted out an agenda that spans a gamut of emotions that they must learn to emote on screen. Her schools ignore the technical aspects of film-making and students can hope to learn all the nuances of 'acting'. Obviously, the current channel boom provides the impetus to rope in fresh talent.

She explains, "Given the dearth of good actors and actresses, there is a pressing need for training schools. In my time there weren't so many channels or serials being made. Thus, there were a great number of actors and actresses who found themselves out of work. Today everyone is very busy."

She argues that shootings are often cancelled as character artistes are busy while the paucity of talent compels producers and directors to make their selection from the mediocre talent available. The school's agenda is to churn out trained people who are to be groomed and ready to face the camera.

The advantages in enrolling in a school run by a former actress are obvious. Her school, she says emphatically, is an excellent gateway for students as "her access to the industry makes it easy for her to promote" them all the time.

But of the hundred students who have passed out of her school in London none appear to have made it in the movies or on the small screen in India. She confirms that none have got placements in Mumbai but before you can raise an eyebrow she clarifies, "Some are professionals settled in London, others are students and some too young to live alone in another country. Besides unless they have firm or concrete commitments it is not feasible for them to quit London and come to Mumbai."

She adds as an afterthought, "Some directors and producers have auditioned my students but they probably didn't fit the bill. Sometimes the script requires a certain kind of actor or actress and somehow the students weren't what they were looking for..." she trails away.

Since the students are hand-picked by Kohlapuri herself, what does she look out for? No specific qualifications really, education or drop-dead looks. But she hastens to add, "They must be presentable, have a flair for acting and," — her bejewelled fingers dance in the air and she gesture vaguely, — "have that basic spark." Sex appeal sells but how long does that last, she asks? And yes, you can get by with "an average face" provided your talent surpasses your looks. After all, Padmini is living proof of that.

She doesn't intend to make a comeback just yet, quite content to bask in the distant memory of her performance in *Prem Rog*. 'That was my favourite film and was a role that an actress dreams of playing some day'



The school doesn't adhere to a strict age restriction either. While the youngest student can be 14 years old there is no cut off age ("there will always be roles of fathers and grandfathers..."). She's partial to 14-year-olds as that was the age when she turned to films.

Heavens help the children of ambitious parents, you think aloud. She disagrees, "I don't feel that a 14-year-old is too young to enter films. There was a time when parents, lured by money and instant stardom, pushed their children into films. But today children are very aware, want to do their own thing and parents are allowing them to do so."

So what makes the Padmini Kolhapure School's act so different from that of other schools in the fray? She laughs, and then adds somewhat immodestly, "All I can say is that they don't have me!" ■

FOCUS

The Farmer as Consumer

What products is he looking for, and how can he best be targeted? **Ghazala Wahab** finds out

For marketing whizkids now, the farmer is the king. The urban markets are showing signs of overkill. As futuristic graphs of growth show frightening stagnation of the urban market, the rural market reflects signs of growth of unimaginable proportion.

Consequently, corporate houses are now focussing on Indian villages as potential markets for all kinds of consumer durables. "It is time to treat rural people, particularly the farmer, as customers," says David B. Rich, country director of International Development Enterprises, a non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to developing and marketing low-cost, good quality technologies that even the poorest of the poor can afford.

To highlight the potential and requirements of the rural market, IDE organised a two-day roundtable on rural marketing in New Delhi recently. The idea was to get leading corporate houses to look at small and marginal farmers as customers and to explore how to use marketing as a tool for the development of the hitherto undeveloped area of the country.

With few exceptions,modern technology is something most Indian villagers have not even dreamt of. Rakesh Mohan, director general, National Council of Applied Economic Research, pointed out during his presentation,that one cannot expect changes when even the the most basic infrastructure does not exist."How can you expect a person who has spent five years training as a doctor or a teacher to go and live in a place which doesn't even have a road?" he asked.

It was issues like these that the conference wanted to address. Because of the government policy of subsidies on agricultural products like diesel pumps, tractors etc, the lot of the Indian farmer has improved, but only financially. Socially, they remain on the periphery of society, treated as poor recipients of charity with no purchasing or bargaining power. As a result, corporate houses never really thought of them as consumers and never aimed their products at them, except for the ones which were meant only for farmers. Even then, for those products the customer was the government and not the farmer. As the government insisted on subsidies, the cost was slashed which in turn compromised the quality. As a result, farmers got a substandard product at low cost whose efficiency level deteriorated with each use.

Talking of the predicament of the Indian farmers, Rich said, "In the West, the farmer has plenty of choice vis a vis agricultural products as a lot of manufacturers target him as a customer. This makes the prices and the quality competitive, unlike India, where a farmer has to actually go hunting for a product that suits his requirements."

Earlier, the IDE used to compete with the government for products like pumps, irrigation sets, etc., but it lost out very badly in the process. "The Indian farmer is not used to buying from the open market. Despite better quality products they only buy from the government at subsidised rates, so gradually we had to change policy," said Rich. "Now we are working with the government and the results are fairly good. Though the subsidies continue, we monitor the quality, so that the farmer gets a good return on his investment."

One of its most successful products is Krishak Bandhu Pedal Pump. Using the simple principle of a hand pump, it consists of two barrels, plungers and

Indian villages: Potential markets for corporate houses and (inset) a weekly *haat*



pedals instead of a handle bar. The user has to stand on it, balancing his/her weight over the pedals to draw out water. The pumps are so easy to use that even children and old people can use them. The pumps have become quite popular in Orissa, East Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. Over 1.2 million pumps have been sold so far in South Asia. The pump costs something between Rs 300 to Rs 1,000. Another technology that IDE has been promoting is the drip irrigation system which was invented about two decades back in Israel. It harnesses irrigational water and makes sure that not a drop is wasted either through evaporation or by flowing in areas it is not required.

But despite this the main problem of providing the rural population with quality products at low costs is communication. Not enough research has been done among rural people to understand their psyche. Over the last few years, owing to good monsoons and state efforts, the Indian farmers' purchasing power has increased. Also, television has brought them closer to the urban world thereby whetting their appetite for consumer durables like shampoos, cosmetic soaps, tea, toothpastes and so on.

But Indian corporate houses have not been able to cash on this boom to a large extent as rural purchasing realities continue to baffle them. This was evident at the conference also. Roda Mehta, managing consultant, Ogilvy & Mather and Karthik Kumar, senior executive vice-president, Rediffusion-Dentsu, presented absolutely contradictory papers on rural promotion and communication.

Mehta said promoting a product in the rural areas requires local understanding, use of local dialects, folklore, etc., as urban perceptions are not appropriate. Her conclusion was based on extensive research done in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar before relaunching Taaza tea and later Lifebuoy soap in the rural areas.

Immediately after her, Kumar presented his paper also based on research and the experience of his agency vis a vis their client Eveready. He said a simple message is important, and a message is independent of location. Consumer behaviour and attitude to brands are universal. According to him, his experience has shown that rural consumers do respond to sophisticated, urbanised advertisements as they are mainly aspirational in nature. Important things, according to him, were extensive use of point of purchase principle, constant change of designs, and multiplicity of items.

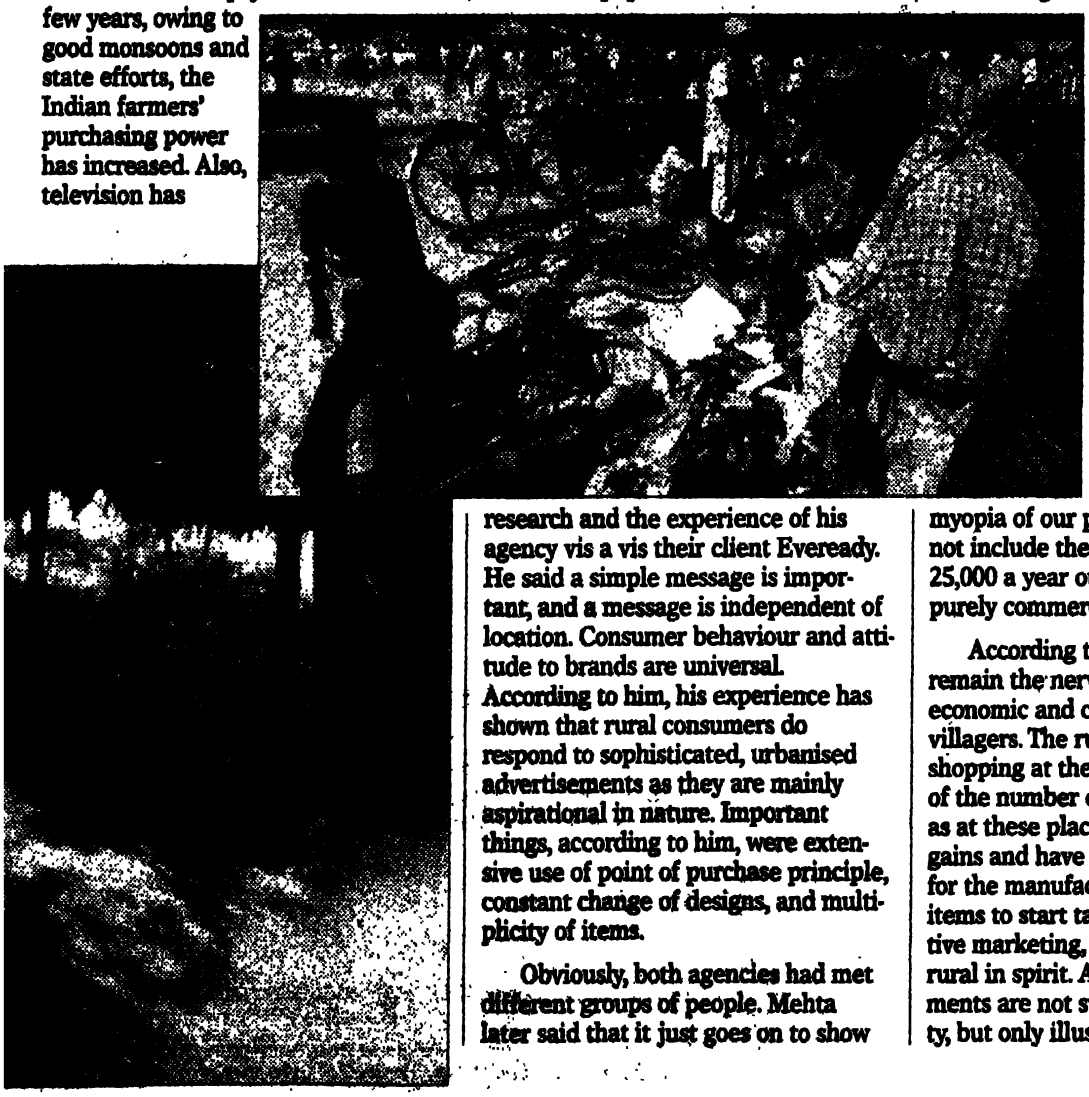
Obviously, both agencies had met different groups of people. Mehta later said that it just goes on to show that advertisers and marketing people still have a long way to go as far as rural marketing is concerned because no one can say for sure how rural people will react to certain products. During her presentation she had given an example of this. When they were launching Taaza tea they used the television visual of a Bharatnatyam dancer in their wall paintings in the villages.

"But," says Mehta, "people misunderstood it. They took the girl as a *naanchnewali* (a nautch girl) and the whole campaign fell flat. Instead of recognising the product for its refreshing qualities, they disapproved of the figure of the girl. So we had to change the advertisement."

Yet, despite this ambiguity one thing was certain: no amount of sophistication can beat the traditional ways of buying and selling in the rural areas. For instance, the weekly *haats* and *melas*.

Talking of that, Pradeep Kashyap, president, Marketing and Research Team (MART), said, "The urban planners decided that rural *melas* were of little consequence and stopped its census in 1961." Considering that almost 47,000 *haats* take place in a year in India, and each one get about 4,580 visitors per *haat* day and have the sale of around Rs 2,23,000 each, one can only marvel at the myopia of our planners. And this does not include the *melas* which number at 25,000 a year out of which 5000 are purely commercial.

According to Kashyap, *haats* remain the nerve centre of the social, economic and cultural life of Indian villagers. The rural people do all their shopping at these *melas*, irrespective of the number of shops in their village, as at these places they get good bargains and have better choices too. It is for the manufacturers of consumer items to start tapping these with effective marketing, which need not be rural in spirit. After all, advertisements are not supposed to show reality, but only illusions of reality. ■



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)



Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
IC-741	1230	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1120	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1230	1	IC-742	1450	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
IC 771	0550	daily	IC-772	1135	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
IC-703	0710	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1520	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0635	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2050	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD 286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
IC-725	1230	2, 6	IC-725	1625	2, 6
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-572	1100	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5



RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
KL-876	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1360	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1960	5	AI-305	1905	3
BG-688	1710	2, 5	BG-687	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5
IC-747	0945	6	IC-748	1310	6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI 109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed., Thurs & Sun. Arr Tues., Wed & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep. Mon, Tues, Fri & Sat. Arr. Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues, Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon. Wed, Thurs., Fri & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun. Arr: Tues. & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep., Tues., Wed. & Sat, Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs..; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed, & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6 55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmadabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03 50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival. Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (6 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry)



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am 27 years old and doing a small job. I recently met a call girl in a hotel. It is not her regular profession. She is actually a poor student. I spent a night with her. I was very moved after listening to her sad tale of rejection by her boyfriend. She told me not to indulge in such activities and did not take money from me. I think I am falling in love with her. I don't think I'll be able to marry her as my parents will not accept her. I am economically sound enough to help her financially. I would not like to play around with her, too. I would genuinely like to rescue her. Can you show me a way?*



Bikramjeet Kashyap, Guwahati

A. It is my duty to warn you of the emotional risk of getting involved with this girl. I realise that your intentions are good, but I am sure you realise that any emotional relationship is bound to be difficult. If you want to help her, do so by befriending her and by maintaining one-to-one human contact. Everyone of us has to make our own mistakes in life and carve out our own path in life. A good friend is one who can extend a steadying hand when one falters. Help her to refocus her situation. Perhaps, she could train for another job and you could assist her financially.

Q. *I am a Hindu Brahmin girl of 22 years. I am in love with a Muslim boy. I have heard that in order to marry a Muslim I have to convert to Islam or our children will not be considered legitimate. But I do not want to do so. How can we get married legally? Our respective parents will not agree to our alliance. We have to do everything ourselves. Please help.*

Name withheld, Calcutta



A. First of all let me reassure you that to marry a Muslim it is not necessary for you to convert to Islam. Inter-religion marriages, however, must be registered in the concerned court with at least two witnesses. If you and your beau have seriously decided to get married you are legally entitled to this union as two consenting adults. I am sure that your parents will eventually reconcile. You could try approaching the matter with them before the marriage, but please, rest assured that the decision is entirely your own.

In love with a call girl? It is my duty to warn you of the emotional risk of getting involved with this girl.... If you want to help her, do so by befriending her. Perhaps, she could train for another job and you could assist her financially

Q. *My brother who is 11 years old is unable to walk. My mother is a diabetic patient. I study in a college and stay away from home. In recent months it has become impossible to live with my brother as he has become very violent. My mother's health is also fast deteriorating. My father is mostly out on tours. Can you give the address of any institution where we can keep my brother?*

Name Withheld, Burdwan



A. This problem requires some effort on your part. I assume you're the eldest child in the family, and so feel responsible for your parents. Your brother seems to be suffering from an inability to cope with his physical handicap, possibly making him violent. Institutionalisation is not the answer to dealing with physical handicaps. Difficult though it may seem, you have to try to help him come to terms with his condition, as your mother may not be well enough herself to help him. Try showing him to a psychotherapist, try introducing him to other non-physical activities like computer courses, reading, drawing, painting and writing. Painting and writing are therapeutic activities, and will help him release some of his pent-up stress. Hopefully, your efforts will help .

Q. *My father has a funny problem. He is scared to travel in any moving train. He feels as if he is being asphyxiated. For this reason he cannot even travel to our relatives' places.*

Namita Roy, Calcutta

A. Your father seems to be suffering from

claustrophobia. A phobia is an extreme irrational fear of a specific object or situation. Claustrophobia is a fear of closed spaces. A phobia is a kind of anxiety disorder, and can be treated by behaviour therapy by a psychiatrist. But do not worry it is not as bad as it sounds. It is a common affliction and you could try talking to your father about it and what association he has formed in his mind about closed spaces. It may be possible that he is repressing a particular memory or he is not being able to identify it.

Q. ***I am a 26-year-old graduate with a B-Ed degree. Two years back, I decided to get married because I was getting marriage proposals from well established grooms. But my problem is that I belong to a lower middle class family. My father is a driver in a well-known tea garden and he is also an alcoholic. I teach in a reputed convent school and am the eldest of four issues. My colleagues and friends bring these proposals to me but they have never seen the atmosphere at our home in the evenings. I am afraid that if I settle for a well-established man, he might talk badly about my background after our marriage. What should I do? Should I marry a well established groom or not?***

R.R, Tinsukia, Assam



A. First of all, I'd like to congratulate you on your spunk. In spite of difficult circumstances, you've moved ahead, and you sound like a fighter to me. Of course, you should look at the proposals. But you must be upfront with the prospective grooms. When you meet them, you should explain the situation to them, and let them decide if you are the bride they want. The man who recognises the traits of strength and perseverance that evidently characterise you, should be the man you decide to settle down with. Your qualities will be an asset to your husband. Marriage is not an escape route. You seem to be doing well for yourself, and a bad marriage can be a trap, and hinder your personal growth in future.

Q. ***I am a 45-year-old widower. I am in service and living with my only son in a government organisation away from relatives. During my stay, I had fallen in love with one of my colleagues who is much younger to me. We had a very intimate relationship and we even got married in a temple. However, we did not disclose our relationship to her parents or her relatives. Now she has been transferred from here. Again, I am leading a very lonely life without her. Should I approach her parents or bring her here forcibly? She is very scared to talk about us to her parents.***

S.K Jana, Durgapur

A. You seem to be very confused yourself. The thing for you to do first would be to figure out what you want. What course do you want your relationship to take? Are you thinking of marriage? After you have decided what kind of relationship you are expecting, you must first ask your partner if she feels ready to go ahead with it. If you both are seriously considering a continued alliance, it would be ideal if you could approach her parents together. Force is out of the question.



Q. ***I am an IIT graduate with a coveted job in an MNC. I am 26 and single. In our department, there are two senior lady officers who are a constant source of trouble for me. They are about 35 and 38 years, close friends and very attractive. Being relatively new to my job I respect them as my seniors. But they keep calling me to their chambers and the conversation always becomes loaded with sexual innuendoes. Recently, they directly made a pass at me and the situation has really become unbearable. But my job is so well paying and they continue to harass me under some pretext or the other. How can I cope with this situation?***

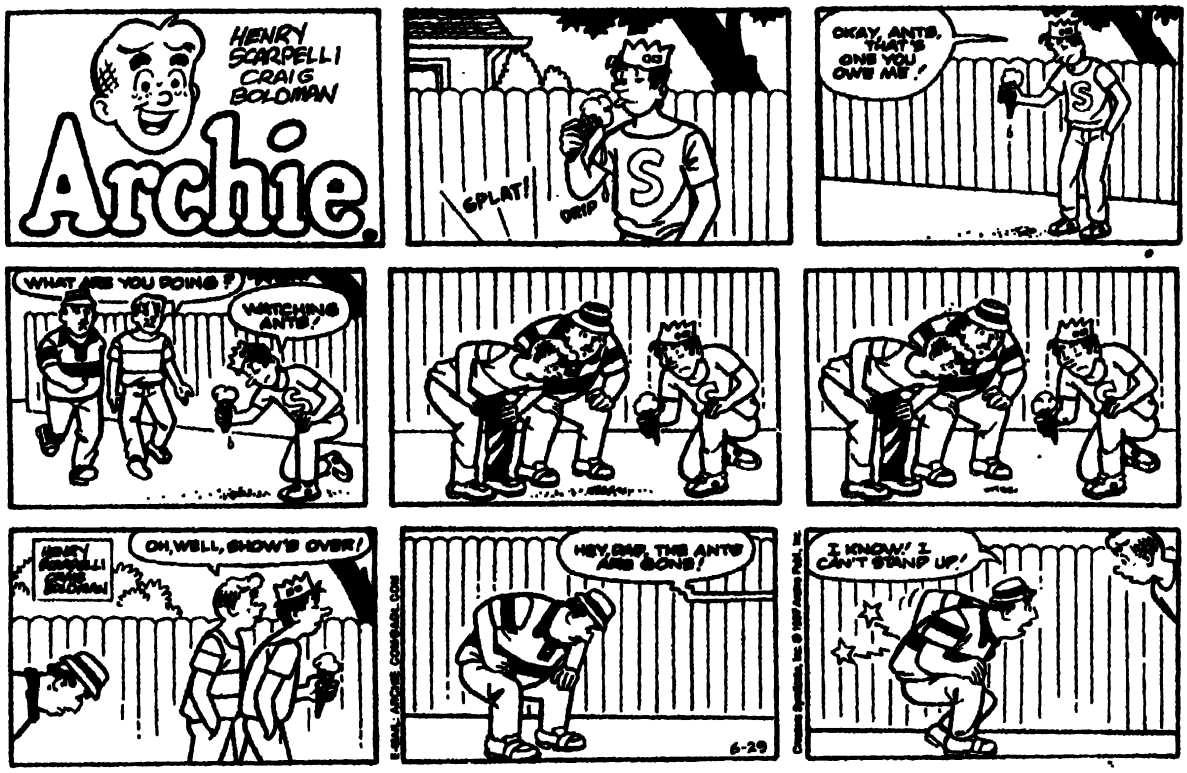
Rakesh Aroskar, Calcutta

A. You seem to be in a rather tricky situation. Though it seems that you are being sexually harassed by your colleagues, unfortunately it may not be the wisest ideal to raise a hue and cry about it. You are a well educated person and I am sure you are aware of the double standards we all have to put up with in one situation or the other. Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned and you may be treading a very delicate line as far as your career is concerned. The thing for you to do is to make it clear to these ladies that you do not believe in mixing your personal life with your work. But this has to be tactfully done. The situation calls for some diplomacy but stay firm in your resolve not to yield to your colleagues' advances, as the situation then may become much harder to reverse. ■

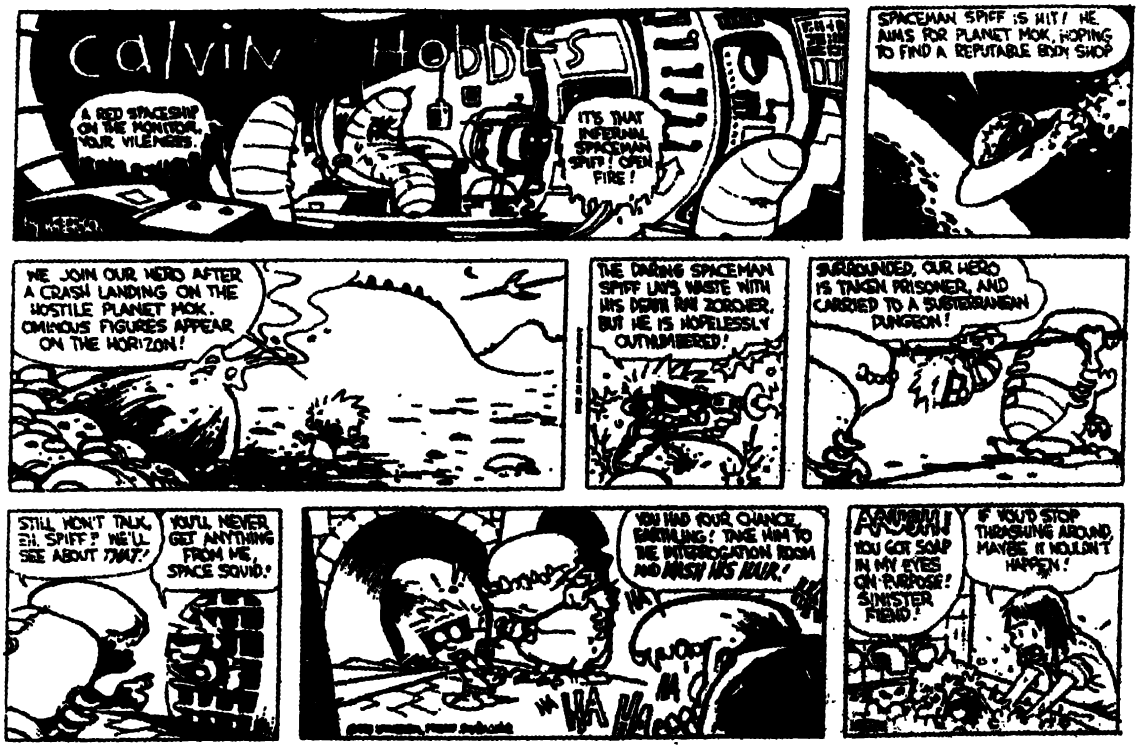
Harassed by senior women colleagues in office? The thing for you to do is to make it clear to these ladies that you do not believe in mixing your personal life with your work. But this has to be tactfully done

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

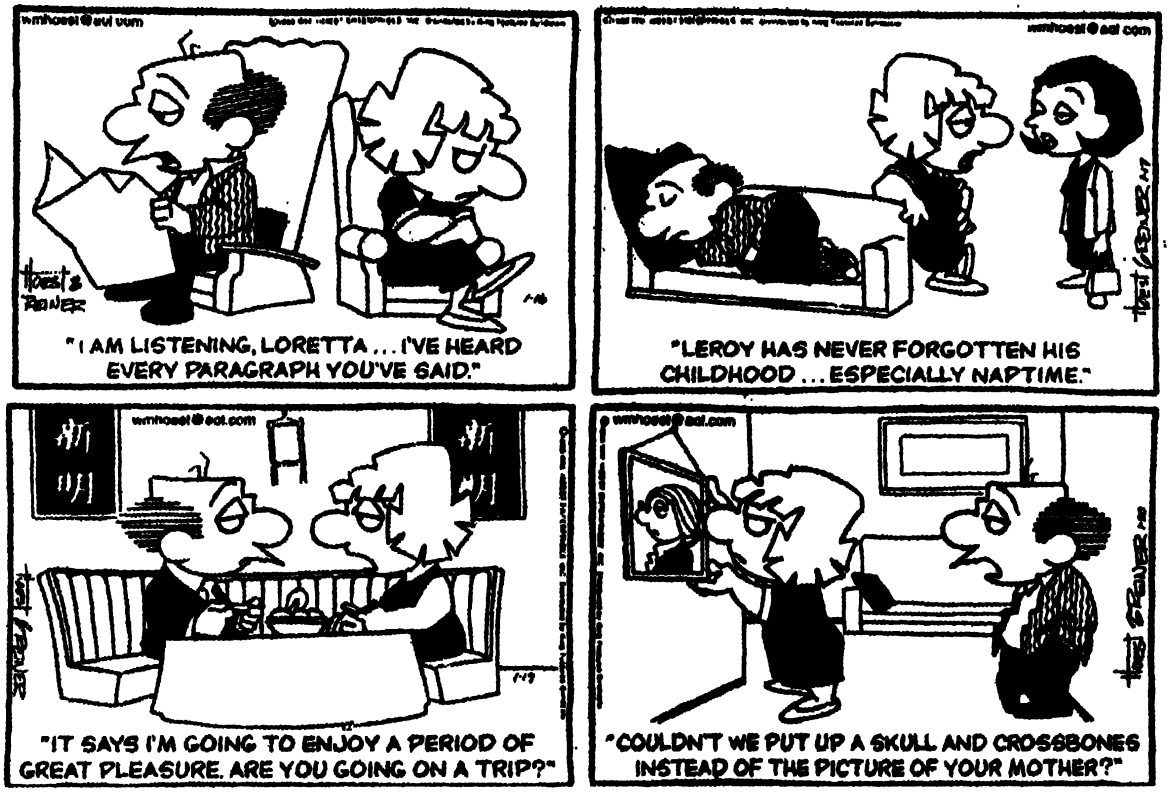
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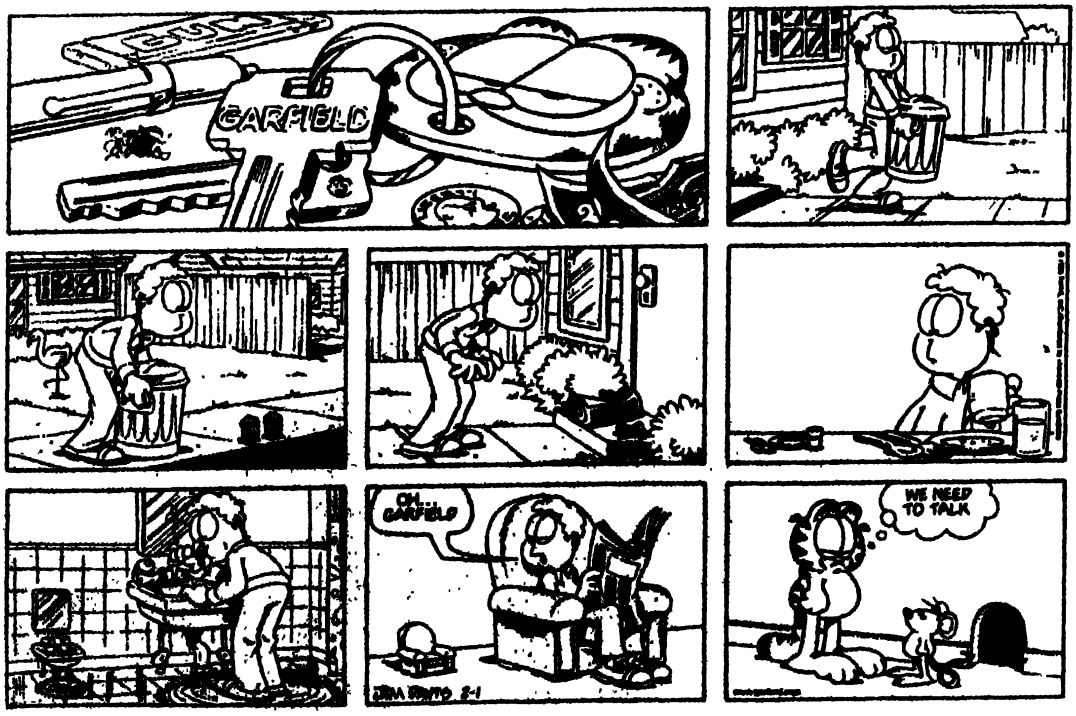
CALVIN AND HOBBES ▪ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



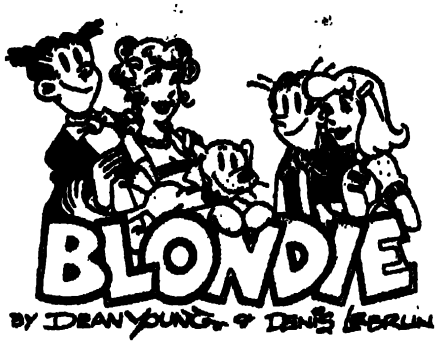
GARFIELD ▪ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE















BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q ***I have heard that applying oil to hair increases dandruff. So I have stopped using oil and use dandruff shampoo instead. Am I doing the right thing?***
Surojit Roy, Assansol.

A It is quite obvious that someone with little knowledge is advising you. Oiling your hair does not lead to an increase in dandruff. The problem arises only if you leave oil in your hair for hours on end or keep a dirty scalp. Oil your hair once a week with warm coconut oil and then apply the juice of a lemon. Leave this on for about an hour and shampoo normally Drink at least ten glasses of water daily and eat a healthy diet with lots of fresh fruits and vegetables. You can continue to use an anti-dandruff shampoo which will help you get rid of dandruff much faster.



Q ***I find your tips very helpful. I have to travel a lot and am afraid of getting sunburns. Since an elaborate pack would be difficult to carry with me while travelling, can you suggest something simpler? Is orange peel-off pack any good?***
A.S, Calcutta

A Orange peel-off packs tend to pull the skin harshly and I find them to be quite painful. Make a home-made pack with the following ingredients- fullers earth, ground cloves, lemon peel powder, dried mint leaves and peppermint oil. Mix these together to form a thick paste and keep in a jar. This can be carried with you wherever you go. A sun screen would also be helpful in protecting you against the strong UV rays of the sun as well as against the dust and pollution.

Q ***I have a six-year-old daughter who has smooth, silky and straight hair. Is it okay for her to use normal shampoo? She does not allow me to apply shikakai etc on her hair. Please advise.***
Jyoti Shankar, Assansol.

A Never underestimate the likes and dislikes of youngsters, however small they may be. If she does not allow you to use shikakai powder on her hair, avoid it. Instead, use a mild amla based shampoo.It is also advisable to oil her hair at least once or twice a week. This will not only assist in hair growth, it will also keep it luxuriant and shining as well.

Q ***My problem is thin eyelashes.I applied castor oil but without much results.Please suggest an alternate method.***
Anita Desai, Calcutta

A It really depends on how long you have used castor oil and how regularly you use it. Anything natural will take some time and I would still suggest that you continue to use castor oil for at least two months daily before you find a marked difference. Please understand that they will not be miraculously thick but there defi-



nitely will be a marked difference.

Q ***I am a regular reader of your columns and would be grateful if you advise me on the problem of dark cir-***



cles. I also suffer from sleep problem and find myself getting up very late in the morning despite retiring early to bed.
Aditi Prasad, Calcutta.

A It is important for you to analyse the reason behind your sleep problem. Is it because of lack of tiredness or due to some tension?. Sometimes the sub-conscious plays havoc with us and it makes matters worse when you cannot find the reason behind the problem. Try to relax before you go to sleep. Take a warm bath and listen to some soothing music, have a cup of warm milk and try to ease out tensions. Try muscle relaxation therapy by lying down with your eyes closed and concentrate on relaxing each muscle in your body starting from the toes. Just let your body go; move upwards and feel each muscle relaxing and going limp. As for the dark circles, if it is a sleep problem, they will go automatically. You can apply the following soothing pack daily to the eye area. This will not only fade out the dark circles, but also tone up the delicate muscles of the eye area. Take the white of an egg, mix with grated potato, grated cucumber, lemon juice and thick whipped fresh cream. Apply all over the area after keeping in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes. Leave on for at least half an hour and wash off with cold milk compression. Soon your eyes will look sparkling and bright.

Q ***I have a peculiar problem, my facial skin is so oily that I cannot apply moisturiser. However, the rest of my body is so dry that it appears white and flaky. What should I do?***
Anesha Swamy, Bombay



A This is definitely not a peculiar problem as many people suffer from this. I would suggest that you go in for a warm oil massage once a week. It is obvious that your skin needs nourishing. An oil massage is beneficial to the skin and you will find it to be an extremely relaxing experience. Remember, oil massage should always be given by someone else. Oiling oneself can be quite tedious. Leave the face area as this may lead to other problems.

Q ***I am 16 years old and have fine lines around my eyes, mouth and jaw. They make me look as if I am ageing. Otherwise I have an oily nose. Can you please explain my problem and how should I overcome it.***
Seema Gutur, Assam



A You have a combination skin and that too perhaps a case of extremes—excessive oiliness and dryness combined together which is probably why there are so many fine lines.. Don't worry, you are not grwoing old. I would suggest that you make a fine paste of almonds, add lemon juice and two drops of sandlewood oil—ensure that the oil must be pure and not an essence—and apply this all over the face and leave on for ten minutes. Dab milk and then wash off. Alternately, you can also apply honey to the area which will moisturise and fade out the lines gradually . This treatment must be done at least thrice a week for results.

To have thick eyelashes:

■

Apply castor oil for at least two months for a marked difference



Illustrations : Debasish Deb



ASHISH SONI
Fashion designer:

My favourite jeans are Levis 501. Nothing fits as good as they do. I would prefer them in any shade, any colour— from the regular indigo, to blue, black, burgundy and even white in summer. I also wear my jeans to work and co-ordinate it with a formal shirt and tie.

MANPREET BRAR
Model/ veejay

I normally wear my Levis all the time. I have had one for the last five years as a measure for weight gain. I am fond of Giordano for the soft feel of its fabric which makes it ideal to lounge in, but the only problem is that it goes out of shape. In summers, I like to wear my jeans loose but in winter with those bulky sweaters, it is always better to wear something which is close to your skin.



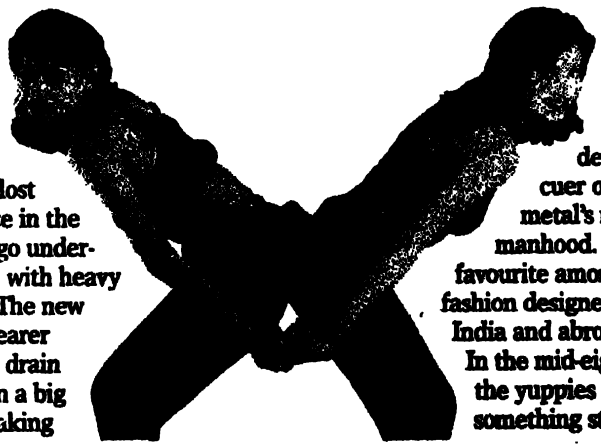
It's all in the Jeans

It's rare to find someone these days who doesn't own at least one pair, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

It is that item of clothing which will always keep a corner of your wardrobe blue. Jeans, the ageless apparel which no custom can stale, have become the icon of several generations of young men and women. Their simple credo of wash-and-wear have made them the most sought-after garment on the street fashion block.

Jeans have had a somewhat colourful history, despite being restricted — in the beginning, at least — to various shades of blue. In the West, during the early Seventies, jeans epitomised the height of fashion——not that they have lost their position since— when teenage girls would pass the vital statistics test depending on how good they looked in their respective pairs.

It was the drainpipe crisis which got the flares off; and then followed the punk look. There was a cool split between the non-conformist types who were on the side of drain pipes and the traditionalist flare-wearer on his way to middle age. By the Eighties, with punk going downhill and a new romanticism creeping into youth, denim lost its place in the sun to go underground with heavy metal. The new jean-wearer took to drain pipes in a big way, making jeans skin-tight, creating subtrends which no fashionable person would be caught dead in.



Heavy metal is credited not just for that abomination of early stonewashing which created that "hideous piebald look", but also for the breakthrough of stretch denims as a rescuer of heavy metal's receding manhood. It is now a favourite among top-end fashion designers both in India and abroad.

In the mid-eighties, when the yuppies arrived, something strange hap-

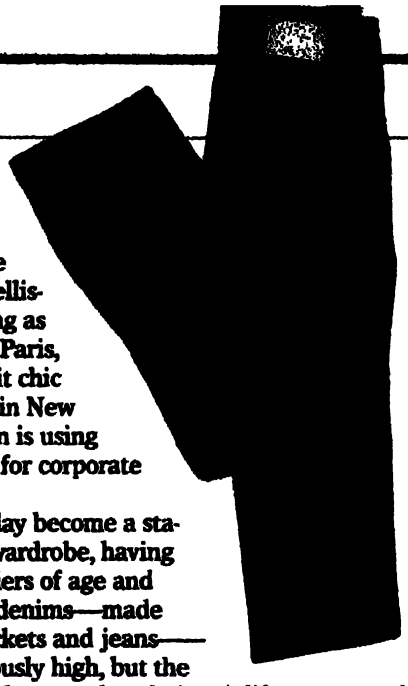
pened to jeans. The new rich began yearning for the original denim look. Nowhere was that more clearly typified than in the revival of the Levis' 501 cult, "punching all the right nostalgia buttons, evoking the gamut of jeans mythology from James Dean onwards."

Jeans caught the imagination of Indians in the early Eighties. Though Zeenat Aman had already kicked off the fashion for flares among Indians, the shortage of manufacturers in India relegated them to the back seat. It was in the Eighties that Indian brands such as Avis, Hara, Wings, Northstar, Fake, Wranglers and Levi's gave people who didn't travel abroad the option to be clothed in denim of every variety.

The dreaded stone-washing was followed by snow-washing and sand-blasting. In the mid Nineties, Claws gave a 'raw' touch to jeans with imported labels like Pepe, Lee-Cooper, Levis, Lee and Jordache. Local giants Charlie revived the blues with a distinctive feel, tint and fuse wash. The domestic brands were quick to capture the market in the Nineties—Killer took over Bombay, Moustache ruled Calcutta and brands Numero Uno and Charlie were all the craze in Delhi.

In the US, companies specialise in jeans for all sizes and ages—and 60 per cent of jeans are bought by people over 25 years. In India, the buyers could be between anywhere 16-35 years though these days one does run into daddies on the wrong side of forty sporting jeans and looking devilishly handsome.

What is surprising is that denim seems to have moved into the big league of high fashion. In London, Vivienne Westwood shredded it to a delicate frayed, piece of trellis-work masquerading as a pair of pants. In Paris, Chanel has made it chic and formal; while in New York, Donna Karan is using stiff indigo denim for corporate women's suits.



Jeans have today become a staple of everyone's wardrobe, having cut across all barriers of age and income. Toddlers' denims—made into tiny skirts, jackets and jeans—are priced ridiculously high, but the kids manage to look as good as their adult counterparts. For the young, Rs 1,200-1,400 could fetch their favourite Lee or Levi's, followed by Pepe, Lee-Cooper, Wrangler, Guess, Police and Jordache.

"Tight-fitting and regular jeans are the ones most in demand," says Sanjay Sevani who owns Trovan Apparels in South Delhi, "as opposed to the relaxed or parallel cut which is out." Basic colours, mostly blue, green, oyster, marshbrown, tobacco, brown and rust, are the more sought after shades.



A lot of buyers would prefer their jeans to be soft, specially in summer, when a rough and tough pair does not seem to do much for comfort. To cater to such clients, Arvind has introduced the LHT Eurospun material with a softness of 15.5 ounce gauge. Also on line are "Newport's cotton gaberdine jeans at Rs 499 which sell like the proverbial hot cakes in the scorching months," says Rajesh Khatter, who sells jeans at his fashion outlet in Delhi.

Call it coffee table concern, but the fact remains that denims wreak havoc on the environment, or so an advertisement of Wrecker jeans—claiming to make eco-friendly denims—warns. Green lobbyists would be shocked to know that 30 litres of drinkable water is polluted for just one pair of jeans. It also reduces about 18 seconds of a labourer's life span, requiring about 100 kgs of pumice stones which are used and then dumped in landmines causing a depletion of the ozone layer. However KG Denims, from which leading manufacturers like Levi Strauss source their materials, use eco-friendly vat dyes which are safe for the skin, claim company sources.

When it comes to how long a pair of jeans can last, wearers swear it could be anything between 6-7 years depending on its handling and washing. "It should always be hand washed not machine cleaned to prevent wrinkles which will reduce its life span considerably," says Sevani.

Jeans no longer commands price exclusivity; one can now own a pair made locally for as low as Rs 250. But then, buyers are also concerned about longevity which makes them go for the better brands in the market, which are willing to take responsibility for defects that range from colour, weave to stitching and manufacturing.

As competition gets tougher and national and international brands fight for rack space, jeans have become a buyer's market. In fact, there are any number of quality fabrics available at throwaway prices.

Dominating the country's urban ethos is not easy by any means. But jeans have captured the imagination of every youth worth his swagger. Try and identify one who hasn't ever tried on a pair. Chances are you won't find any. ■

Rooted in Art

That's how India's best-known art historian, Saryu Doshi, sees herself. **Sudipta Basu** profiles a woman with exquisite taste and impeccable credentials

Over two decades ago, a youthful Saryu Doshi, a student of art history, came gushing in to narrate her experiences of a recent holiday in Benares to professor Motichandra at the Prince of Wales Museum. But he brushed aside her blabber; and then demanded her opinion on the weaves of the saris that might have caught her eye there, the food she had eaten, and the kind of vessels people of that riverside town used in their kitchens.

"And here I was, all soaked up in temple carvings and ancient Indian architecture. Saris? And food? Well, one never did look around for that sort of thing," remembers Doshi now.

Which is why, today, as honorary director of the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), housed in the Cawasjee Jehangir Hall, in Mumbai, Doshi gives herself a few pats on her back for having thought of packing in a country-wise food and cultural festival to complement the ongoing three-month exhibition of artefacts from across the world, 'The Enduring Image'. Never mind if this could not have been organised due to "practical difficulties".

"It's an idea that is too early for fruition. For then, we'll have to deal with paper plates flying around, or worse, curry on the floors of the gallery," says Doshi. "And yet, it would have been an interesting way to package an exhibition. After viewing a section of Greek or Egyptian or American works of art, the visitors' curiosity about the history of the respective country could be quelled if he could sample the cuisine or participate in a small discussion on history of that part of the world."

The late Dr Motichandra would have been proud.

'Enduring Image' opened in the city last month, an event organised by the British Council in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Government of India. It has brought a collection of over 300 treasures from the British Museum, the largest overseas loan in the museum's history, to India. As the title of the exhibition suggests, it refers to the use and significance of the human form in world cultures — examining the theme historically, spreading over global works of art, from ancient Egypt, sub-saharan Africa, Mesopotamia, pre-Columbian America, Japan, south Asia, the Greek and Roman worlds and ancient India. "The works on display here include paintings, sculptures, coins, wood work, and work in brass and copper as well," says Doshi.

The event is also supported by a programme of educational and multicultural activities, lectures, craft demonstrations, workshops and seminars to appeal to diverse interest and age groups. Apart from this, family weekend activities, special guided tours of the exhibition and film shows at the venue have been organised.

NGMA has been in existence just over a year, in which time it has played host to six major exhibitions — an exhibition of the Progressive Art Group, 50 years of Mumbai art, a Japanese exhibition and an exhibition on 50 years of Indian photography

Sarayu Doshi: Planning food and cultural festivals to complement an exhibition of



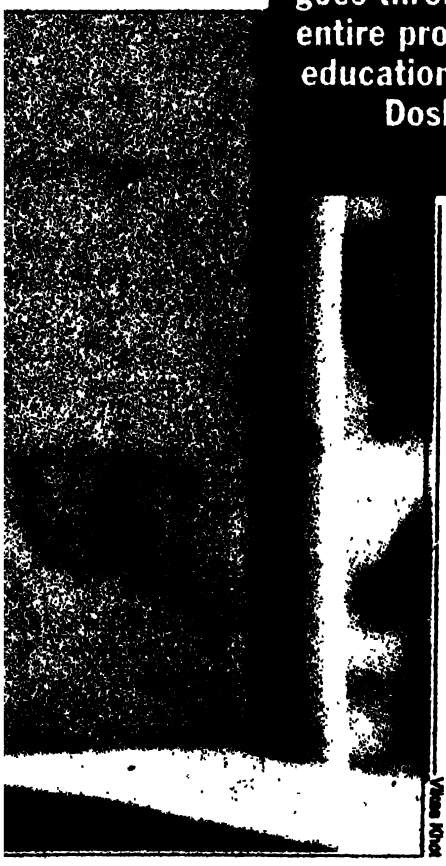
were a few of them. Doshi is also toying with the idea of putting together an elaborate exhibit with the paintings of Raja Ravi Verma, since she is already working on a portfolio on the artist for Baroda University. "Despite his flaws, he was truly the pioneer of modern Indian art. This is proved by the fact that till about 10-15 years ago, his paintings were not even worth Rs 2,000; the same are sold for astronomical amounts these days," says Doshi.

Saryu was among the first batch of students passing out of Queen Mary's School in Mumbai, who aspired to leap beyond high school. "High school was treated like finishing school in those days. The teachers were British, who educated you with correct social manners to launch you as the perfectly groomed maiden for social interaction," says she. "But most of us wanted to pursue higher studies abroad, and achieve something beyond acquiring social graces."

She graduated from the Sir JJ School of Art, Mumbai. Thereafter, marriage took her to the USA, where she enrolled for a course in the study of art history at Michigan University. This was followed by a doctoral study in Jain art and miniature paintings at Mumbai University. She has since then taught art history at Michigan University, and put in one term teaching at the University of California. This besides participating in seminars and *sammelans* across the country. "The good thing about writing a paper in my field is that whatever you do, becomes a contribution. So little has been done in the past," says she.

Studying Jainpani paintings itself was not an impossible task for her, since Doshi comes from a prominent Jain family, which had access to the temple libraries. "The most fascinating revelation that the study of Rajasthani art history threw up for me, was that of the involvement of women patrons in the field of art and sculpture dating back to the 2nd century BC. And most of these women came from the working classes. They were either ironmongers or craftsmen's wives," says Doshi.

'The study of art history involves a certain method of thought and its application which can only be attained after one goes through the entire process of education,' says Doshi



Saryu Doshi takes exception to the manner in which the self-professed band of art critics today don the badge of art historian with honour, without attempting to seek any knowhow of the subject. "The study of art history itself involves a certain method of thought and its application which can only be attained after one goes through the entire process of education," says she. "I am not ruling out the self-taught, but there are very few of them around, anyway."

She also agrees that it was perhaps this approach of hers that irked Mulk Raj Anand, when they were editing Marg together. Anand took umbrage to Doshi's bristling footnotes and academic approach to the writing that went into the magazine. "'Make it more reader-friendly,' he would say," recalls Doshi. "The chemistry between us just did not work."

But she came away wiser from that partnership. Which is why when she came around to editing the magazine, she made sure that the contents that went into it were not too austere and scholarly. "While serious research went into putting out each of the articles, they were done in a more acceptable form," she adds.

Over the years then, Doshi has acquired a more open approach to her vocation. What excites her most today is the booming 'art' of advertising. "This is one field that indicates social change most effectively," she feels. She cites examples of a paint campaign, that showed a young couple moving into a newly done-up house with some of their most prized paintings; or Tiger Pataudi posing in front of a painting for the Grasim Gwalior suiting campaign, as the changing tastes of the people.

"And then there is the recent anti-AIDS campaign that almost screams 'get laid' in bold print some thirty times, before saying 'get AIDS'. Apart from putting out a pithy campaign, it also tells of the overt American influence in language that has permeated down our society," she says.

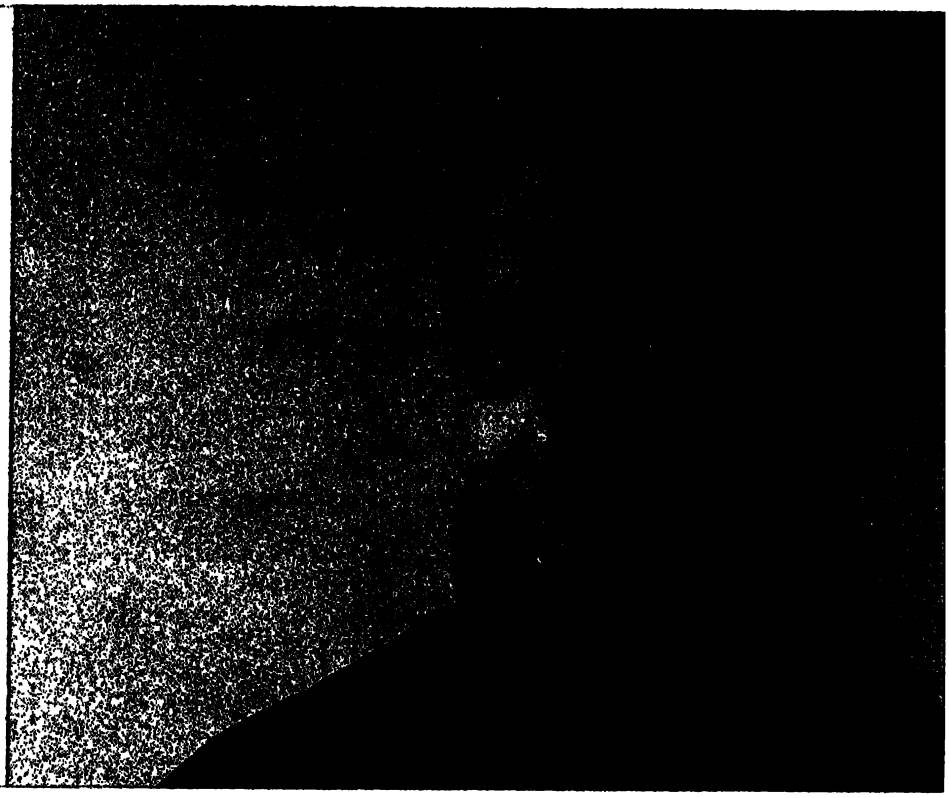
This attitude has also been applauded by many a film maker of this country, since Doshi's presence on the film censor board assures of a certain ambivalent attitude among its members. She agrees that one cannot sit on judgement on somebody's creative process. "Which is why I was hurt when Shekhar Kapur blamed us for snipping his film, whereas we had not so much as touched the film at all," says she.

While the winds of change have left their mark on Doshi's perception of her approach to her subject, the one thing that has remained with her closely since the past, has been her penchant for saris. While she cannot offer a certain count, she says, her tastes are rooted in the traditional cottons and silks.

The weave, the feel and a certain colour off-setting another in a single design attracts me the most," says she. "I cannot wear the salwar kameez because I know it is not me. So here I am, a traditional sari-clad woman, attempting to put together a show of modern art. Maybe I could get my hair bobbed at least." ■

My Personal Style

Fashion designer Jatin Kochhar has a fantastic collection of coffee mugs bought from all over the world



Mugful of Joy



TRUE BLUE :

I had this beautiful print in blue and I thought this fabric would look just great as a bed cover. If someone had bought a dress made of this fabric and seen what I had done with it apart from making dresses, I would have had a difficult situation on my hands.

I like simple and extremely modern furniture with clean lines like German furniture. Also, I do not like things to be fixed to a certain spot. I constantly like to move things about and change the look of a room. Everything has to be flexible. This means everything — accessories, lamps and so on. I went through a time of buying a lot of ethnic stuff but it did not fit into the scheme of decor that I felt was my style, so I became more focused about what I wanted in my rooms.

What I really like collecting is aquamarine blue glass bottles in different sizes. Since I knew that this was a colour I preferred I went to Khurja and bought everything in blue. I live with my family and so my place, which is on the first floor, is not really geared for cooking and so on. A microwave, crockery and cutlery, I have some beautiful Chinese dishes — just enough to entertain my guests. This is the reason nothing matches.

Another thing that I love to collect and pick up every time I am abroad is coffee mugs; not the kind you find in India but really fabulous ones. I think coffee mugs from different countries have a distinct character and this I find very interesting. I have a global collection of coffee mugs usually bought as souvenirs of the different countries that I visit. So, I ask my guests to choose the mug of their choice to have coffee in. Some of these mugs were nightmares to bring back to India — they were so big in size — especially the ones that you get in America.

I also have an interesting collection of glasses — not the expensive variety, but of an interest value. Such as coke glasses that I bought back from the USA. I have not ventured into carpets or rugs and I have very basic ones in my rooms. Needless to say each one of them is blue! As for the curtains and cushions — if I see an interesting print then I just do it myself in the factory. For instance, there was this African fabric I was working with to fabricate shirts and I ended up making *chattais* with them!

Another time I had this beautiful print in blue and I thought that this fabric would look just great as a bed cover and from that it graduated into pillow covers, curtains and so forth. If someone who had bought a dress made with this fabric and seen what I had done with it apart from making dresses, I would have had a difficult situation on my hands.

As told to Sujata Pandey



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POST MORTEM

Play Back

The cover story on Bollywood icon, Asha Bhosle, was a real treat ('Encore!' March 1). The singer deserves a big hand for her near fifty decades of musical excellence. Call her the disco queen, the ghazal queen, the pop queen — she will be there for decades and sounding fresh with every generation. It is time the government recognised her meritorious contribution to Indian music and suitably honoured her. Channel [V] could award her, why not the government?

b

T.R. Anand, Serangabad



Some people are born great and destined to achieve greatness. They 'grow' young with each passing year and outshine their contemporaries. Asha Bhosle is one such admirable personality who makes every Indian feel proud.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Asha Bhosle will never go out of news. Whether she is launching a new cassette or CD remixing her old songs or having to prove that she is the lawfully wedded wife of R.D. Burman. Asha claims, life has not been rosy for her, but at the end she has emerged a glowing and a happy person basking in her success as a singer, wife and mother.

Tanmoy Chowdhury, Calcutta

What a splendid achievement for an artiste — 12,000 songs! No wonder Asha Bhosle has made a permanent place for herself in the hearts of her admirers singing cabarets with as much ease as ghazals. We would appreciate it if she could open an academy to groom promising and talented playback singers. Who knows, one day we might get another Asha!

B.N. Bose, Calcutta

It is amazing how Asha Bhosle not only countered the professional challenge posed by her formidable sister, Lata, by developing her own style but also managed to retain the magical quality of her voice which can compete with youngsters nearly half her age.

Rachana Dutt, Calcutta

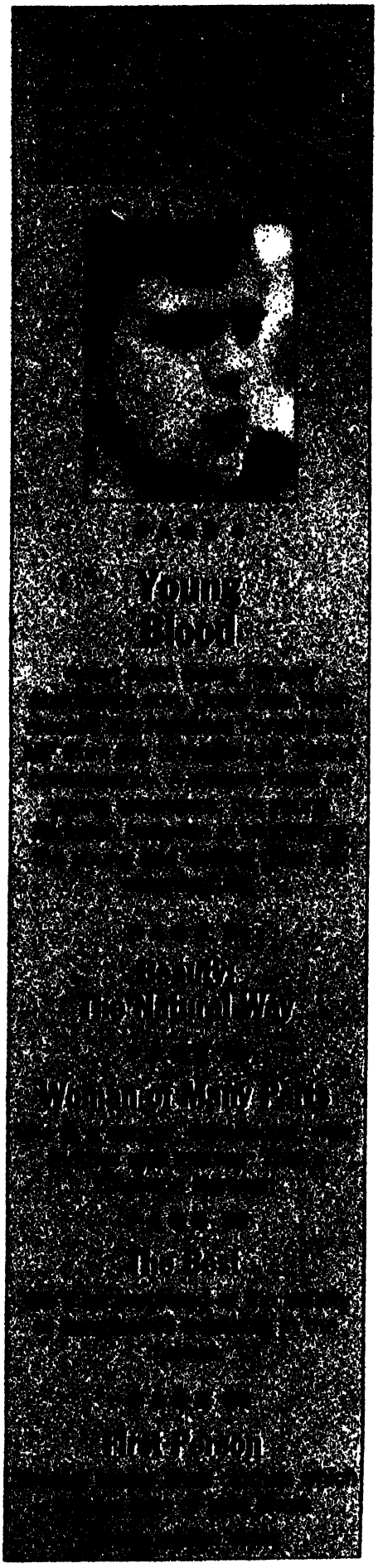
Asha Bhosle is an extremely talented and versatile artiste when compared to her elder sister, Lata. Asha has this ability within her to change with the times and look evergreen. Also, she deserves full credit for coping with life's disappointments with a smile.

Vinay Asawa, Calcutta

Unlike her iceberg-like sister, Lata, Asha has been a vivacious personality, having gone through relationships — some fruitful, some not so fruitful — and being a wife and mother and at the same time an extremely charming person.

Suchitra Biswas, Howrah

The photograph which appeared on Page 6 with the cover story on Asha Bhosle (March 1) was taken by Gautam Rajadhyaksha. It was mistakenly captioned as being taken by Vikas Khot. The error is regretted.





YOUNG BLOOD

Jagdish Yadav

There's yet another son in Indian politics: Omar Abdullah. **Geeta Sharma** meets the latest hope of Kashmir

In one of the Opposition rows in the hallowed interiors of the Lok Sabha, sat the inimitable Laloo Prasad Yadav. A few seats across him, sat the feisty, fiery Mayawati. Both waved their hands, shouted and screamed and thumped their desks with full might, adding their bit to the hullabaloo in the house.

Seated between them was a young entrant, Omar Abdullah, witnessing the proceedings of the House on his first day as a member of Parliament. While he watched the house discuss the contentious issue of the election of the new Speaker, the young debutant made a mental note of the things he ought not to learn.

"One was that there are better ways to attract attention than screaming and shouting. I too am experienced in making snide comments about friends or colleagues, but I am sure it can be done with some decorum and discipline," says 27-year-old Abdullah, the National Conference MP elected from the Srinagar Lok Sabha constituency in the 1998 general elections.

"Having said that, let me tell you, this was an eye-opening experience. I have seen it all on television with a detached perspective, but this was totally different," he adds.

The only son among the four children of National



Omar Abdullah at an election meeting



Omar Abdullah with son Zamir

He makes no bones about the fact that he owes a lot to the family name. 'Let's face it,' says Omar, 'I got a party ticket at such a young age because I am my father's son'

Conference chief and Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Farooq Abdullah, Omar maintains that the decision to enter politics was primarily his. "Of course," he admits, "there were a lot of demands from within the party (the National Conference) that I contest, but entering politics was something I had been contemplating for the last two years."

Both Omar — till recently working with ITC's Land Base India LTD — and Payal, his wife — who was with the Jet Airways — recently quit their jobs. The couple were planning to shift to Srinagar this summer with their five-month-old son, Zamir, where Omar hoped to begin learning the ropes of state politics. The mid-term general elections, however, made him decide to enter the national political arena.

A mature head on young shoulders, Omar comes across as a person who is not given to making politically correct statements. For instance, he's candid enough to tell you that his father was not keen that he contest the Lok Sabha polls. "In fact, he thought I was too young to enter politics at the national level. But then, I feel he was too old by the time he did so. If we look at it, dad had become an MP in 1980 and in two year's time, he had become chief minster. So in that sense, he was thrown in at the deep end," says Omar.

Similarly, he makes no bones about the fact that he owes a lot to the family name. "Let's face it," says Omar, "I got a party ticket at such a young age because I am my father's son. Anyone else would have first had to work at the grassroots level. And by the time he did that, he would no longer be young."

Having said that, Omar denies strenuously that he is heir-apparent to his father. And that his would be a one-term stint in the Lok Sabha as a short-cut to state politics. "I want to stay here as long as I can, learn the ropes and contribute my bit before I can even think of going back to the state," he says.

As for his political agenda, the young Abdullah is quite clear. It is Kashmir, and more significantly, the youth, he believes, who have suffered the most in the past eight years of militancy. And he believes that the solution lies, among other things, in motivating the young towards self-employment. "The youth have been sitting idle after school and college and so have become susceptible to propaganda from across the border."

Since there is no culture of self-employment in the state, he says his priority would be to think of ways to motivate them and set them up meaningfully. "Just giving them loans and

then seeing their units wind up after a couple of months makes no sense. This is something we have to work out," says Omar.

Next to self-employment, his second priority is playgrounds for the young. From the response he got at his election meetings, Omar gauged that they no longer want guns and grenades, but playgrounds to play in. "Where ever I went in Srinagar, the youth said they wanted a playground to play cricket. I have promised to fulfil their demand, but on one condition. They would have to play their first game with me!"

Abdullah is optimistic that the Kashmir situation is retrievable. The fact that in the last two years, three elections have been fought there successfully and peacefully compared to the violence-prone states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, shows that people are keen to join the political mainstream. The situation, he feels, is on the mend and now it's a question of keeping the borders tight.

Also, one of the things he feels strongly about and plans to take up with the Centre, is the issue of countering the senseless propaganda from across the border. "We need to off-set it with our own positive efforts. If the security forces are organising free medical camps for people there, we should be able to highlight



As for his political agenda, the young Abdullah is quite clear. It is Kashmir, and more significantly, the youth, he believes, who have suffered the most in the past eight years of militancy

Omar with wife Payal and (above) Payal with their toddler Zamir



As for his grandfather's grave, Abdullah says it has been guarded ever since he died. Only now, the ceremonial guard has been replaced by the security men

and project it," he says. Such projection, he adds, is necessary because after the economy, the Kashmir issue is the second most important issue concerning India at the international level.

Omar feels that irritants like the fact that his father is not that popular in the Valley or that his grandfather, Sheikh Abdullah's grave has to be guarded round the clock, are not cause for worry. He maintains that the popularity of a person at a particular place is no indicator of the overall success or failure of his efforts. "But yes, there are lessons to be learnt from them," he adds.

As for his grandfather's grave, Abdullah says it has been guarded ever since he died. Only now, the ceremonial guard has been replaced by the security men. "With the militants being so ruthless in gunning down women and children as they sleep at night, they would have no compunction about digging out graves. And one grave that our neighbours would like to have dug up is that of my grandfather," he says.

Omar does not call the support of the National Conference to the Bharatiya Janata Party in its government formation effort at the Centre, a compromise. "It is not as if we have lent them unconditional support or are standing behind them like a rock. Besides, abrogation of Article 370 and Ram Mandir are issues that they have raised to come to power. But once in power, they cannot afford to alienate any section, least of all Muslims who are the second largest chunk of the population," maintains Omar.

Born in the British town of Rochford in Essex on March 10, 1970, Omar spent the first five-and-half years of his life there before coming to India. In 1975, his grandfather, who was then in Delhi having been exiled from Kashmir, summoned his son Farooq — who was a practising doctor — his British wife and their children, three daughters and a son, back home. Ever since, Omar's life has been determined by the fact that he belongs to Kashmir's ruling family.

The first fall-out of it was on his education. In school in Srinagar, Omar's teachers would often come up to him before his exams and hand him the question papers. And with the exam papers, they would also hand him letters seeking transfers or promotions or job placements, which he was expected to forward to his father.

When his parents learnt of this, they decided to send him out of Kashmir. Since his





Omar campaigning for the elections: New son in the horizon

father's friend, Dr Karan Singh's younger son Ajatshatru (currently a minister in Jammu and Kashmir) was studying in Sanawar, Himachal Pradesh, Omar, too, was sent there.

At Lawrence School, Sanawar, Omar did nothing that would rock the boat. "I was brought up to understand that I was from a family where anything I did would be noticed and commented upon. So I was quite a boring guy in school, and never really committed any 'serious offenses'." Of course, he jumped the school fence to get to a nearby town for extra food, but nothing beyond that.

He hated being sent away from home to a boarding school initially, but looking back, he says he is grateful for it. Being in a boarding school, he feels, can teach one to be self-disciplined and independent. And above all, "it teaches you to be careful with money. I would get pocket money of Rs 2 a week and with that I bought a cola, a packet of glucose biscuits, *samosas* and *chola bhaturas*."

Out of school and into college at St Stephen's, Omar and Rahul Gandhi — who had also got admission at the same time — were criticised for having got into college on the strength of their family name. Omar, who says he found the criticism unfair because he had 74 per cent marks while the cut off for Philosophy honours was 60 per cent, found the ragging there too much to bear.

On a friend's advice he decided to seek admission to a commerce course in a college in Mumbai, where he spent an enjoyable three years. "I bunked classes, spent a lot of time in the canteen and had occasional passing flings," he says, with a laugh. With a good first division, he went to England, where his mother and sisters had shifted because of the turbulence in Kashmir.

He came back after a year of unsuccessful attempts to find a job. While in India, Omar worked at a series of jobs. The first was in the sales department of the Oberoi Hotel in Delhi, where he met Payal, his wife-to-be. Discovering that this wasn't exactly his cup of tea, Omar took up a job in the Delhi office of ITC's Global Holdings Company. Soon after, he moved to another ITC concern, Landbase India Ltd, with which he was till recently.

Asked about his rapport with his father, Omar stops to think and weighs his words before saying, "I don't know...but things have improved over the years." Omar, who was away from home for most of his growing years, says he was always reserved with his father. "But now I can speak to him about things I never did earlier. He always thought I was a bit of a clown; only now, has he begun to take me seriously."

Omar gives the credit for this to his wife Payal, who has a wonderful relationship with her parents. "She is also very easygoing with my father, so now I, too, am beginning to be like that."

Omar doesn't remember too much about Sheikh Abdullah who died while he was still very young. But one thing, he says, he remembers and respects his grandfather for is that when he gave Eidi (gifts on the occasion of Eid), he never differentiated between the family and Omar's mother, though "she was not only from a different religion but also from another country."

Back to his current agenda, there is more hope than trepidation in his voice. "I have come to the national legislature with a clean chit. It is for me to write on it. And I am hopeful of doing a good job of it and not botching it up." ■

'Now I can speak to him (his father) about things I never did earlier. He always thought I was a bit of a clown; only now, has he begun to take me seriously'

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Mars has changed signs, emphasising buying/selling/trading/borrowing for you. People who have separated will get together again, thanks to your unceasing efforts. You will also impress those who really matter, because of a charming Venusian influence. Partying is probable.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



A promotion is due to you and should come through. Those in production and sales do well. Love tugs at your heart and will not be denied. Form, design, colour, symmetry, music will all edge forward in your life in the next 27 days. At the same time it must be made clear that expenses will be heavy.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Try to meet deadlines. If in for a job, prepare well for the test and interview. A chance to travel should be taken up. People will try to exploit you for their selfish ends. Therefore, judge the situation critically and only then offer your help. Love could be intense and sudden. Keep a tight hold on purse strings.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



You will excel in work and at play and thus feel happy and confident. You can now pull out all the stops and make things really happen according to your own sweet desire. This is the right time to take risks, for you are sure to win. Cancerians are in for major achievements in their field of activity.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



You will be straining every nerve and sinew to advance. Passion, too, will dominate you. Property matters, renovation and decoration will also figure for Leons. Addition to your wardrobe will enhance your image. Collaborations, publicity and ceremony are major spin-offs for you.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Time for healing, uniting and coming to terms with yourself and others. Sex-appeal and originality will distinguish you and you can use these to your advantage. You will make new friends and hang on to old ones and that's simply wonderful. Time to start a new venture. Be rest assured about your health.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Loans and finances will take up practically all your time. Partnerships are also highlighted. Love could be placed on a pedestal but ultimately, you will have to face reality. Poets, artists, writers, psychics, editors and dancers do exceptionally well. 15th to 17th will be outstanding for a grand job, says Ganesha.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Perfect your techniques and streamline your procedure if you are in sales, teaching, trading and most certainly managing corporations. You may get very confidential information which could help you. You will re-unite with people. Be attentive to the needs of your parents and spouse. They will require your support.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



A job-switch, funding, taking care of pets, hiring and firing of servants form the major trends for this week. The trick is not to waver from your expressed objective. A dash of romance and adventure keeps you happy and excited. You will shortly locate a real teacher and under his vigilance, develop maturity.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



A love relationship will be strong and durable. Your karma will now help you to be happy, as well as, successful. The focus is on style, panache, eclat. You will win plaudits. Just be high on confidence and conviction. You will make your parents proud. A get together is in the offing and will be a source of joy.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Home, property and travel make it a grand triple-header for Aquarians. Bondings will be pretty close and intense. You must go in for diversity, be it in politics, cinema, literature or research. Marital relationships and family values need to be revitalised and emphasised. You must watch your weight.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Communication, beautification and reunion are the keywords for Pisceans. Siblings, relatives and old friends will make their reappearance this week. Stand tall. Don't give up on your principles. All will turn out well. Yes, addition to the family is a possibility. You do well in tests and interviews.

BIRTHDAYS

April 12: Mercury sextile Uranus: Ganesha says, only through skill, dexterity, wit and manipulation will you succeed. June and December shall be the rewarding months.
April 13: Moon-Jupiter trine assures joy and enthusiasm. If you are seeking financial funds, you will get it. A separation from a loved one is, however, indicated.
April 14: No strong aspect: While loans, funds, buying and selling will be unusually important to you, rest assured that life will proceed well for you. Health will improve.
April 15: Moon trine Mercury: Pluto, the power house is activated giving you energy and drive. Mercury gives you skills and intelligence, add it all up and you have a formidable array in your favour. A welcome attachment is indicated.
April 16: Moon sextile Uranus: Contacts and conversations hold special meaning for you. You will be creative. The flow of distant places will enrich you.
April 17: Moon trine sun: An excellent formation for people, activity, getting along with people, success and joy. You will consolidate your position in society and at work as well.
April 18: Moon sextile Jupiter and trine Venus assure fun, comfort, money and romance. Jupiter signifies money and positive attitude. Therefore, you will be happy and a success.

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Potted History

What the chattering classes are talking about

This Week: AIDS, the most fashionable cause of all

The talking point: Is the recent flurry of activity surrounding the visit of Hollywood star, Richard Gere. While Gere usually spends all his time in India espousing the cause of the Tibetans, this time around he took time off to talk about AIDS as well.
And not just content with talking, Gere also lent his presence to two fund-raising events — in Delhi and Mumbai — to benefit the victims of AIDS. Leading fashion designers donated outfits which were then auctioned (along with a painting) to raise money which went towards various charities and AIDS hospices.

And what was Gere's contribution?: Well, there was his larger-than-life presence to begin with. Though it has to be said that Bollywood star and newly-anointed BJP MP, Vinod Khanna, managed to steal his thunder at the Press conference organised in Delhi to discuss the problems associated with AIDS.

How did he manage to do that?: Simple. By spouting the most outrageous nonsense you've ever heard. Sample: All those who are HIV positive should be made to wear badges that proclaim that they are infected. That way, the rest of the population can steer clear of them, and the disease can be contained.

The reaction to this: Was horror, outrage, and then plain anger — and not necessarily in that order.
But despite the loud protests that greeted his statement, Khanna would just not be shut up, defending his position with vim and vigour. His guru, Osho, he said, had recommended such a measure, and in his view it was the best way of combatting this disease.



Shabana Azmi and Richard Gere : AIDS is serious business

No sooner had Gere recovered: Than he was confronted with the spectacle of Delhi society at its noisiest best. This was at the fund-raiser which had all the movers and shakers of the capital in attendance. Despite all the requests of the organisers the audience just refused to shut, nattering away all through Dr Najma Heptullah and Shabana Azmi's speeches. Everyone thought, however, that the presence of a true-blue Hollywood star would turn them speechless. But, no such luck. The noise level remained the same even when Gere took the mike.

The star reacted by: Chanting Buddhist mantras *sotto voce*. And either through divine intervention or because nobody could figure out what the man was mumbling and wanted to find out; the crowd quietened down a bit.

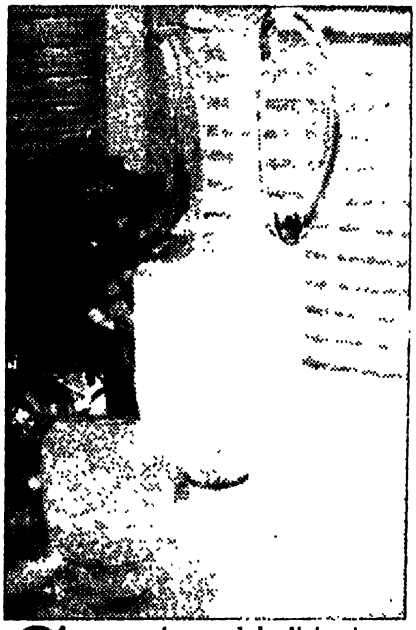
Worse was to follow, though: Gere, rather than be grateful that some attention was being paid to him, was mad as hell. AIDS was serious business, he informed the audience, and it was time they realised it. Not that it was entirely their fault, he added. The problem was that they hadn't been touched by AIDS as yet.

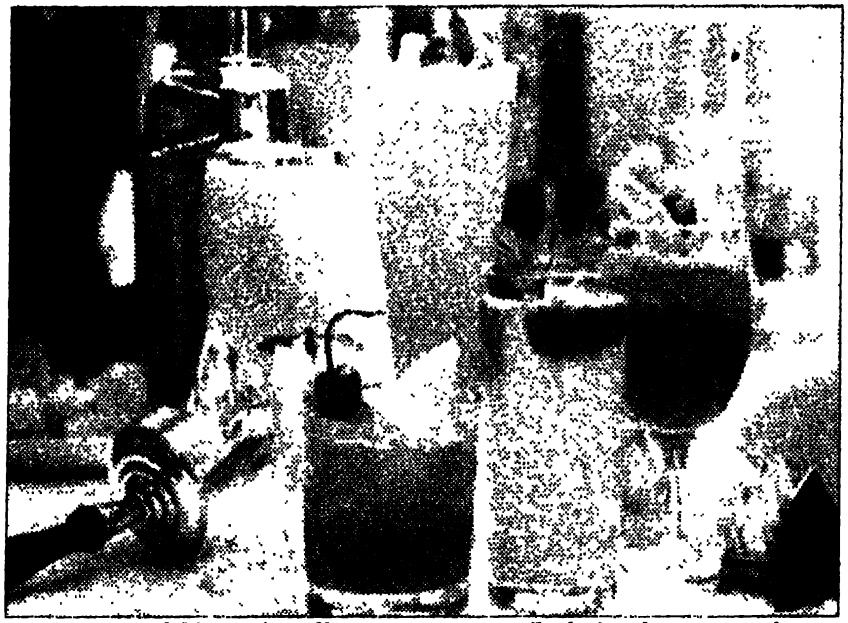
But, said a grim Gere, pointing a shaking finger at the crowd, it wouldn't be long before "you lost someone to AIDS". And only then would you realise what a frightening disease this was.

The fear of God was struck: Into Gere's own heart later in the evening, when he was accosted by a young maiden and virtually molested on the dance floor. As she pulled the star to herself using her *dupatta*, and pressed her lithe young body against his, the other guests looked on with a mixture of embarrassment and awe.
The Hollywood great has just gone from Cindy to Sindhi; and it can't have been a very pleasant experience. ■

Your Favourite Poison

Use it to beat the summer heat, says **Sujata Pandey**





Summer time and the living is easy. But that's only if you are living up in the mountains or are the type who really likes to soak up the sun. For the rest of humanity, the one thing on their mind is liquid: as cold and refreshing as possible. But no matter how many glasses one puts away, the parched feeling stays close by, and the local *juicewalla* becomes a life-saving friend.

Gone are the days when the only thing fresh came in the form of *nimbu pani*. Now, one actually has a choice— orange, pineapple, apple, litchi, guava and mango juice is readily available in convenient tetra packs. And the choice is not limited to just fruit drinks.

Health freaks who prefer traditional coolers can pick up herbal drinks made of *badam*, *khus* and, of course, the ever present *roohafza*. Although the colour is not too appetising and the taste is an acquired one, those who like it swear by its cooling properties. A traditional drink made of raw mangoes and herbs — *Panna* — is useful in staving off sunstroke.

The recipe for making *Panna* is very easy and once made, this drink stores well in the fridge and can be kept for at least a week in a clean airtight bottle. Boil the mangoes with sugar to taste. Once soft, lightly mash the pulp and strain the juice. Garnish the liquid with herbs like mint, roasted and ground cumin, salt and a pinch of black salt, according to taste.

Even though milk products rot more easily during the summer, the most evergreen drink of all is the humble *lassi*. Served in tall glasses with ice it feels really good going down. This drink is most popular in central India and has its origins in Punjab. There are many ways to making this drink: with sugar, with salt, with mint and also with fruit!

In this drink, plain yogurt is thinned out with iced water and sweetened. This can be drunk at any time of day with your meals or just straight. This is most refreshing if you have had a hard day out of doors, and it succeeds in cooling off the body and mind much better than a soft drink.

All you require to make *lassi* is plain fresh yogurt, iced water just enough to thin out the yogurt, sugar for sweet *lassi* or salt for salt *lassi*, according to taste. Combine all these ingredients in an electric blender for three seconds, pour out into a tall glass and garnish with mint or fresh fruits of your choice. If you want, you



can add a few drops of rose or *kewra jal* to give the *lassi* a really exotic flavour.

Another great drink for beating the heat is *Thandai*, a milk and almond drink originating from the plains of north India. Whole milk is normally used to make this drink but if you want, skimmed milk can be used as a substitute. The second major ingredient used is almonds which apart from tasting divine is also believed to enhance one's memory. The flavouring of this drink comes from cardamom. For a difference in taste it can also be flavoured with fresh mint or fresh *tulsi* leaves.

The recipe is easy to follow and the end result is delicious. You will require seeds from one cardamom, or four-five fresh mint or *tulsi* leaves, cold milk — whole or skimmed — and twelve blanched almonds. Crush the cardamom seeds. In a blender combine the cardamom powder or the fresh mint/tulsi, almonds and sugar with a little milk and blend well. Add the rest of the milk and blend further This drink is best when served chilled.

Saffron or *kesar* is also a superb coolant and most of affluent India



drinks *kesar* and *badam* milk. It is most popular in the south where it is drunk cool with meals. It is a very common sight to see waiters rushing from table to table bearing glasses of tall, frothy milk.

This drink is fairly simple to make and consists of milk, cardamom powder, a generous pinch of saffron, sugar to taste and a teaspoon of unsalted, peeled almonds cut into slivers. Combine the ingredients in a heavy pot and bring to a simmer. Turn the heat down and simmer for two minutes more. Pour into a blender and blend at high speed. Sprinkle with almonds and serve.

If you are watching your weight or do not want to indulge in heavy *lassi*, the best refresher would be buttermilk-the slightly tart liquid residue left when cream is churned to make butter. Known as *chha* or *chhaas* in the plains of northern India, it is a popular breakfast and lunch time drink and is made with roasted, ground cumin seeds, buttermilk, salt, freshly ground black pepper and a pinch of red pepper which is optional. Combine all the ingredients in a blender, blend for about three seconds, and serve.

For those of you who enjoy the occasional or not so occasional tipple, cocktail coolers can be much nicer than drinking plain old alcohol. But nothing can beat the hot favourite of summer, beer, which is drunk by the gallon through the day. Changing the flavour of beer for those who have not developed a taste for it - with shandy: beer mixed with a lemon based soft drink - is the best combination of soft and hard.

Gin and vodka are also wonderful as cocktail bases. Tom Collins is made of two oz gin, one oz lemon juice, one tbs sugar, three oz soda, one cherry and orange slice. Combine gin, lemon and sugar in a shaker and shake well. Strain into a glass filled with ice



cubes. Add soda, garnish with cherry and orange slice. Serve chilled. For a vodka base, try a vodka grasshopper— 3/4 oz. of green creme de menthe, 3/4 oz. of creme de cacao, 3/4 oz. vodka. Combine all the ingredients with ice. Strain into a cocktail glass and serve.

If you enjoy rum and bourbon try these for taste- Bourbon cooler: take two oz. of bourbon, four oz. lemon based aerated soft drink, one lemon wedge. Combine bourbon and soft drink in a glass filled with ice cubes and stir well. Garnish with a lemon wedge.

Coconut toastie could well be a ladies drink made with one oz. light rum, five tbs vanilla ice cream, 1/4 oz. whipped cream and shredded coconut. Combine all ingredients, except the coconut in a blender and blend on a low speed for a short length of time. Pour into a chilled champagne flute and garnish with coconut.

Enjoy the summer with the drink that you most prefer. Make living really easy for yourself while the sun shines, by cooling off with your favourite poison.■

FOCUS

Private Lives

Are our political leaders entitled to them? **Ghazala Wahab** finds out

The most powerful man in the world, the President of the United States of America, was in trouble. The aircraft he was travelling in had been hijacked. The hostages included his wife and daughter. But instead of caving in to pressure, the President stays on board to save the passengers on board, his family, and above all, to salvage the honour of his country. He was is, after all, the American dream President, a Vietnam veteran, an honest family man.

There was one catch though. This ideal of manhood was just a character played by Harrison Ford in the Hollywood blockbuster, *Air Force One*.

The film encapsulated, in a sense, the yearning of the American people: of how they want their President to be. Ford, as President, fights to save the honour of his country, endangers his personal security; whereas the real President is allegedly fudging evidence to save his skin. The media is having a field day, gleefully unearthing one sexual encounter after another, and recounting them under banner headlines on their front pages.

Yet, despite the media's enthusiasm, President Clinton's sexual adventures have only added to his popularity. The issue for most Americans, is not if he slept with all the women making claims, but whether he asked Monica Lewinsky to lie under oath?

For people in this part of the world the whole thing is trifle baffling. From the Indian perspective, a hue and cry over sexual indiscretion is a waste of precious time and newsprint, which can only be justified by the fact that such stories sell and people enjoy reading them even if they don't effect their voting pattern.

But lying? Is that such a big deal? After all, we in this country have been voting in people involved in all kinds of financial, social and personal irregularities, and will continue to do so. In India, lying seems to have become a way of life, it does not amount to crime or even a sin any longer.

So this sort of moral outrage appears not just foolish but also reflective of some kind of psychological disorder. The popular Indian view of Westerners, particularly Americans, is that of morally bankrupt people. But these very people set their leaders very high — sometimes impossible — moral standards, and then judge them by how well they live up to them.

As against this, India, the so-called conservative and spiritually-rich land turns a blind eye to anything even remotely connected with morality. It is a contradiction which is very close to hypocrisy. We are intolerant when it comes to religion, but extremely tolerant when it comes to ethics, the essence of all religions. Says Khushwant Singh, columnist and an author, "Ours is a more liberal society. We are the inheritors of liberal sexual traditions. One only has to look at our portrayals of our gods and goddesses. Compared to us, the West has a rigid, Christian, monogamous code. Their prurient attitude comes from their Victorian code of morality."

The media was always obsessed with Diana's private life



But does this liberal sexual inheritance mean that one puts a blanket over all sorts of sexual misdemeanours? While the sexual indiscretions and preferences of leaders do not really concern the people — being a matter between the leader and his wife/husband — blatant abuse of power for sexual favours is definitely not a personal matter. As Mrinal Pande, television host, says, "When the personal life of politicians starts affecting their politics then it definitely

becomes a case for investigation."

When one holds politicians accountable on financial and social irregularities, then why not on sexual ones as well? After all, not all sexual relationships remain personal. Politicians are known to have furthered the political careers of their mistresses, paying little attention to the concepts of merit and hard work.

Agrees Renuka Choudhury, Telugu Desam Party leader and former Union health minister, "Most of the women you see in politics today are the wives, widows and mistresses of various politicians. There are very few like us who have come up the hard way. And it is not funny because the careers of many brilliant women politicians have been destroyed because a particular wife, widow or mistress did not like them."

Yet, the Indian media and public skirt these issues. The reasons for this are many, including psychological and sociological. But perhaps the most important factor is political realities of the sub-continent.

In absence of even basic material requirements like food and clean drinking water people have no time or even desire to delve into peripherals like the sexual misdemeanours of their leaders, which is not the case in the West. Abroad, everyone has all the time in the world to to make everything an issue. Questions on British foreign secretary Robin Cook's relationship with his former secretary was a mild form of this condition; whereas the obsession with the late Princess Diana's personal life was its most extreme manifestation.

Another reason is that in India, nobody expects political leaders to be role models. As long as they are fulfiling their primary job, that is, making life a little more liveable they are doing enough. In that sense, Indian voters are perhaps more cynical; and they certainly see no connection between sexual morality and professional capability.

Says Mrinal Pande, "It is only partly true that people are indifferent to the sexual escapades of politicians. In my opinion, there is a very strong male-female divide. If the leader concerned is a female than people not only dig out unsavoury details about her life, they actually make up stories about her. This is because of the feudal nature of our society." According to her this is one reason why women politicians in the sub-continent, who want to be taken seriously as politicians, dress down, underplaying their sexuality.

But irrespective of the gender divide, this indifference is a sad reflection on our society, feels Khushwant Singh. He says, "Morality is very important for society. There have to be different parameters for individuals and leaders. Leaders have to set examples, individuals don't need to. Leaders, by virtue of what they are, have to behave responsibly. They have to live up to what they preach, only then can they be called leaders."

The same thoughts are echoed by Renuka Choudhury. One expects a leader to stand by what he or she does. To own up to mistakes instead of lying about them. To have the courage of conviction.

Paula Jones : Enhanced Clinton's popularity



And for this reason alone their lives should be open to scrutiny. Nobody needs to peek into anyone's bedroom, but when somebody is in a position to alter the lives of ordinary people then his or her actions should be transparent.

Says Gagan Saraswat, senior executive with Apple Finance Ltd, "People have a right to know what their elected representatives are doing. Whether they are conforming to the social norms of the society or not. After all, when you are in a position of power you have to make some personal sacrifices."

Isn't that stretching the right-to-know a bit too far? Saraswat says that philandering of any leader would not effect his voting decision as long as the representative is doing his job. But still he should know exactly what kind of a man he is.

But R.W. Sheikh, a business consultant with Omam Consultants, doesn't agree with this. He says, "My only concern is with the public life of the leaders. I am not bothered what they do behind the closed doors of their bedrooms as long as they are doing their primary job. After all, as a professional I would want to be judged only on my professional competence."

The Indian people, argues Sheikh, are not interested in the sexual adventures of politicians anyway. As illustration he uses the case of Gopinath Munde, deputy chief minister, Maharashtra. His alleged affair with a nautanki dancer for whom he had bought some property was exposed in a national weekly but there was no furore. It remained just a story, he says. "May be, the reason why Indians turn a blind eye to all this could be as the popular saying goes, hamam mein sab nange hain (everyone is as exposed as the other person in the bath)," says Sheikh with a chuckle.

Another reason for this indifference on the part of the people is our cultural ethos, says Renuka Choudhury. Indians, by temperament, are very inquisitive and interfering. But on all issues which require interference or even a stand they dither and withdraw saying that it is none of their business. Which explains the wife-beating, dowry deaths and various kinds of abuses that women undergo in a family.

But this does not explains why the media remains silent about it. Perhaps because there is a fine, but firm, line dividing what is within and without bounds. So, one can slay the politician on political grounds but stay away from his hearth and home. After all, aren't film stars enough to satiate the voyeuristic desires of the people? Besides, they are much better looking too. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 710	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2 4 6
IC 712	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 716	1600	1, 2 5 6	IC 744	1220	1 2 5 6
IC 740	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 716	1400	4 7	IC-744	1420	4 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1640	2 4 6	CD 268	2155	2 4 6
IC 716	1620	3, 5 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2 3 4, 5 6	IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 5	IC-722	1625	1 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W-511	1310	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 965	1315	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4 6
IC 765	1810	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-961	0805	daily
9W 963	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 462	1700	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1040	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 512	2015	daily	9W-511	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1 3 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1105	1, 3 5, 7	IC-702	1140	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 707	0700	2 4 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4, 5, 6	9W 612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1005	1 2 4 6 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1310	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0530	1, 3 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD 213	1300	2 6
IC 716	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W 621	0950	1, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1 3	IC-204/202	1655	1 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1 3, 5 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	?	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2 4 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4 6, 7	CD 286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ 183	1155	4	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 875	0425	7	KL-875	0240	7
BANGKOK					
KB 105	1025	2 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1210	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
BHUTAN					
BG-698	1715	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
SU-536	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI 106	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs. & Sun Arr. Tues, Wed & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr: Mon, Thurs, Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13 45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr: Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr Tues, Wed., & Sat.	11 35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues., Wed. & Sat, Arr. Tues., Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr. Sun, Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep. Mon., Tue & Thurs., Arr Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed, Sat & Sun.; Arr. Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr Tues.	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4 15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6 00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14 00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr.. Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14 10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arri Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22 35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems



Q. ***I am a student of B. Com second year and also studying CS and computers. Two years back I fell in love with a girl who was five years younger to me. I expressed my feelings to her and we kept communicating over the phone. Unfortunately, her parents came to know about the phone calls and they had to be stopped. Her parents went further and shifted their house about 5 km away from my house. The distance did not, however, stop me from visiting her. But she was always in the company of her parents or relatives. Sometimes her sight cheered me, sometimes, it left me unmoved. Can you tell me what I should do? I cannot live without her. But how can I get her love?***

Rajib, Asansol

A. You neglected to mention the age of the girl. But I assume you are about 19 or 20 which makes her about 15 or 16. My advice would be not to rush things with her, as she is still very young, and in all likelihood unsure of what she wants. It would be wise to slow down and take a break. This will give you time to examine your own feelings and give her some time to grow up! If you are sure of the depth of your feelings, you will be in a better position to deal with the situation. In addition, you are obliged to respect the wishes of her protective parents, at least until she gains majority.

Q. ***I am 38 years old and my husband is seven years senior to me and rather insensitive towards my feelings and sentiments. He holds a grudge against my parents as they could not meet up to his expectations of dowry. Understanding his mercenary cravings, I took up a job but that did not change his attitude. He treats me very shabbily in front of my children and others. At times he is abusive and cannot control his temper. I have a 15-year-old son and his birth was a caesarean delivery with all its complications. He forced me to have a second child and I yielded thinking it would change him. But it did not. I still look good and attractive and feel like quitting but stick on for the sake of the children. Please advise me how I should keep myself in one piece and regain my confidence. I was very carefree and confident before marriage. Do I need psychological help? Please use your tarot cards to predict my future.***



, ABC, Jamtara

A. You need to take your life in your own hands. Maybe quitting your marriage altogether is not the best option keeping in mind that there are two children involved. But surely, you do not have to helplessly face this emotional abuse at the hands of your husband. Stop being an emotional captive. Be in charge of your own happiness. Try to derive happiness from within yourself, from your children, your job and from positive objects.

Don't let yourself fall into this trap where your energies are being depleted by your dispassionate husband. Work on your self-esteem. Adopt a new approach to your job — do it not to please him, but to please yourself. You will be surprised at what a wonderful medicine self-confidence can be. You do not need to rely on your husband to assess your worth. You are relatively young, attractive, and the last thing you need is to create false dependencies for yourself. You certainly do not need psychological help or tarot cards for that matter.

Parents unhappy with your performance and you feel you are a failure? In life, everyone goes through high and low periods. One has to learn to take these ups and downs. The key is positive thinking. Condition yourself to look at the brighter side of things

Q. ***I am a student of class XII and passing through a rather bad time. My parents have lost all hope in me, they scold me constantly as they feel I have not succeeded in any sphere of life. I have tried my best to be successful but luck has betrayed me. One of my friends has suggested that I am going through a period of depression. My Higher Secondary examinations are in April but I cannot concentrate on my studies. Please help me.***

Anindita, Sonarpur

A. In life, everyone goes through high and low periods. One has to learn to take these ups and downs in your stride. The key is positive thinking. Condition yourself to look at the brighter side of things. Only we can help ourselves to be happy. Depending on other people or external objects for happiness is not the answer. Every one of us must at least attempt to make ourselves more emotionally self-sufficient. Each one of us must try to find the key to our own joy which surely lies within us. Your parents probably feel that scolding you will propel you to perform better. At this crucial hour in your academic life, try not to get deflected. The way to teach yourself concentration is through persistence and determination. Put in your very best, you are sure to do well. Good luck!



Q. ***I am a student of class XII and my board examinations are due in April but I am in a great dilemma. I spend most of my time thinking absurd things related to sex. I keep having carnal dreams and indulge in self-abuse. Consequently, I have lost concentration in my studies. Suggest how I can come out of this utopia of my own creations and lead a normal life.***

Name withheld, Calcutta

A. The way to control your runaway mind is to work on your concentration. Indulging in sexual fantasy is perfectly normal at your age and by no means abnormal. But the more relevant question is how to concentrate on your studies for the boards. First of all, free yourself of this 'guilt' about your fantasising. Then go to work! Your board examinations are around the corner. Be your own watchdog. Everytime you feel your mind is straying, compel yourself to refocus your attention to your main subject matter. Soon, with practice, you should be able to train your mind to respond to your commands. This training will prove helpful all through your life.



Indulging in sexual fantasy and losing concentration in studies? Be your own watchdog. Everytime you feel your mind is straying, compel yourself to refocus your attention to your main subject matter. Soon, with practice, you should be able to train your mind to respond to your commands

Q. ***I fell in love with a girl when I was 12 years old. After four years I expressed my feelings to her. But she vehemently refused me. I later proposed to another girl whom I was close to but she, too, turned me down. Now I am 25 and in love with a third girl who happens to be a good friend of mine. But I am afraid to express my feelings to her because I am afraid that she will refuse me, too. I don't have many friends and am a bit nervous mixing with people. I would not like to lose her friendship. What should I do?***

S.R., Calcutta

A. Let me reassure you that everyone who suffers rejection is wary of being hurt again. But rejection is a fact of life, and unfortunately, one just has to take it with a pinch of salt. But do not let it destroy your self-esteem. You are still very young, and armed with the right attitude, you have many fruitful friendships to look forward to. But I have to advise you to tread the path of caution with your friend. A lasting friendship is far more valuable than a possibly fleeting romance.



Before even thinking of confessing your love, you must decide whether you are willing to risk your friendship. In a close friendship, there is always the possibility of one person experiencing some degree of infatuation and it might be worth it to wait and test the intensity of your love.

Before going ahead and pouring your heart out to her, try and judge what her reaction is likely to be. Maybe some mild flirtation is called for. It will help prepare the ground for an alternative relationship for both of you without actually taking the plunge blindly.

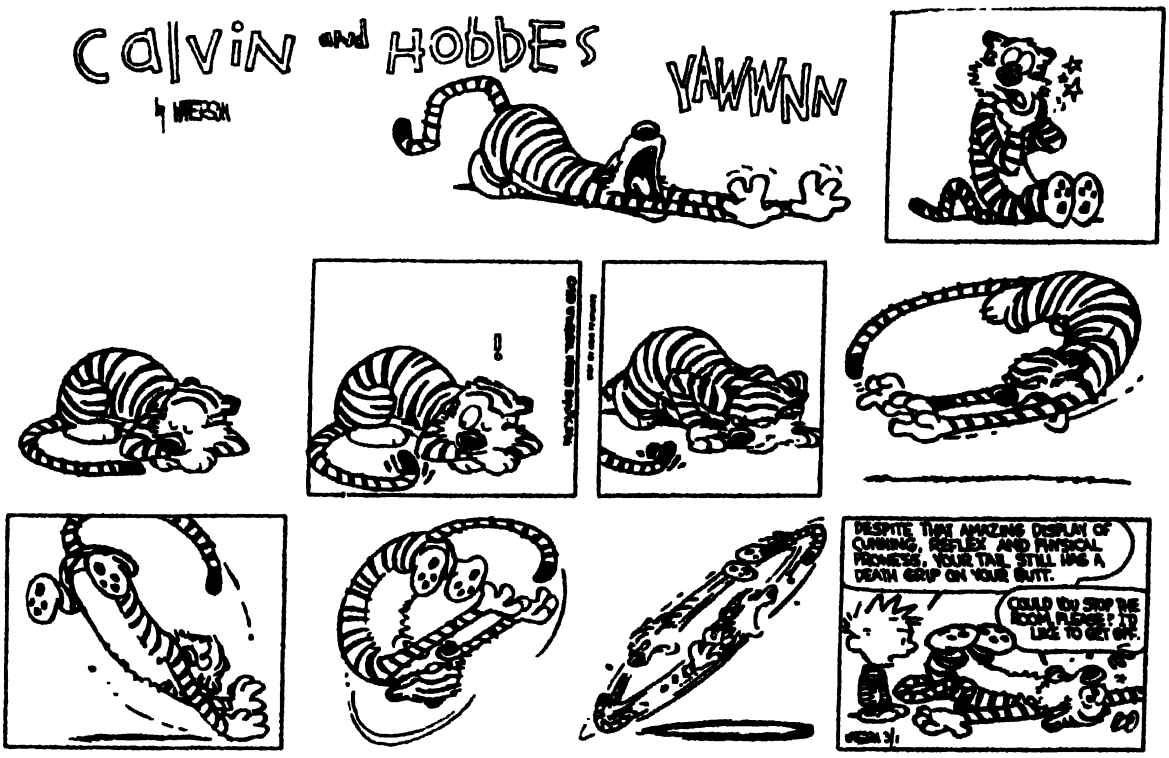
In Survival Strategies dated March 29 we had carried a letter from a Ms Reena Chabbra. We would like to clarify that this is not the same person who lives in Central Calcutta and goes by the same name. Any embarrassment caused to her because of a case of mistaken identity is regretted. — Editor

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

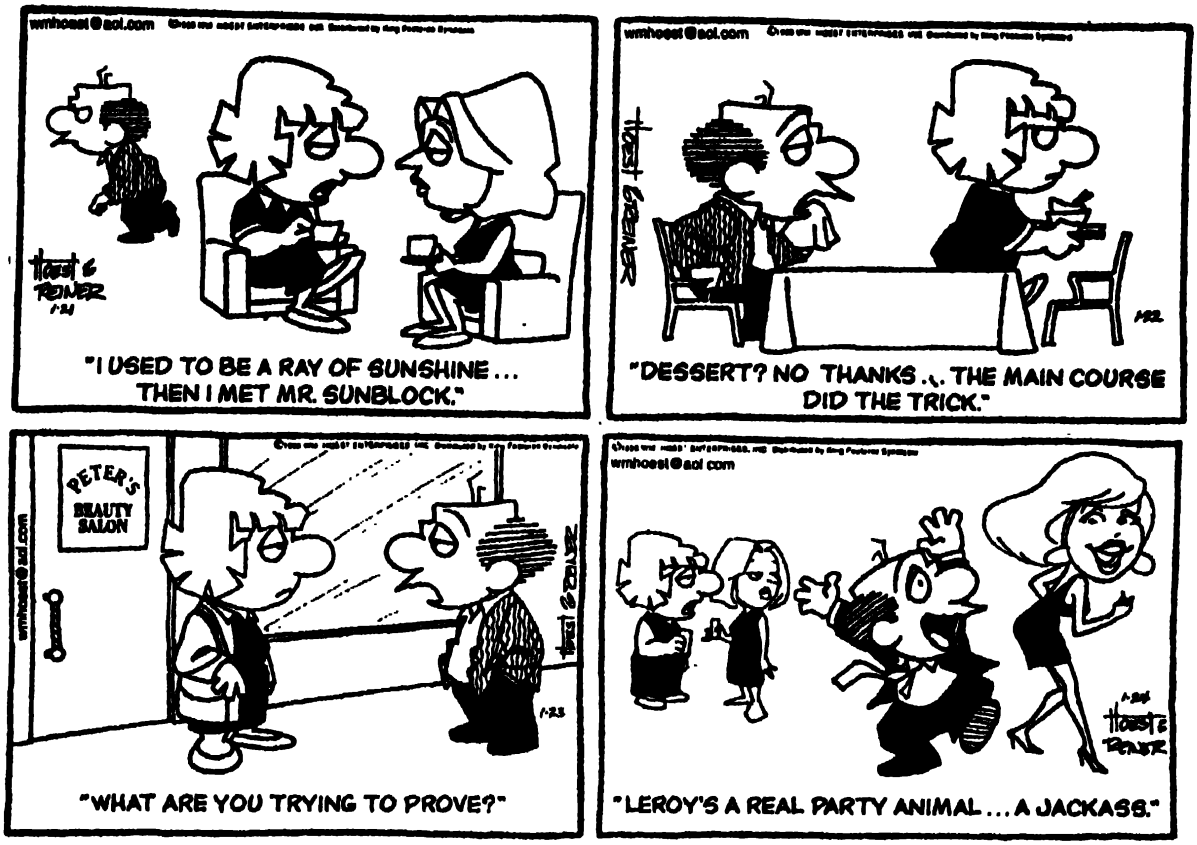
ARCHIE



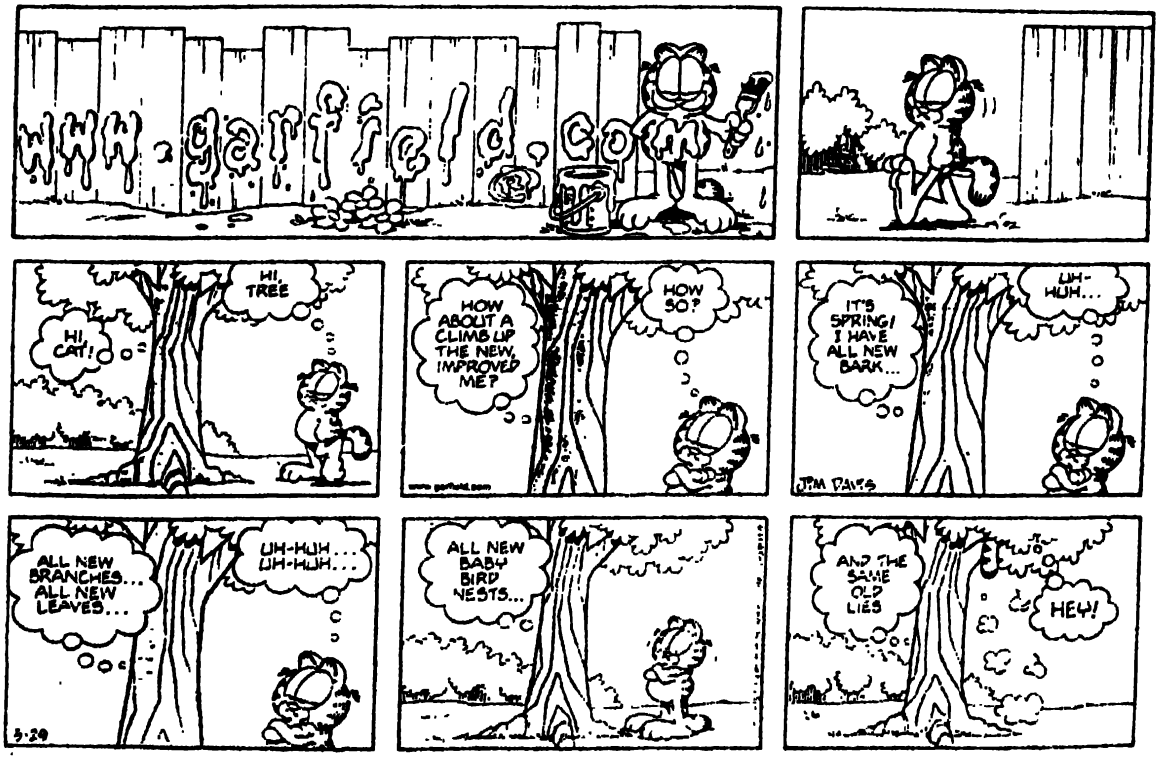
CALVIN AND HOBBES BY WATTERSON



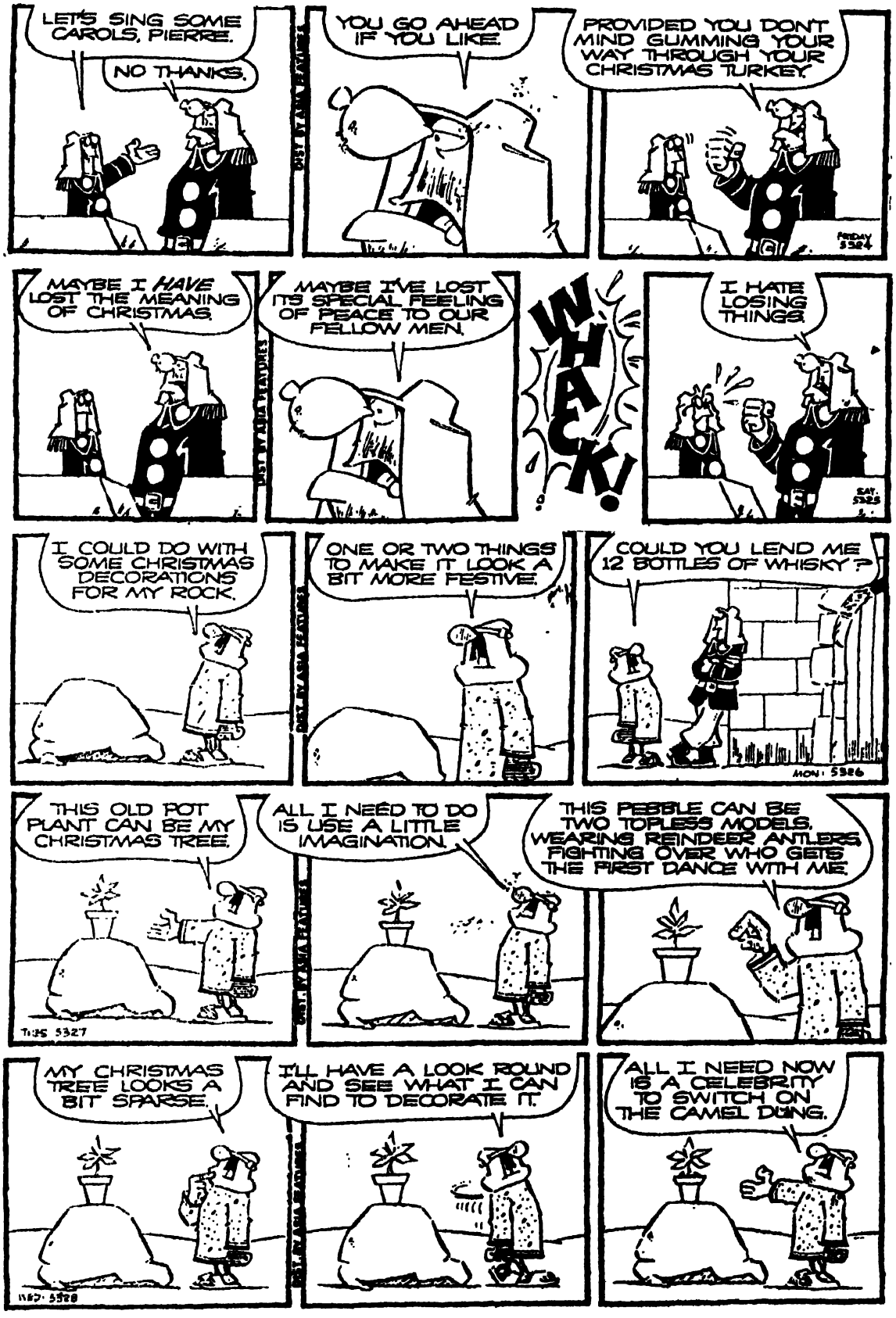
THE LOCKHORNS



GARFIELD by WATTERSON

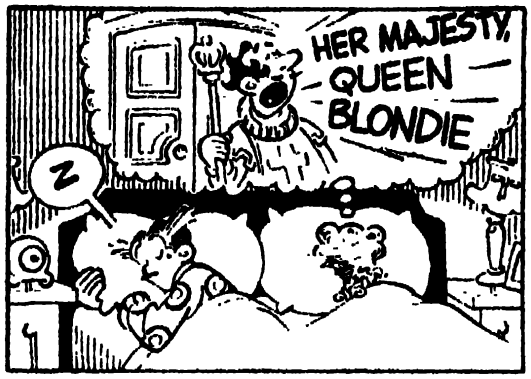


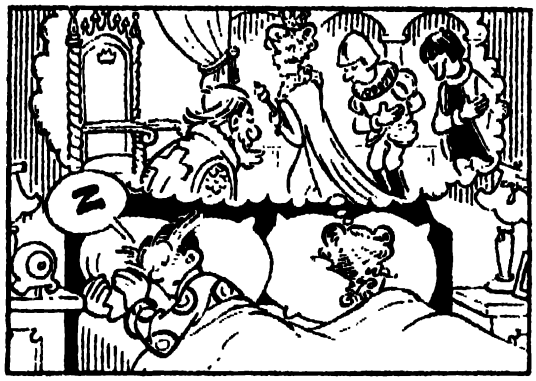
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

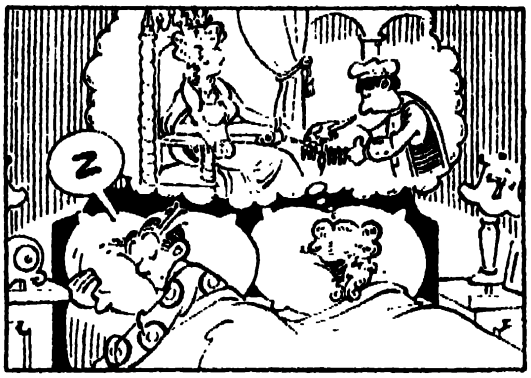


BLONDIE ▒ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

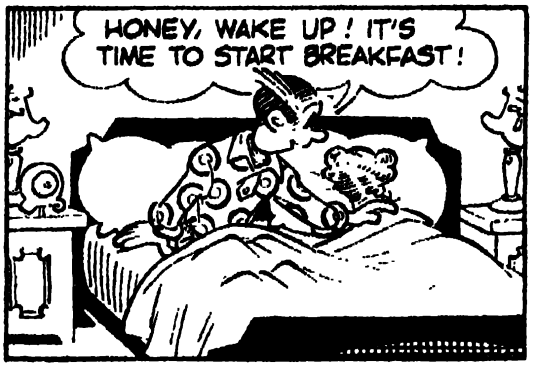




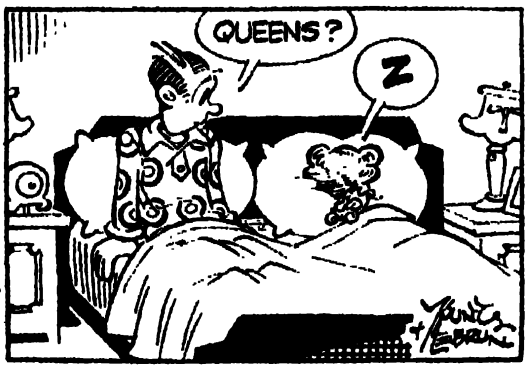












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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

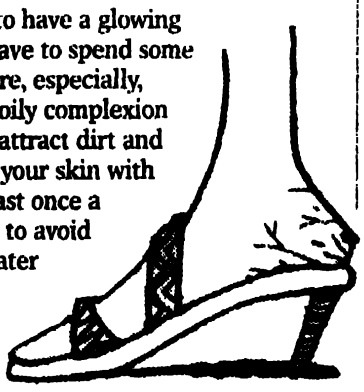
Q ***I am 13 years old and already getting pimples. Will they become worse? I am told that it is very common for teenagers to get pimples but I wish to avoid it. I am also very scared of the marks that pimples often leave behind. Please advise.***
Seema Prasad, Darjeeling.



A Pimples can occur at any age. You can, however, easily control them by being a little careful and by bringing about some changes in your lifestyle. Make it a point to say a firm 'no' to fried foods and sweets, drink atleast ten glasses of water every day and consume lots of salads, soups, fruits and natural juices. You must learn to keep your face very clean as well. Apply a face pack of green gram flour, ten ground cloves, mint paste and rose water. This should be done atleast thrice a week. Make sure that you do not suffer from constipation. Abiding by all these rules will ensure that you have a glowing complexion.

Q ***I am 40 years old and I have an oily skin. Please tell me how I should look after it naturally. I would request you not to suggest an elaborate skin care routine as I don't have a lot of spare time.***
Deepak, Nagaland.

A If you wish to have a glowing skin, you will have to spend some time on skin care, especially, since you have oily complexion which tends to attract dirt and pollution. Wipe your skin with rose water atleast once a day. If you wish to avoid the soap and water routine, you can use cleansing grains which can be made by combining powdered rice, gram flour, sandlewood powder and powdered masoor dal. Take a teaspoon at a time and mix with water. Apply this mixture all over your face, scrub gently and then wash off with cold water. You will find your skin feeling and looking much cleaner.



To treat cracked heels:

- Soak feet in warm milk and use pumice stone

A ***I am a 22 year old woman. I love using eye make-up but whenever I use eyeliner, my eyes start watering. Is there anything apart from kajal -- which has a very smudgy effect --which I can apply on my eyes?***
Radhika, Calcutta.

Q Try to use your liner slightly away from the eyes. Also start applying your kajal with a liner brush which is available at any cometic store and then follow up with an eye-liner. This will ensure that your eye make-up does not smudge. Your eye-liner will also not be touching your skin directly, so the watering will also not occur. There are also some very good eye-pencils available in the market that can be used instead of kajal. You can experiment with them as well. Expressive eyes invariably enhance a woman's beauty and it thus becomes imperative to make them look appealing.



Q ***I am an ardent reader of your column. I have a severe problem of after shave rashes. Could it be due to the cologne that I use or due to some other reason? Please advise.***
Mridul, Mumbai.

A After shave rashes can be a reaction to the cologne that you are using but it could also be due to the very sensitive skin that you appear to have. Try to change your cologne and go in

for a mild after shave lotion. After shaving, I would advise you to first moisturise your skin and then apply alum all over it. This is an age old treatment that is also very effective. Try to be gentle with your skin. I would also suggest that you apply fuller's earth face pack once a week to keep the skin toned.

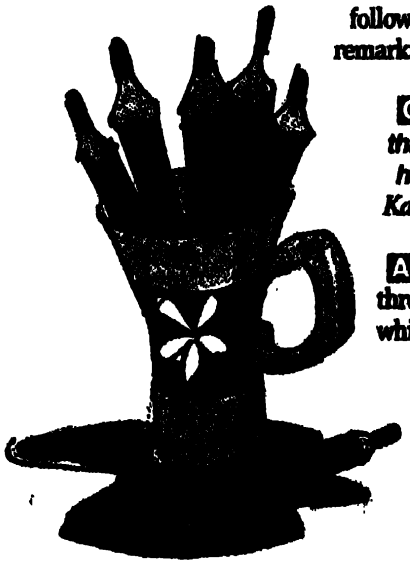
Q *I am a 10-year-old girl and I feel I have a very dull skin. This is making me feel so depressed that I cannot concentrate on my studies any more. Will my skin always remain like this? Please advise.*
Monisha, Patna.



A I am happy to see that you have become aware of the need to look after your skin from such an early age but I think you are laying far too much importance on your looks. This is the time to concentrate on your studies. You can, however, take out five minutes everyday to look after your skin. Mix a paste of fresh cream, two ground almonds and the juice of a lemon and apply all over face and neck for five minutes. Scrub off with milk and then wash off. You can also apply 2-3 drops of olive oil and very gently massage it into the facial skin and leave on for sometime. This will keep your skin satin smooth.

Q *I am 32 years old and am very conscious about my cracked heels. I have tried out various treatments available in the market and they only provided me with temporary relief. Please suggest a permanent remedy.*
Srilata Subramaniam, Calcutta

A As with the weather, changes in the skin are also inevitable. There can be no permanent solution to this problem. You have to deal very gently with your heels. Soak your feet in warm milk for about 15 minutes. Use a pumice stone to soften out dead skin on the heels and soles of the feet. You can then apply warm sesame oil mixed with olive oil and massage the feet. This should be ideally done daily at night before going to sleep so that the oil is left on for about six hours atleast. If you feel that your sheets are going to get too messy as a result of this, you can use a pair of socks. If followed regularly, this routine will make a remarkable difference as to how your feet look.



Q *I am 18 years old and have very thick eyebrows. Can I pluck them at home or should I get them threaded?*
Kajal Biswas, Siliguri.

A I would advise you to get them threaded professionally as many times while plucking, one can even pull the skin near the eye which can be extremely painful. Always dab eyebrows with ice cold rose water after threading.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



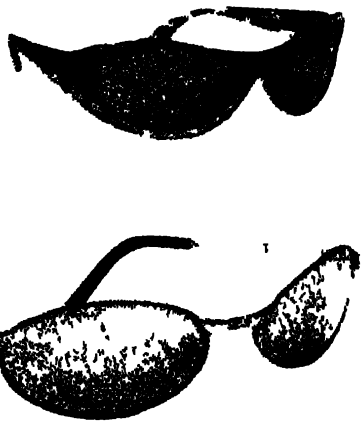
THE EST

NAFISA JOSEPH
Model/ veejay

Somehow I've never landed a perfect pair of sunglasses for myself. Besides which I'm terribly careless with them and invariably break them even before I can get used to them. Eight months ago, however, I did buy myself a pair that I think is perfect. It's one of the cat-eyed ones that our moms and dads would wear when we were children. The pair is plain brown with a classic French design. I like it as it suits my face and is dressy and sober at the same time.



Pradip Sanya





RUBY BHATIA
Actress/Veejay:

My favourite pair of sunglasses is the one that I picked up in Canada. It really doesn't matter to me that it is unbranded as I love it for its style. It's cat-eyed, oval and narrow and I love its mirror-effect lenses. The pair conforms to the specifications that I look for in sunglasses which are never round, and invariably coloured blue. I buy my sunglasses from Canada but on one occasion Ray Ban was generous enough to gift me a pair.

An Eye for an Eye

If you're looking for sunglasses, you will be spoilt for choice, says **Samita Bhatia**

Would you rather be Bewitched, Defiant, Reckless, Volatile or Spellbound? Or are you one for Revolt, Illusion, Pandemonium, Venom or Recess. Encouraging you to look beyond your own nose are myriad brands of sunglasses that correspond to your state of mind and christened to suit your every mood.

Accessorising yourself is in and people are no longer stopping at just clothes to be hip. Today, the most obvious mode of making a fashion statement is with your sunglasses.

"With distinct customer choices emerging there is a great need for a wide range of sunglasses to suit individual tastes. Today there is a frame to suit every face," says J S Bajwa, managing director, Bausch & Lomb.

Lightweight styles predominate the market and look sleek or sporty, sophisticated or simply cool. The moods swing between the outrageous, witty, irreverent and confident.

You can pick up these symbols of your lifestyle in colours that are just as diverse. The hot sellers are matte black, glossy brown, glossy copper or gunmetal, flash gold, dark gray and silver flash. Or simply red. The effort of manufacturers is to offer "the highest standards in terms of quality, comfort, design and durability," says Bajwa. The innumerable foreign brands which have a strong presence in the country combine in them some

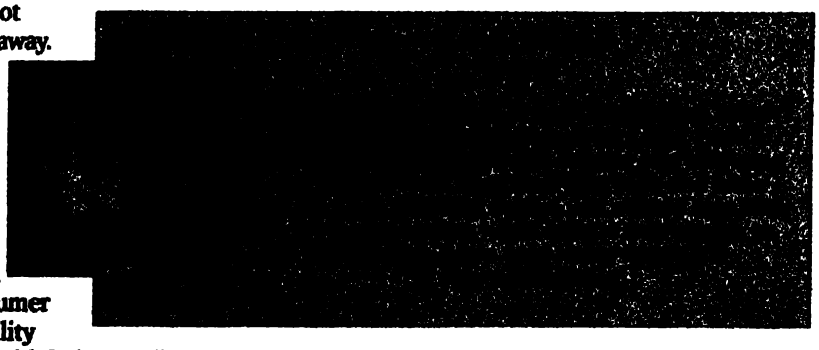


salient features which are compelling Indians to take to them. They offer practicality, quality, comfort, durability, safety and above all, style. They claim to provide total glare protection, distortion free vision and hundred per cent protection from the harmful ultra-violet rays.

The latest entrant in the sunglasses market is Benetton that is fast metamorphosing into a "lifestyle brand", helping you to accessorise. Says Robert Angeli, director, marketing, Benetton, "The sunglasses market may be in a nascent stage in India but we foresee a substantial growth in the coming years."

The abundant collections available today are reflective of this evolving industry. In the market for sunglasses there is no brand loyalty in customers, says Angeli. "However there is a tendency of buying branded sunglasses," he adds. The influx of international brands in the Indian market has tutored the consumer on quality parameters that should be expected in a branded product.

International brands have been doing brisk business over the years, prices notwithstanding. Trends indicate that price tags, which are on the steep side, are not keeping buyers away. Angeli says of Benetton's range, "Reasonable prices have helped product acceptability in an effective way. The Indian consumer is extremely quality conscious along with being traditionally price sensitive."



And they are picking up the latest styles from Armani (Rs 6,000-7,500), Oliver (Rs 5,500-6,000), Police (Rs 3,800), Christian Dior (Rs 2,000-2,200) or Safilo and Carrera (Rs 2,200-2,500). Brands which have been officially imported and are available across the country.

Others that have entrenched themselves in India, like Ray-Ban, are specifically catering to evolving individual preferences.



You are invited to look cool this summer with the new Ray-Ban range that the company says is based on the 'Diversity of the Individual'. Says Abhijit Sanyal, vice president, Eye-Wear Business and general sales manager, Bausch & Lomb India, "Our new collection compliments individualistic lifestyles. It makes a strong personal statement and caters to the global-Indian citizen."

Ray-Ban specifically targets women with Rituals (Rs 1,890-2,290), a range that offers them accompaniments for formal and informal wear. Air Boss (Rs 2,790-2,890) are wrap-around sunglasses in metal, a contemporary design that harks to the timeless design of the Aviator model.

You could try Mondo Metal (Rs 2,990) for a youthful appeal or go for the sporty Asphalt (Rs 3,490) range and its square-flat or square-wrap frames in gun metal finishes. Or try Cross Walk (Rs 2,790) which has been "designed to fit every face and situation", or so the company insists.

Benetton hopes to "open up the market" too with it's recently launched range of sunglasses that weigh a mere 6 gm with the lenses. Through Colours (Rs 1,399) and United Colours of Benetton (Rs 2,199) the brand retails 32 styles in different colours which provide a fair choice to the customer.

The classic, trendy and funky shapes of the glasses appear to have gone down well with youngsters. Now the company is planning to retail them in the open market.

The company's move to venture into accessories is a part of a long term plan of recreating Benetton as a one-stop-shop. Says Angeli, "Brand extension into areas concerned with fashion and lifestyle is a logical move from apparel into accessories."

There's more for the fiercely independent young generation.

Italian brand Killer Loop introduces them to street sport eye-wear. The collection comes in a range of seven styles and 28 colours while prices begin at Rs 2,290.

According to Bajwa of Bausch & Lomb that has also brought the Killer Loop brand to India, "The decision to launch a street sports eye-wear brand has been a strategic one."

Killer Loop caters to the needs of those people who have an active lifestyle and stand out "from mainstream society." He adds, "The collection is designed to appeal to today's urban youth who are confident, witty and have a streak of irreverence." The various styles in the collection reflect different facets of the youth of today, says Bajwa. So the different ranges in the collection have been aptly christened Revolt, Illusion, Pandemonium, Bewitched, Defiant and Reckless.

Global trends have dictated that while eye-wear designs have to make an individual statement, the look must be bolder and sleeker. Your choices abound, and are available right under your nose or should one say above it. ■

PROFILE

Woman of Many Parts

Dancer, bureaucrat, wife, mother and teacher; Shovana Narayan excels at all these roles. **Geeta Sharma** reports

Years ago in Calcutta, a woman went to enrol her little daughter as a student of Sadhana Bose, the dancer and actress of yester-year. Looking at the child, she told the mother, "*Koler bachha nieye eshechho?*" (Have you brought a babe in arms to me?)

Despite the less than propitious beginning, the little girl learnt the rudiments of dance from Bose. And often, even as the others in the dance class left after the day's work, she would still be standing in front of her teacher, asking for more. Small wonder then that Shovana Narayan — as the little girl was called — left her co-students far behind in no time at all.

Then, as her civil servant father got transferred to Mumbai, she went under the tutelege of guru Kundal Lal. There too, the determination to learn continued. And while the other students chose to run away to play when the guru was late for class, Shovana would sit patiently waiting for him.

That was, perhaps, because Narayan's parents had told her there were no half-hearted efforts in learning — whether in school or at the dance class. "You have to put in your best in both. But the day you get a second rank in your school, your dancing will have to end," her parents told her categorically.

So even as a young girl, Shovana Narayan, learnt to live with the duality of excelling in both — academics, which she had to pursue; and dance, which was her vocation. Today, at 45, with an MSc. degree in Physics, a bright bureaucratic career and a stream of awards for her Kathak performances around the world later, Shovana looks back on her life with some satisfaction.

Narayan's 16-year-old marriage to an Austrian diplomat, Herbert Traxl, and his being deputed as the Austrian ambassador to New Delhi, has added a third dimension to her life. Besides being a dancer and bureaucrat, she also has to play the role of official hostess as the ambassador's wife. And in addition to these, there is yet another facet to her: a dance teacher, "who is keen not to necessarily churn out good dancers, but also *rasiks* and *rasikas* (an appreciative audience)".

Shovana insists that not one of these roles has hindered or hampered the other at any point in her life. She answers your look of disbelief by pointing out that she has made it possible through sheer hard work — something she has been used to since childhood. "Since I was in school, my days have begun at five in the morning and ended in the late hours. Perhaps that is what has given me the time and determination to pursue all this," she says.

Strangely, Shovana does not come from a family of dancers or artistes, as one would expect, but of bureaucrats and politicians. Her grandfather was a member of the Central Assembly while the late President Dr Rajendra Prasad, was her uncle. Her mother, a social worker, hailed from an aristocrat family of North Bihar.

"In our family, dancing was not something that a girl could take up seriously those days. And yet, when I would finish doing all the odd-jobs to keep me busy and go up to her and ask 'Ma, what should I do now?' she would look exasperated and say, '*Tum nacho!*'" Little did she realise that it was exactly what her daughter would be doing for a major part of her life, Shovana adds laughingly.



Ashwani Chopra



Even at the tender age of nine, Shovana was an intrepid learner. One day, guru Kundan Lal asked her if she would like to dance on the sharp edge of a sword and she agreed. Then, shortly before a performance, little Shovana was asked if she would do it on stage and again she said 'Yes!'

A bed of (12) swords strapped on a wooden base was soon laid on stage and the nine-year-old danced on it, enthralling the audience with her flawless rendering. The only person not amused by it all was her mother, who was in the audience and fainted the moment she saw her daughter step on the sword bed.

Shovana fondly recalls her learn-

ing years, the time spent training under guru Birju Maharaj, were the most endearing and tough. "He taught me all the *'angs'* and gave me the final solid grounding in my dance. And he was a hard taskmaster. He would come home on weekends, when there was no school and make me dance from ten in the morning till late evening, never letting me sit even for a moment," she remembers.

Shovana feels indebted to Birju Maharaj not only because of the *talim* but also for the fact that he came to her house to teach her for ten years without charging her a single penny. "My mother would ask him to take at least some *guru dakshina* and he would say, 'I only want her to become a good dancer,' " she recalls. Her mother finally devised her own way of repaying him: keeping a serving of *paan* and a plate of *rabari*, both of which he loved, ready for him ever



Shovana Narayan with her Austrian diplomat husband



day.

Deeply committed to the world of art, she has done extensive research especially in the field of dance. She has authored two works, *Rhythmic Echoes and Reflections* and *The Development of Kathak in Bihar.* Narayan is also a visiting lecturer at the University of Vienna.

Shovana's performances have been imbued with a contemporariness that she feels is inherent to Kathak. And yet, dance to her does not mean experimenting. It is an inward expression of one's inner feelings. Some of her works, like *Darpan*, was traditional yet very contemporary and she feels that themes taken from a present-day format or characters with modern names can still have the same resonance as traditional themes. She cites the example of Lord Krishna and asks, "What he did as a child, don't children of today do similar things?" Her compositions, *Darpan*, *Muktilekha* and *Manav Adhikaar*, were innovations that dealt with contemporary themes. Besides, she has also taken themes from contemporary poets such as Maithilisharan Gupta, Ratnakar Pandey, Mahadevi Verma, Harivansh Rai Bachchan, Jaishankar Prasad and many others.

Her fresh approach, creativity and sensitivity were in evidence in *Moonlight Impressions* where she performed Kathak to the piano. German pianist Hermann Sausen played the music compositions of Ravel and Debusyy, while Narayan performed duets with Western classical ballet dancers.

Shovana has also proven to be a pioneer of sorts with a unique experiment bringing together three diverse dance styles — the Spanish Flamenco, the European Classical ballet and Kathak — in the form of a dance drama, *The Dawn After.*

Over the past five years, Shovana, together with eminent philosopher and grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, Ram Chandra Gandhi, has worked on several scripts on the lives of sages, such as Ramana Maharishi (*The Awakening of Death*), Swami Vivekananda (*The Temptation of Vivekanada*) and *Mohan and Rambha* based on an episode on the life of Mahatma Gandhi.

Her marriage to Herbert Traxl, currently the Austrian ambassador to New Delhi, has helped her promote the dance form in a big way in her husband's native country. As a result, a one-hour film on her has been made and telecast on Austrian TV. Shovana is modest about the Padma Shree, Indira Priyadarshini, Shringar Shiromani and National Integration awards among others, and says her long working hours have made it possible for her to excel in life.

Shovana is also a senior joint secretary level officer in the Audit and Accounts service, but says her work has not hampered her dance career and vice versa. The training and discipline and long hours of work that she has been used to, have made it possible for her to be fair to both.

On the personal front, her long-distance courtship with Herbert, whom she met at a performance, was followed by a long-distance marriage. "We would meet after three-four months whenever either could go over to visit the other," she says. Their 12-year-son, Erwin Ishan, who now studies in Vienna, was with Shovana for the first six years. "After the kindergarten years, we felt it would be better if he studied there. I miss him but then whenever I can, I go and meet him."

An eminent danseuse, a successful bureaucrat and a career diplomat's wife. Is there any other role that she is yet to slip into? "No. I don't want to be anything more, I am quite happy the way I am," she says, with a laugh.■



Ramp model Sheetal Mallar prefers clothes which involve less of skin show

Skirting the Issue



DESIGNER TRESSES:

I am very passionate about my hair. I must have coloured my hair 25 times in the last year and a half. I have worn my hair sun bleached, to silver, to a raging red,to silver streaks in red and auburn to a simple dark brown

Being on the modelling scene, one is compulsively driven to keep up with the West. Yet, while on the ramp I am comfortable wearing anything, so long as it doesn't involve too much of skin show. Here I put my foot down firmly, because I know there are others who will do it anyway.

I have always lived in my jeans and still do. But while at work, I prefer to wear a pant suit. I wear skirts very sparingly, since you have to be very careful about how you sit etc. I am very careless in this respect and hence prefer to be well covered. And yet, my favourite attire remains the skirt suit, which I wear only for a very formal party where they ask for a specific dress code.

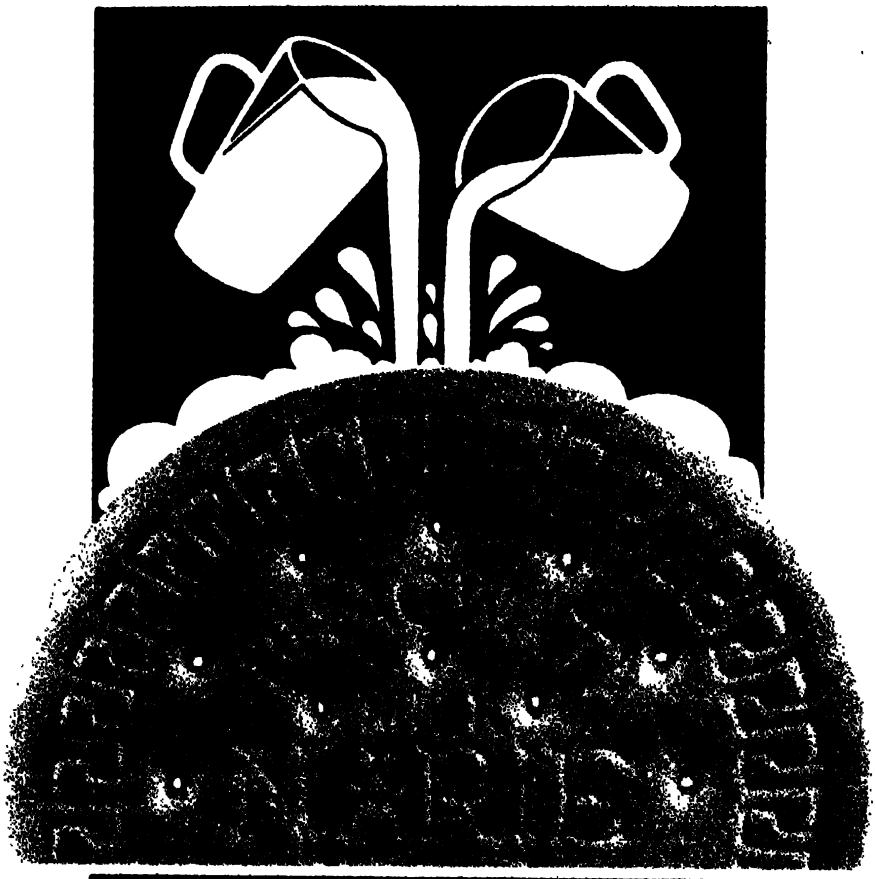
Some years back, after stepping out of an austere convent school and into college, I went through this completely weird phase — or so my mother tells me. I would turn out in extremely short skirts and wear a stupid hairstyle like bunching up my hair right on top of my head and have it fall around my like a fountain. All that, thankfully, is a thing of the past. Today I have evolved into hipsters and trousers. I do not use any make-up in the day, but for a moisturiser and a lip pencil.

Since I travel so much for work,I get opportunities to shop for clothes in the places that I visit. I have been shopping in Europe and America, especially in the last three years. Donna Karan and Armani are my favourites. Back home in Mumbai, the Fashion Street is ideal for a mish mash of clothes. I have found some outstanding stuff here from surplus rejects. As for footwear, I stick to simple open platforms.

Apart from clothes, I am very passionate about hair. I must have coloured my hair some 25 times in the last year and a half. I have worn my hair sun bleached, to silver, to a raging red, to silver streaks in red and auburn to a simple dark brown. Now I am wearing a darker shade, and intend to go easy on funky styling, because my hair has become very limp thanks to the shower of peroxide. Actually, I am surprised that after all this I have any hair left on my head!

■ As told to Sudipta Basu

Go gay the milky way



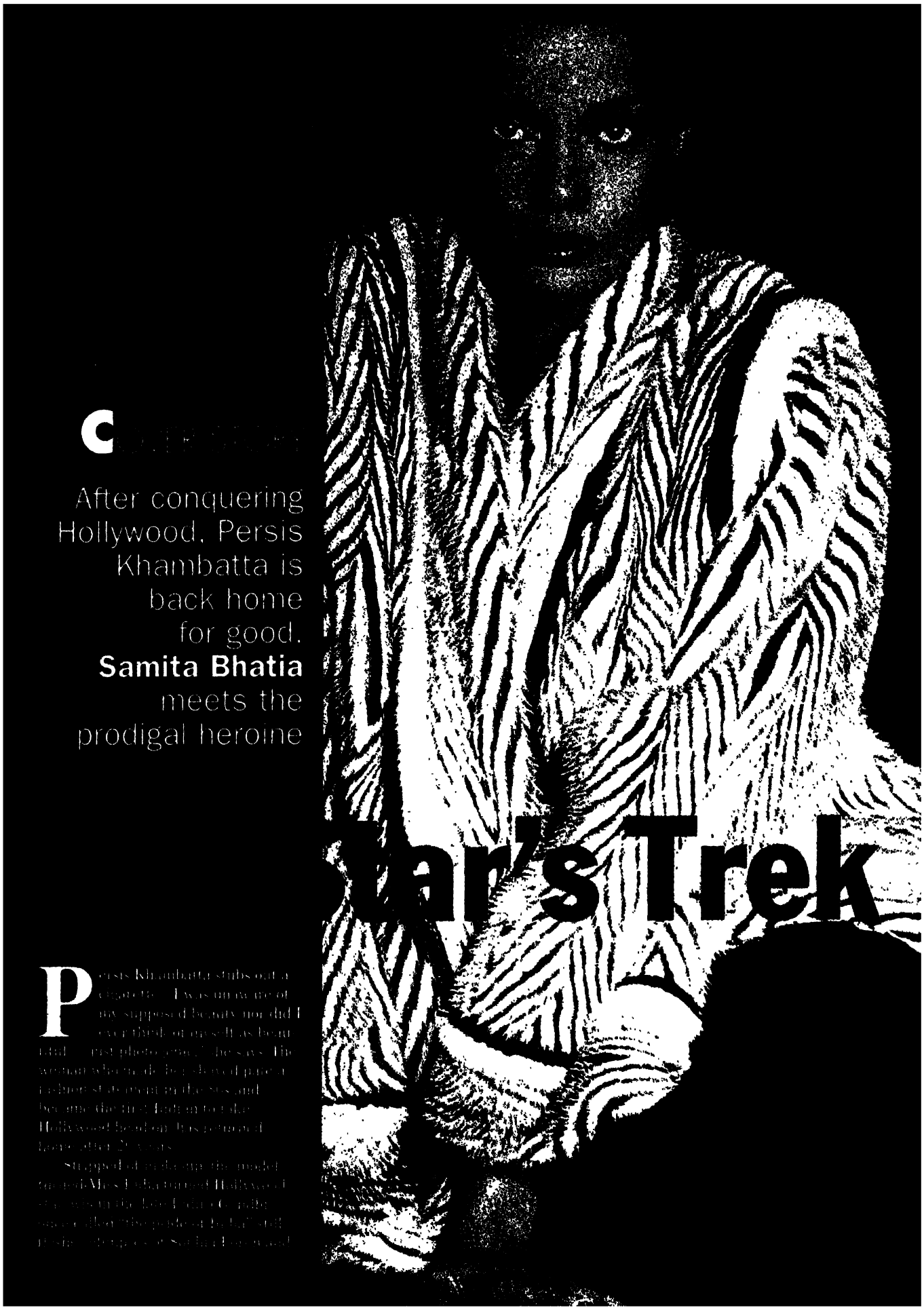
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BISCUITS





C

After conquering Hollywood, Persis Khambatta is back home for good. **Samita Bhatia** meets the prodigal heroine

tar's Trek

Persis Khambatta stubs out a cigarette. "I was unaware of my supposed beauty, nor did I ever think of myself as beautiful—just photogenic," she says. The woman who made her debut as a bald space cadet in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* and became the first Indian to take Hollywood by storm, has returned home after 20 years.

Slapped with the tag of the model turned Miss Universe turned Hollywood star, Persis Khambatta's life has been a roller coaster ride. She graduated to fame and [illegible]



Harry Langdon

A versatile face; (centre) Persis Khambatta with Shyam Benegal at the announcement of *Not a Nice Man to Know* and (righ

Persis sums up her successful Hollywood stint with, 'It lasted because I had the versatility to look Italian, Spanish, French, Gujarati or Parsi'

Gina Lollabrigida. And you are not surprised to hear that she was voted one of the 10 most beautiful women in the world by Lord Patrick Lichfeld, the Queen of England's personal photographer.

She got rave reviews as the Air-India girl in England; was among the minuscule three per cent of the 2,00,000 actors in Hollywood who had a film in hand; sashayed the famed catwalks of Europe and America; wined and dined with Hollywood greats who only feature in other people's dreams.

To date she also remains the sole Indian to be invited to present an Oscar — for which she was called away from shooting with Sylvester Stallone for *Night Hawks*. Persis sums up her successful Hollywood stint with, "It lasted because I had the versatility to look Italian, Spanish, French, Gujarati or Parsi."

However, she reached out across continents to her homeland with a helping hand when required. In the wake of the Latur earthquake she raised $ 50,000 for the victims at a quiet charity dinner in Los Angeles.

Now she's back for good and soon she'll be on Star TV being quizzed by Khushwant Singh on what makes her tick in *Not a Nice Man to Know*. Says Sadia Dehlvi, the series producer, "The women on the show have a mystique about them. And Persis has more than her fair share."

Persis hit the front pages some months ago with the launch of *Pride of India*, a coffee table book published by Parichit Media. Says Khambatta, "I hoped that some day I'd be able to do something for Indian women who I've always empathised with." This took the form of a glossy on the history of Indian beauties, featuring all the Miss Indias the country has known. "Everything was done for the love of India," she says.

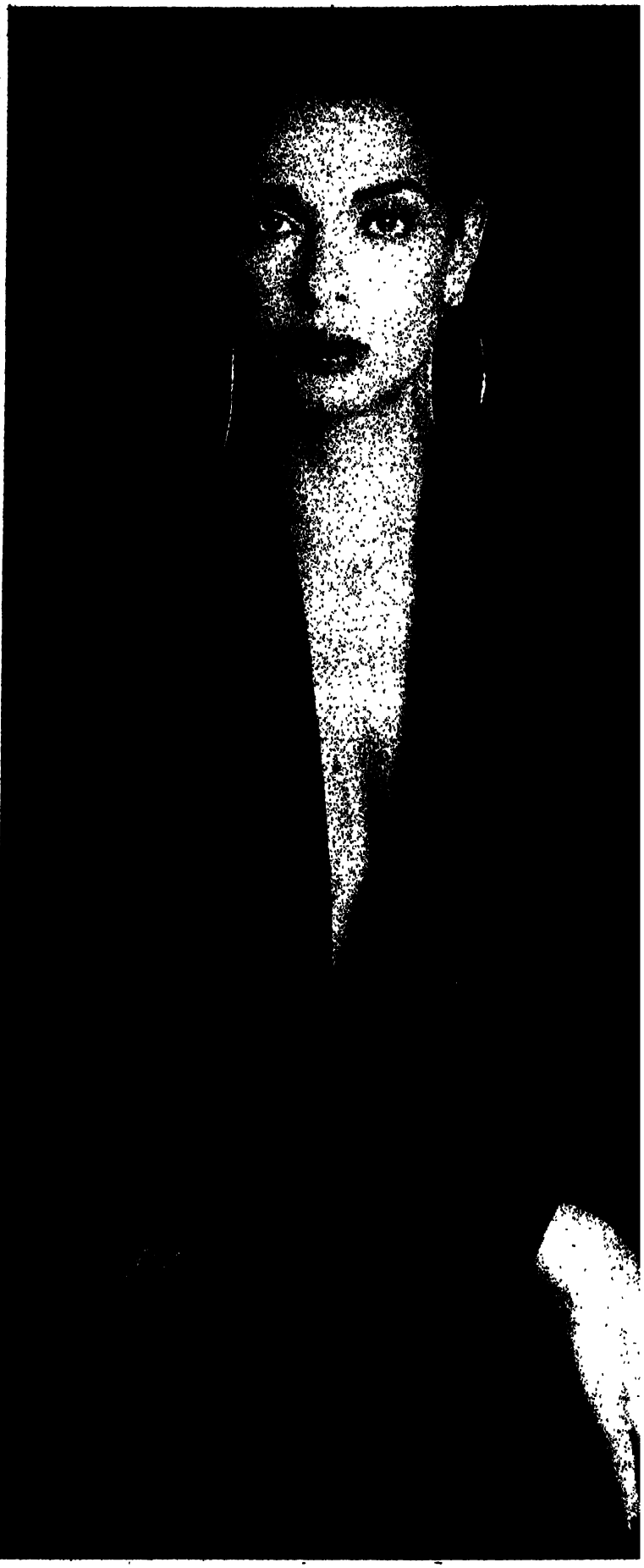
Sixty books were signed by the various Miss Indias and sold for Rs 5,000 each with the cheques directed to the Missionaries of Charity. She explains, "Most Miss Indias have maintained that Mother Teresa has been their inspiration. Here was their opportunity to do something for her."

Working in tandem with models and winners of beauty pageants she realised how different the profession is today from the time



Ajit Chowdhary

the international look that took her to Hollywood



Courtesy Vogue

when she was a sought-after face. She mulls, "We were a handful of models who did our own make-up, created our own style, and designed our own clothes. Models get all of this on a platter today. The media attention, too, never focussed on India. Besides we got pickles as presents rather than motor cars." And Rs 100 for a fashion show to boot.

She reacts sharply to the suggestion that models are dumb. "How would I have got from India to London to New York to LA if I didn't have brains or business acumen to succeed in my career? Modelling is not easy, you know," she retorts

However, it came easy to her. She recalls, "I had the art even as a child. Every time I knew that there was a photographer close at hand my expressions would get very animated. I would pose, laugh, give him my profile and offer him all the angles."

So at 13 years of age Persis was 'discovered'. Gurmeet Singh, a Lintas photographer, saw her at a restaurant while she was lunching with her family. When Singh insisted that Persis model for him, her mother brushed him off saying that Persis was still at school. But



With Khushwant Singh on the sets of *Not a Nice Man to Know* and (below) with producer Sadia Dehlvi



Anil Chowdhury

modelling she did, and the test shots were approved by Lintas for a Rexona soap campaign. Subsequently Persis was crowned Film Princess which led to more modelling assignments that took her all over the country. The Miss Bombay and Miss India titles followed in 1965 as a matter of course.

Her flirtation with Hindi films too began at a restaurant — the Gazebo in Bandra — soon after. A casual meeting with a photographer in the restaurant landed her a role in K.A. Abbas' *Bombay Raat Ki Bahon Mein*, a film that won her the Indian Newspapers Award for the best actress of the year.

Being a celebrated model — "posing for DCM, Ponds, Hakoba, Bombay Dyeing, pots, pans, shirts, ties, anything" — and an upcoming actress wasn't enough. She opted out and decided to try her luck in the interna-

global arena armed with her talent and determination to make it in the competitive world of modelling in Europe. She didn't regret the decision for within a year she was modelling for *Woman's Own, Harper's, 21* and other leading publications in London.

"I was a street survivor and had oodles of street smartness. I never procrastinated and focussed on what I wanted," she says fiercely. "I wanted to further my career abroad and I did in a way that no woman has been able to do it even in the 90s," she says with a shrug.

London wasn't always a cakewalk. Her struggling days were marked by leafing through the yellow pages, scouring for modelling agencies that would entertain her. She recalls braving the snow to beat a path to photographers' studios as she didn't have money for a bus ride. "Very often a sack of potatoes was all the food I had," she says through a haze of smoke.

Her persistence paid off and Gavin Robbinson — the number one photographer of the time — returned her calls. And not before long she was making enough money to pay the rent.

Little did she realise that an Air India commercial would make her a recognisable face. Aired prime time on television, people began identifying her as the Namaste girl. But this recognition subsequently proved to be a handicap as paying commercials didn't use her primarily because she was typed as the Air India Girl.

The ad world may have been resistant to the idea of using her, but around then she got a break in her first motion picture outside India. Opportunity came knocking when she unexpectedly met Roy Fox, the famous band leader of the 40s, on the bus she was riding. He convinced her to meet Hollywood director Marty Bown who was visiting London. A day later Persis had landed herself a part in *Wilby Conspiracy* with movie greats like Sidney Poitier and Michael Caine.

The film soon had Hollywood abuzz with everyone predicting that Persis would be the next Fay Dunaway! "People thought that I was one of the best things that had happened on screen," says Khambatta today, in a matter-of-fact tone.

New York beckoned and she gave in to its call. With *Wilby Conspiracy* releasing in America around the same time she had United Artists help her out with its publicity. What followed was a whirlwind of glitzy Hollywood parties and Press coverage. Los Angeles became her new home.

Next came *Conduct Unbecoming* with Richard Attenborough and Michael York, followed by her first American TV performance in *Man with the Power*. Over the years her portfolio included *Warriors of the Lost World* and *Megaforce*. She also made guest appearances on American television with serials like *The Adventures of Superman, First Strike, Macgyver, Hunter, The New Mike Hammer* and *Casablanca*.



Persis : Facing the cameras since childhood

But her coup on Hollywood's big screen was yet to come. She was selected for Paramount's *Star Trek, The Motion Picture* from among 600 aspirants for the role of Illa, a woman from outer space. "I invested in a $1 skull cap for the audition and bagged the role."

Shorn of their crowning glory even the most beautiful women run the risk of looking their worst. Persis earned perfect scores from all the heads in the studio.

"For seven months I shaved my hair and became the talk of the town. The best invita-

'We were a handful of models who did our own make-up, created our own style, and designed our own clothes'



Atul Chowdhury

India's best known Hollywood star

tions that one could think of came my way. From heads of studios to the best actors wanted to wine and dine me. But they really didn't know what to do with the bald-headed woman," she laughs.

This bald head was to become a fashion statement and it propelled her into fashion shows and charity balls organised by celebrities like Jane Fonda, Julie Andrews and Ted Kennedy. Scalp hats were designed specially for her while she'd even paint it on occasionally.

Says Persis, "I wanted India to be proud of me while I was abroad." So though *Playboy* pursued her for ten years to pose in the nude for the magazine, she consistently turned down the offer.

Bold enough to shave off her hair but not bold enough to pose for *Playboy*, you quiz her. She retorts, "When I shaved my hair I had confidence in myself as a woman. I found that if I portrayed nudity in a film, no matter how successful I became people would always hold it against me." So she turned down a film that included a rape scene.

Thus, in Hollywood she earned herself a reputation of being "straight as an arrow". Says Khambatta about herself, "I feel that I'm still a simple person, sensitive, emotional, trusting. And I've been let down because I've been trusting." But she refuses to go into the details.

"You feel hurt, you cry. You start putting on weight (obliquely referring to her own weight gain?) you feel that nobody loves you. It's a destruction that you go through," she says sadly.

After a satisfying run abroad she returned home for good in 1995. "There is no permanence in my life, in anything," she adds with a faraway look, "I came to Mumbai for personal reasons and it took longer than I thought and I stayed."

This time she was offered her own talk show, a film, *Khafa*, with Milind Soman and Sonali Bendre, besides sundry serials. But nothing worked out and it bothers her that nobody cared enough to tell her that the proposed projects had fallen through.

This attitude hasn't made her cynical, embittered or just angry but "hugely mad," she says with feeling. For though the Indian film industry has applauded her success in Hollywood, they have not acknowledged her as an actress.

She says, "Gulshan Grover and Shabana Azmi have done films abroad but they've done them and come back home." So why have Indian awards ceremonies and film festivals ignored her completely, she wonders.

She smoulders on, "Inspired by Hollywood, they call themselves Bollywood, they even copy Hollywood films but they've not accepted me into the fold. They want to be around Cindy Crawford and Richard Gere when they come to India but they overlook the only Hollywood star they have in India."

Personal attacks that she is subjected to on occasions exhaust her no less. "People take it upon themselves to fling at me — 'Your face hasn't changed, but you're fat' or 'You kissed on screen so my husband thinks you're a whore'." *Vipusna* (meditation) and long days of complete silence give her the inner strength to cope.

But what she values more than being a successful model and Hollywood actress is her spirituality and being a "successful human being". She adds, "I believe in charity and humility. In my path to success if I had to step aside to let someone pass I did it. I'm happy that I didn't cross over someone's body to get there." Principles that she will adhere to in re-establishing herself in India.

On the cards are plans to launch a school for training models or a modelling agency "run on strictly professionals lines".

India's pride may even gravitate to the small screen. And after Hollywood it should be a cakewalk. ■

Says Persis, 'I wanted India to be proud of me while I was abroad.' So though *Playboy* pursued her for ten years to pose in the nude for the magazine, she consistently turned down the offer

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Ganesha says, the new moon has you shifting focus, setting your goals afresh and also getting thoroughly involved with the money scene, investments, lending and borrowing funds. You must guard against unnecessary showdowns, making changes or letting others infringe on your space.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The strong theme continues to be finance. Property, acquisitions, possessions, buying and selling will be important components. Family and personal affairs demand your time and attention. Ganesha warns you against failings. Love is in the air and could culminate into marriage.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Moonlight and roses, love and storybook romance, leisure and pleasure, fun times and children are what this week has for you. Ensure that you don't lose the affection of those you cherish or become too involved in other people's troubles. Chances are, that you might get the promotion that you have long sought for.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Despite the introspective and detached tendencies that were initiated last week, there is a fair amount of socialising and running around. While your wishes might be fulfilled, there might also be cause for anxieties. A paradoxical week; you are bound to be hated and loved in equal measure.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



A strong decided emphasis on social service, productivity and work. Loans and funds come through and your relationships at work are important. You will have to concern yourself with those who look up to you for help. Learn to mix pleasure and work in equal measures. Do not lose your temper .

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Though the health of someone really close to you causes you grave concern, this is a time for reaping the benefits of your efforts and grinding hard work. The sweet music of money in the coffers, the social standing and perquisites that you deserve now come your way. Health needs attention.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Try to be neither too assertive nor self centred nor should you bend your back trying to please others. Strict control over your temper and striving for emotional balance are advised. Personal progress is more or less assured but self-restraint goes a long way in ensuring this. Time to go places.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



There is much buying and selling, signing of lease documents, contracts, instruments of negotiations and promissory notes. The other dominant theme in your life at the moment will be fashion and food. Better health and better prospects just about sums it up for you. Take an active interest in your child's education.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



You are in a better frame of mind to attend to children, hobbies, arts, music and movies. You may need to guard against causing disappointment to a loved one and also against back stabbing others. Try to cultivate equanimity, cautions Ganesha. Contacts and communications hold special meaning for you.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



The new moon has your mind turning once again to thoughts of fancy, to love and passion and yet it will be firmly entrenched in the more pragmatic pursuits of funds, loans, legacies and money matters. This will be a pronounced trend for the week. You will enjoy going on a shopping spree.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



The new moon sets the trend for May and for a shift in interests. Communications—whether phone calls, the media or just building fresh contacts—mean a lot to you. One can safely say that inter-personal relationships are what you have going for you.You can look for a new job.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



There is much to do and the time is opportune to launch a venture, promote a campaign, project or enterprise. The emphasis seems to be on the electronic media, the joys of computers, cyberspace, all of which could help in many ways, not least in revamping or re-organising office procedures.

BIRTHDAYS

April 26: New Moon: Ganesha claims that this new moon enforces your opinions and gives you energy of purpose. Differences could arise at the place you work.

April 27: Moon sextile Jupiter-Venus: Venus signifies love and comfort, moon-mind and Jupiter stands for money and knowledge. You could not have asked for more.

April 28: Moon sextile Mercury, Uranus and Neptune: This will lead to communication skills, excellent imaginative sympathy and great ingenuity. You will be a success.

April 29: Moon Square Venus-moon: Anticipate problems but learn to deal with them calmly. Your skills will be tested. You ought to take expert advice. Special prayers on Mondays and Fridays will most certainly help.

April 30: Moon sextile sun: This placing helps you overcome obstacles and helps you move ahead. Home influences will also make you feel comfortable. Make new friends.

May 1: Moon square Jupiter: A year of plenty and prosperity. You should therefore try to strive hard to make your dreams come true. You will have the necessary energy.

May 2: Moon trine Venus-Pluto: You will be able to overcome opposition and be victorious. Your ability to impress people will also help. Try to live and let live.

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PROFILE

Mission Impossible

Meira Kumar is all set to take on the establishment on behalf of the dispossessed. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports

In the mid-eighties, Rajiv Gandhi requested an Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer to join politics. She complied, quitting her job for what she saw as a life of service to the nation. Keen on social work, the woman, Meira Kumar, never regretted the decision. She used politics for the uplift of the poor, taking inspiration from her father Jagjivan Ram in her resolve to reach out to the poor.

His portrait and marble bust looms large, engulfing the drawing room of 6 Krishna Menon Marg, where Kumar now lives. There is no security guard to accost strangers at the gate. Kumar treats every visitor—rich or poor—as part of her extended family, claiming "that is how I was brought up".

Her quiet fragility disguises the feisty activist in her. She was the Congress' saving grace at the last elections; the lone candidate to win a seat—from the Karol Bagh constituency——in Delhi. But this was by no means her first taste of victory. Earlier, she had won in the 1985 byelections from Bijnor and the second time around from Karol Bagh. She tacitly accepts her win, saying, "I did not realise the extent to which I would have to fight the BJP wave. I would have been happier if the Congress had secured more seats."

Meira Kumar: Using politics for the uplift of the poor



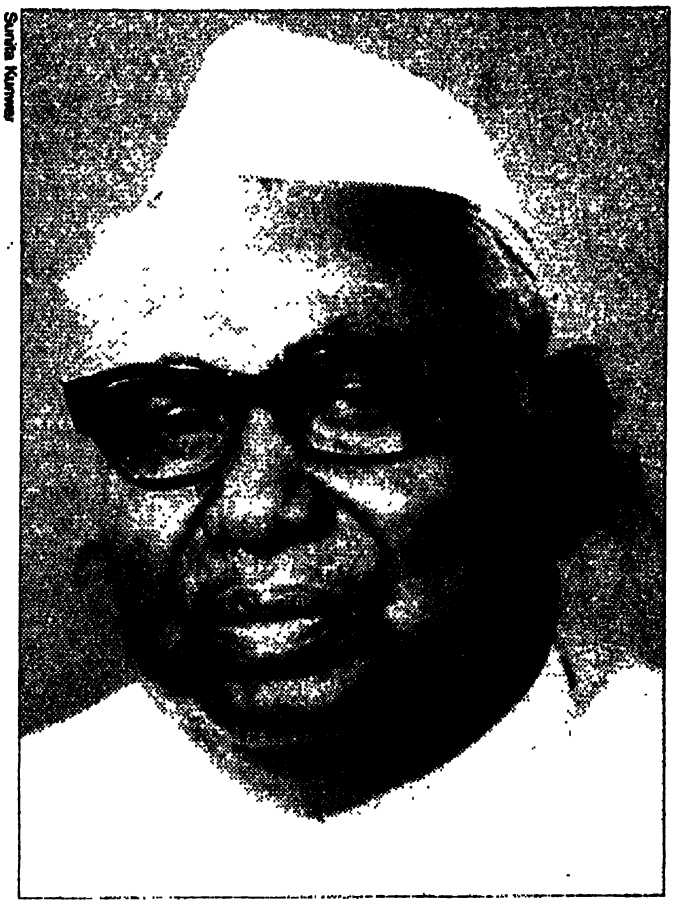
Meira has never shied away from the problems of her constituency which is plagued by a lack of civic amenities. Her win means a lot to jhuggi dwellers whose shacks, she says, were either periodically demolished or leaking like sieves during the monsoons. "I have always fought for them to make sure they were rehabilitated. If they are given alternative land, half their daily wage would go towards transport fares," she claims.

She criticises the hypocrisy of the well-to-do in handling the needy. "We need their services but when they live around us, they become eyesores. Don't you think, " she says agitated, "they have as much right to be in the city as we do?"

Her need for accountability is refreshing in the context of today's politics. "I have maintained an account of every paisa I got from



Sunita Kumar



Meira Kumar: Taking inspiration from her father Jagjivan Ram

the Member of the Parliament's fund—amounting to a crore—in addition to the unutilised fund of my predecessor's." She believes in transparency "even if others choose to be blind," she says referring to her opponent's indifference.

Her work leads her to talk of 'Bapuji' whom she admired since childhood. "I have always seen my father build a rapport with the poor." Her father told her that anyone who joins politics should be able to do well in their own fields. "In his era, politicians were top men in their respective areas which they gave up in a spirit of sacrifice for the country," says Kumar, justifying her idealistic need to join politics.

The mention of Jagjivan Ram brings a catch to her voice. She reflects, "As a freedom fighter, he was among the few who were educated among the weaker sections." The British, she states, had invited him to join Wavell's Council as part of their divide-and-rule policy. He spurned their offer to suffer torture in jails instead. This display of guts to cock a snook at a life of privilege influenced the child Meira profoundly.

She spent her early years, "living and studying in Delhi". Ever since Jagjivan Ram moved to the city during the formation of the Interim Government in 1946, the family, she says, has been rooted in Delhi. At the age of ten, Meira was sent to the Maharani Gayatri Devi school in Jaipur to overcome her loneliness as a child. School was fun, filled with days of studying, music, playing, bird-watching and swimming.

She was particularly fond of her principal, Miss Luter, a White woman, who "was affectionate and firm". In those days of small classes, it was not difficult to give individual attention to a child. A lot of emphasis was given to character building. "During examinations," recalls Kumar, "we always had books in our desks with no invigilators as proof of our honesty!"

Back in Delhi, Meira did a Master's degree in English, following it up with a degree in Law. During the 1962 War, she knitted her first sweater for a jawan. "I was so shaken up with the Chinese aggression, I felt I had to prepare myself for the worst——donating blood and training in nursing and rifle shooting."

Her visit to Bihar's drought-hit areas in the late Sixties saw her introducing a popular scheme where she "got addresses of the victims and asked people in Delhi to adopt them, send parcels, clothes and letters to reassure the periled families".

She appeared for her IFS examinations at the insistence of her mother, Indrani Devi, and husband, Manjul Kumar, an advocate of the Supreme Court whom she had known since her childhood. "I have had a liberal upbringing, and unlike other conservative parents of that age, was given a free rein to make my choices," she says.

A steady stream of people flock to her house every morning. Meira focuses on an old lady who wants her grandchild admitted to a local school, ensuring the girl's admission by calling up the school authorities. The woman, overcome with emotion, touches her feet. Meira flinches in embarrassment.

Meanwhile, a social worker troops

The Next Generation

A look at some prominent political dynasties

Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi

While her father was alive, Indira was restricted to playing hostess at his official functions. But only a few years after his death, she was propped up as a Prime Ministerial candidate by the Congress syndicate. Mrs Gandhi, in turn, brought in younger son, Sanjay, to act as her right hand. And when he died tragically, Rajiv was called in — only to meet with the same fate.

Biju and Naveen Patnaik

He displayed no interest in politics while his legendary father was alive. But after Biju's demise, Naveen stood for election from his father's former constituency, Aska, and won by a handsome margin. But even before he could enjoy life on the back-benches, another General Election was called. And Patnaik, who had by then formed the Biju Janata Dal and allied with the BJP, found himself anointed minister for steel and mines.

Charan Singh and Ajit Singh

Charan Singh may not have had much faith in his son's political savvy, but Ajit Singh thought politics was where his destiny lay. Capitalising on his father's goodwill, he initially



Indira Gandhi with Jawaharlal Nehru: Groomed by her father

in to discuss matters of grave concern with 'behenji', not to forget the three youths who are asked to submit job applications. She manages despite everything to fulfil her traditional hostess' role—offering chai and sweets—while issuing orders to a harried secretary, busy scribbling notes.

The cause of the down-trodden gets her brooding every day. "They suffer not just economic, but social problems like a lack of respect, for one." According to Kumar, caste reservations have not solved the real problem. "The deprived classes are supposed to get 22 per cent of the seats. But only 8 per cent get filled due to a backlog." For every 20 seats, they should get 2 seats but if the same number of seats are advertised two at a time rather than altogether, the preference goes to the general candidates. "So you see, there are ways to circumvent the law," she points out.

Kumar's spirits rise, though, as she fields questions on the Congress in the last elections. She explains, "By and large, there is not much difference between the BJP and the Congress as compared to the earlier elections. There are certain states where we have not got any seats but the percentage of voting has gone up, but in the others, the situation is just the reverse. Put together, the overall situation has to improve."

But wasn't she skirting the real reason for Congress's defeat? Adds Kumar as an afterthought, "The Congress is a nationalist party. It believes in carrying everybody together regardless of their gender, language, religion and caste. But over the years, the spirit of nationalism which swamped the country after Independence has got diluted: casteism, sect, language, religion and divisive issues have crept in. That is why the Congress keeps losing."

But does she not blame the loss on the frequent scams and the criminalisation of politics? Says Kumar, "If politicians like Sukh Ram win, they are being nominated by the people. In the press, politicians are charged with corruption even before they are legally proved guilty. All the hawala people were denied tickets because the press clamped down on them. But Madhav Rao Scindia, Balram Jhakar and Kalpnath Rai have been acquitted of all charges," she says defensively.

As for those within the party who



Mohan Kumaramangalam and son P. R. Kumaramangalam ; Biju Patnaik and Naveen Patnaik



Ajit Singh with his father Charan Singh: Seeing eye to eye

won the support of the Jats, but that dwindled as he began to be perceived as a political opportunist who switched parties far too often. His recent loss from Baghpat, a Charan Singh stronghold, was surprising, though not unexpected.

Mohan Kumaramangalam and Rangarajan Kumaramangalam

The lawyer son, Rangarajan, was considered one of Rajiv Gandhi's brightest men, and is presently the Power minister in the BJP government. But while his father, trade union leader Mohan Kumaramangalam was a dedicated socialist, Rangarajan's political views have now assumed a decidedly saffron hue.

are corrupt, Kumar's logic is that, "You may find a hundred people who are corrupt but the Congress has a membership which runs into crores. I wouldn't say the Congress party is corrupt, therefore, it has suffered a setback. It is like casting aspersions on the integrity of those who are not corrupt."

The mother of three children, Kumar suffers no guilt pangs in having to juggle a career and home. So far, she has managed well, cooking kebabs and chicken for her family though she herself turned vegetarian in Spain where she advocated a 'green' movement. In any case, her family has always travelled with her, first to Spain where she went on a diplomatic assignment, and later, under the ministry of external affairs to London. "Being a student of English literature, I loved seeing where The Solitary Reaper was written," she says, beaming with childlike simplicity.

Back in India, she involved herself with Human Rights causes, highlighting the atrocities on Harijans in Parliament. The Anti-Atrocities Act, though not fully implemented, was passed largely due to her efforts. She organised relief measures visiting victims in Fatehpur, Banwari and Bela, witnessing the "shock and fear in their eyes".

The need to protect the helpless led her to crusade against child labour. "No one has the moral right to employ these children," she says quivering with anger. "Why do people not educate them? Coming from socially backward classes, the children of scavengers and beggars fall prey to exploitation."

She claims child labour adds not just to overpopulation—the parents begin to recognise the earning potential of the children, which encourages them to procreate further—but also to unemployment. "Adults are deprived of jobs which go to children at a pittance," she says bitterly.

Evidently, there is a lot of that bitter bile locked up inside her. Her tenure as member of Parliament will, no doubt, ensure that she find a means to vent it, as she readies herself to take on the establishment. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AMRITSAR					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BOMBAY					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHANDIGARH					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W-902	0835	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W 911	1925	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
GAUHATI					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
GUWAHATI					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
HYDERABAD					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 730	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-512	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
IMPHAL					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5
JAIPUR					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
9W 621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1635	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 211	1910	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD 286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

BAHRAIN					
RJ 185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
KUALA LUMPUR					
KL 876	0425	7	KL 875	0240	7
KUNMING					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB 106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC 731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SINGAPORE					
BG 698	1710	2, 5	BG-697	1630	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0850	1, 5	BG-091	0810	1, 5
BG-092	1150	3, 4 6, 7	BG 091	1110	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-092	1210	2			
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC 723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG-094	1955	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	BG-093	1915	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
BG-094	1815	5	BG-093	1710	5
BG-096	2050	1, 2, 3, 4 6, 7	BG-095	2010	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI 109	2145	3	BI 110	0925	4
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC 748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA 214	1525	2, 6	RA 213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
MOSCOW					
SU 538	2230	4	SU-537	1030	4
PARIS					
KB 106	1000	2 3 7	KB-105	0940	2 6
			KB 105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0815		BI 107	1940	6
BI 110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI 306	1950	5	AI-305	1305	3
YANGON					
IC 727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6 45	2312
3005	19 20	Amritsar Mail	7 35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs & Sun. Arr Tues, Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs, Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs, Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23 30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23 00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues, Fri & Sat., Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues., Wed. & Sat Arr Tues, Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13 00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr Sun, Mon., Wed & Fri	4 15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21 00	Delhi Janata Express	5 15	3040
3049	13 10	Amritsar Express	15 30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10 30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6 30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21 45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep Mon, Tue & Thurs Arr Mon, Thurs & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep Wed, Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun, Wed & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri., Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8 20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5 40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16 20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13 20	2842
2703	7 50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17 30	Tata Steel Express	10 20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20 40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8 35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22 05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4 15	8080
1030	15 45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10 40	2422
6322	03 50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13 45	5623
5624	03 50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22 35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arri Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13 45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203498 (manual enquiry).



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am a 25-year-old girl and pursuing a course in computers. For the last three years, my family has been trying to get me married, but somehow their efforts have been in vain. This has become a sore point with them and they take out all their frustrations on me. I am thus termed a 'burden', an 'unlucky' girl who is doomed to remain a spinster. This situation is really depressing me. Please help.***



T.S, Durgapur

A. The first thing you need is a large dose of self-introspection. You are pursuing a course in computers — you have a bright and prosperous future ahead. Why are you letting your family bully you into believing that marriage is the inevitability for you? It is up to you to take your life in your own hands.

In any repressive situation, there is no point crying about being a victim. Concentrate on your studies and your career. Be focussed. When the time for marriage comes, you will find yourself in a much better position for the future. Good luck, and May The Force Be With You!

Q. ***My parents are very incompatible and are always fighting. This constant bickering has made my home atmosphere very sordid and I find it extremely depressing. Therefore, at times, I have tried to intervene and sort out their problem in a bid to maintain peace at home.***



Parents forcing marriage? Why are you letting your family bully you into believing that marriage is the inevitability for you? It is up to you to take your life in your own hands

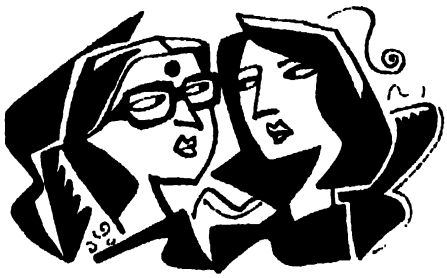
This, however, irritates my parents and they admonish me. Please help me.

N.G, Howrah

A. Strange as it may sound, many people express their affection for each other through constant bickering. It is something like the constant fights between siblings. Your parents' life seems to have fallen into a pattern of constant conflict which they clearly have no desire to resolve.

Instead of wasting your energies trying to sort out their silly fights and getting ticked off in the bargain, it is better you learn a lasting lesson from their childish behaviour and maintain internal and external harmony in your own immediate environment.

Q. ***I am a 27-year-old housewife. I am a post-graduate and I used to work in an English medium school. However, I had to give up my job as my mother-in-law refused to look after my child. The main problem in my house is my mother-in-law. She always finds faults with me and even abuses me in private. If I ever answer her back, she***



complains to my husband and my father-in-law who in turn blame me for creating tension in the house. I try my best to please my mother-in-law but she is never satisfied. I feel very depressed. Please suggest a way out of my predicament.

XYZ, Orissa

A. You are suffering from a classic case of mother-in-law blues. The nicest women in the world seem to lose their rationality and objectivity when it comes to dealing with

their daughters-in-law. I have observed that, in most cases, the more you try to appease the situation, the worse it will get.

I would advise you not to succumb to these pressures. Find some help and go back to teaching in school so as to maintain some autonomy over your life. Be nice, positive and polite, but never lose sight of the fact that this is your life, not theirs and you alone have to live it.

Once you have recovered your core identity from all the clutter of the joint-family situation, you will find it is not difficult to take charge of your life.



Q. ***I am a 35-year-old man and wish to get married and settle down. However, I have a younger unmarried sister. Many proposals have come my way but my parents will not hear of getting me married before my sister settles down. I must also add that I belong to an orthodox Brahmin family where nobody has married out of their caste whereas I am in love with a divorcee who belongs to a different caste. Please suggest a way out of this situation.***

M. K, Jamshedpur

A. Your problems are clearly on two fronts : You wish to please your parents and you wish to please yourself. While pleasing your parents certainly appears to be the nobler option, do not undervalue your own needs. While I fail to see the logic of your parents' resolution, you being their son and your sister's older brother, do have some degree of obligation to their wishes. But where you do have to draw a clear distinction is your own life.

If you are in love with this lady, it is up to you to see what you hold more true — a life-long commitment based on love and sincerity, or traditions which could bind you into a life-long commitment which you enter only half-heartedly.



Q. ***I am a post-graduate working as a sales personnel in a private organisation. In my office, I am very close to a woman whom I treat like an elder sister. A few days ago, a colleague of mine told the Regional Manager about our supposed "love affair". This has made me very bitter. Is there no decency left in this world? What should I do?***

A.G, Assam

A. Unfortunately, there is no cure for this kind of back-biting. The world is full of people who cannot mind their own business, and are completely insensitive to other people's feelings. At all cost, you must continue your friendship with your elderly colleague as before, ignoring the convolutions of office politics. But you have to keep a cool head, and as hard as it seems, do not let it get to you.

If you react to these callous snipes, you are affording their sources with precisely the kind of malicious pleasure they are looking for. Keep your chin up!



Q. ***I am a girl of 14. The problem with me is that I get very angry very soon and over trivial matters. When my younger brother disturbs me I fly into a rage and start beating him up. But when my elder brother makes me angry I cannot do anything and start crying, instead. I have tried to control my anger but it just happens. Please advise.***

Nikita, Calcutta

A. I think it is commendable that you have been able to identify this imperfection in your behaviour and see the need to rectify it. The way to deal with your anger is to work on your self-control. Try to increase your level of tolerance towards other people. One way of delaying a fit of anger is counting slowly from one to 20 the moment you feel you are getting provoked.

This should be just enough time for you to tell yourself not to let yourself go. Most importantly, lighten up! Nothing, and none should be able to aggravate you to such an extent. Your temper is a valuable thing. Do not lose it! Keep it for special occasions!

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

Getting angry over little things? The way to deal with your anger is to work on your self-control. Try to increase your level of tolerance towards other people. One way of delaying a fit of anger is counting slowly from one to 20 the moment you feel you are getting provoked

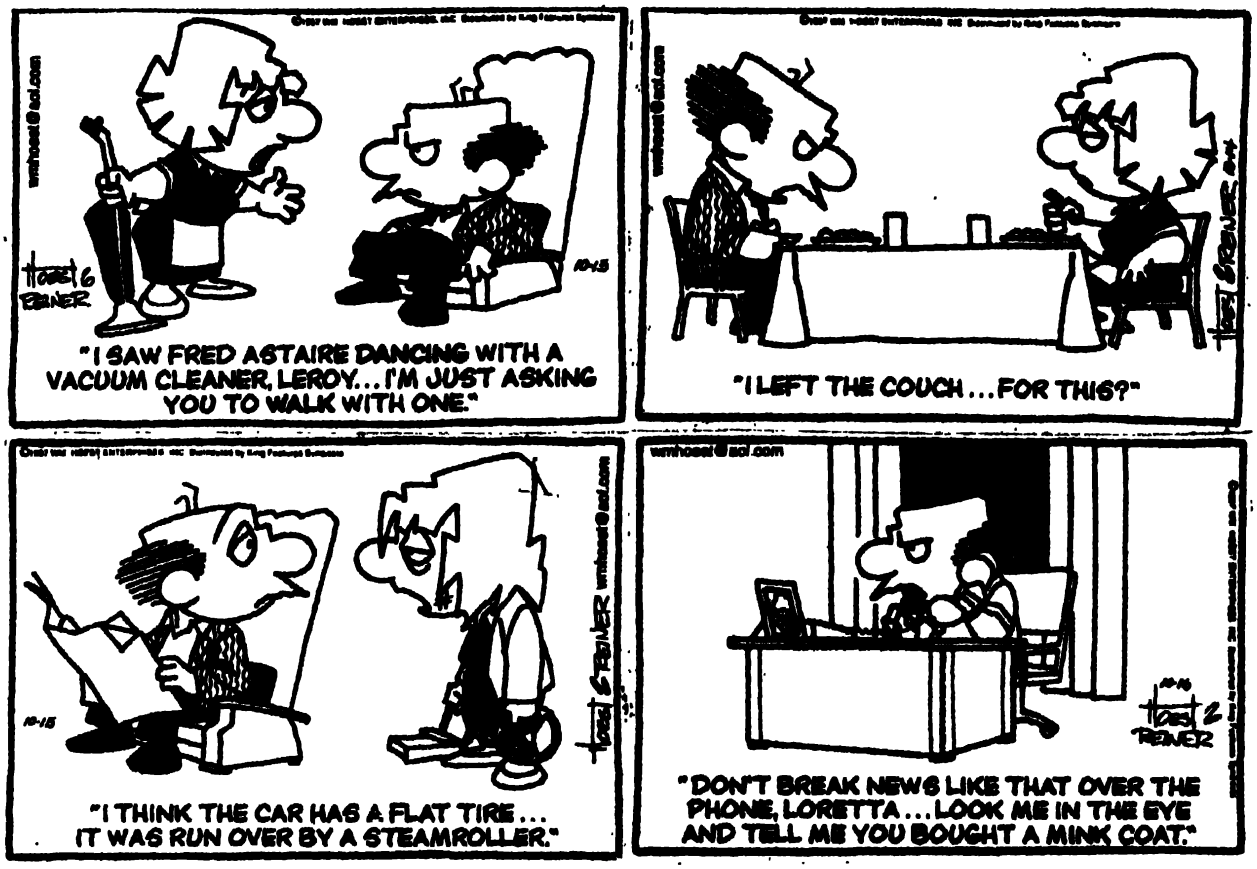
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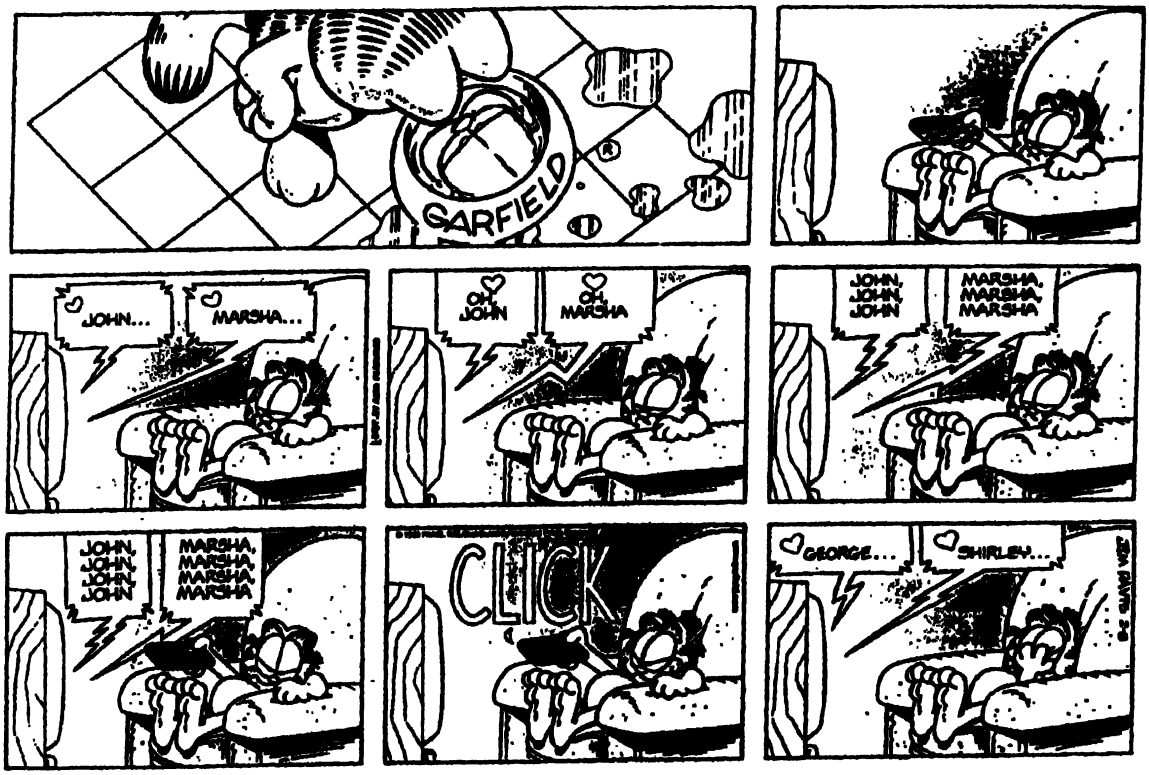
CALVIN AND HOBBES © WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



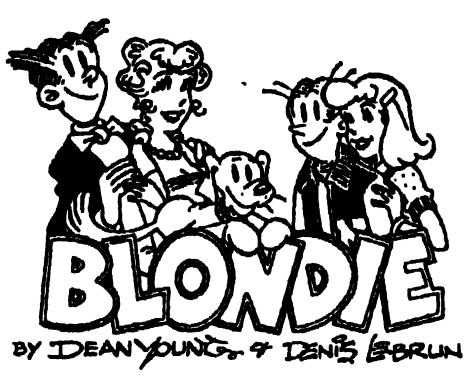
GARFIELD ▪ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ▩ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



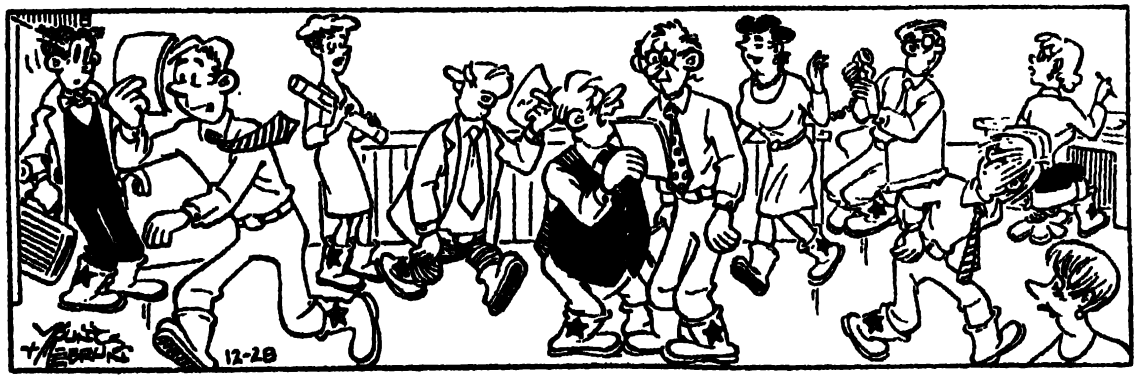












BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q ***The market is flooded with products like electric shaving systems for women which are considered ideal for removing unwanted hair from the legs and arms. I would like to know if they, in any way, damage the texture of the skin. It is common knowledge that the use of razors lead to a rough skin but how about these shavers, meant exclusively for ladies?***
Ratna Saha, Howrah.

A With the advancement in technology, the market has been flooded with products for the skin and hair. The particular product that you are referring to, is supposed to be easy and efficient. However, I still feel that waxing is the best method, in spite of the fact that one has to go to a professional because waxing at home can be uncomfortable. Made from natural ingredients like sugar, honey and lemon, it is most effective and does not leave the skin feeling like a man's stubble.



Q ***I have seen that the moment summer sets in, my skin starts behaving in a whimsical fashion. I get pimple marks and all kinds of eruptions. The skin gets back to normal with the departure of summer. Do you have any remedy for this?***
S. Poddar, Calcutta.

A The pimples are an indication of the greasiness and improper cleansing. Besides, with the heat and perspiration, your skin may not be getting the attention it deserves. Clean your face several times with ice-cold rose water. Apply a face pack of fuller's earth, a pinch of camphor and fresh neem paste. You could also go to a beautician for a regular facial. However, do not go in for a massage. Skin problems can be quite irritating but you have to take care of it not only with the use of face packs, but by also ascertaining that you are eating the right kind of food. Drink 12 glasses of water daily and eat lots of fruits, green vegetables and natural juices. A regular exercise routine will also be immensely beneficial.



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To make the palms of your hands soft:

■

Mix sesame and almond oil and rub into your palms



Q ***I am a regular reader of your column and have immense faith in your remedies. I have a problem which I am very embarassed about, i.e. I have hair on my breasts. Is this abnormal?***
Name Withheld, Calcutta

A Hair on the breasts is quite a common problem and actually you shouldn't worry about it. You can pluck the fine hair with a tweezer. If the growth is exceptionally high, consult a beautician. These happen due to hormonal changes. Nearly every woman has some amount of hair on her breasts and it is not abnormal.

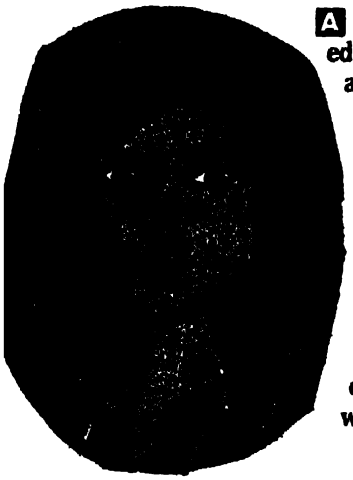


Q ***I have very dark, dry lips. Otherwise, I am fair complexioned and my skin glows. Please suggest a natural remedy to make my lips appear lighter.***
Shweta Dasgupta, Calcutta

A The 'dark lips' problem that you are facing could be a reaction against the brand of lipstick you are using. Remember that darker shades make the lip colour grow dark. Apply a rich moisturising cream in the lip area. You

can even apply almond oil to the lips and it is better to do this before retiring to bed at night.Apply the following pack thrice a week for a month and you are bound to see an appreciable difference—three ground almonds, four tsp cream and the juice of one lemon. Apply on lips and leave on for 15 minutes. Wash off with milk and water.

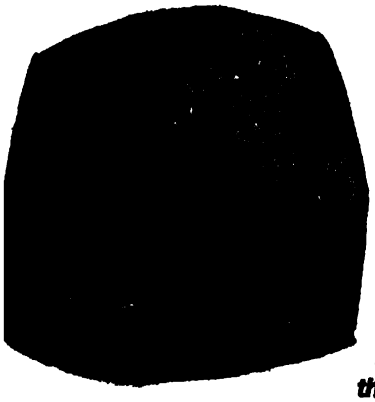
Q ***I am 25 years old. Both my palms are very hard. I have developed a complex because of this. Please help.***
Sagarika Mazumdar, Calcutta



A It is not so difficult to have soft hands provided you realise that hands require as much care as any other part of the body. Moisturise your hands twice a day with a good nourishing cream, preferably almond based. You could also try giving yourself a manicure at home. Massage fresh cream instead of any market cream along with a tsp of sugar which you must rub into your hands until the granules melt. Also try using a tsp of almond oil mixed with a tsp of sesame oil. Massage this into your hands and leave for about an hour. Wipe of with a steaming hot towel and your hands will appear soft.

Q ***My problem is hair. Earlier I used to shampoo my hair twice a week, but now, I notice that my hair gets oily from the second day itself. Do you think that I should shampoo my hair thrice a week?***
Shalini, Calcutta

A You should shampoo thrice a week as I firmly believe that a clean scalp is a healthy scalp. Use a mild shampoo. It is possible that you are eating the wrong type of foods. You must avoid these. Use beer as an after shampoo rinse and watch your hair shine With the present day dust and pollution, it is but natural that our hair gets dirty. Never be afraid to shampoo your hair as a dirty scalp could lead to infection and dandruff. The excessive greasiness in your hair is also not reason enough for you to stop oiling your hair. The scalp needs nourishment and the best way to do it is by a weekly hot coconut oil massage. Henna your hair. This will also make it look better and less oily.



Q ***I always wear perfume. Recently, I heard that perfumes should not be applied as they are bad for the skin. Is this true?***
Jyotsna Roy, Burdwan

A Perfumes do have a chemical content as well as alcohol but unless your skin is hyper allergic or very sensitive, there is no harm in a whiff of your favourite perfume. Many people nowadays use natural floral essence, but these are usually in the form of oils and often feel greasy and uncomfortable. The best way to use this would be to pour a few drops of these in your bath water which will keep you smelling fresh and fragrant all day long.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

"....My hair feels soft as silk because of the henna in this shampoo. Harmful chemicals are history."

Debashree Alipore Calcutta



Thank you Debashree and all other satisfied consumers who tried Vatika shampoo and wrote to us We're pleased to know that henna conditioning has worked wonders for you and has made nature shine in your hair

If you want to know more about the goodness of henna conditioning,write to us at Vatika Shampoo (Telegraph), P.O. Box No. 4939, New Delhi 29



Dabur

Vatika

Henna Cream Conditioning Shampoo

Let Nature Shine in Your Hair

OEM 36

RUCHI MALHOTRA
Fashion Model:

I love clothes. So shirts are a part of my wardrobe. Usually with shirts I like a little bit of transparency. You know, it adds to the mystery. Like a sheer white shirt with stripes. So one gets to see a wee bit of skin through the stripes. My current favourite is a white shirt with a mandarin collar. It has a self print in nice cotton linen which is a little transparent.







Rupinder Sharma

KARAN THAPAR
TV Journalist:

My favourite shirts are made by T.E. Lewin & Sons in Jermyn Street, London. I like their cut-away collar, their double-cuff, and their cotton. Besides, I think, they fit me rather nicely. I like stripes, usually in different shades of blue.

The Shirt off Your Back

It comes in a range of fabrics, colours and, of course, prices, says **Ghazala Wahab**

The *swadeshi* brigade may go hoarse crying for native things but one *videshi* garment has been adopted by Indians of all colour and socio-politico preferences. They wear it like the *burra sahibs* with pants, or like the natives with *dhotis* and pyjamas, or like yuppies with jeans, shorts, skirts or just about anything.

Shirts is so much a part of Indian costume that nobody now thinks of them as foreign despite the plethora of foreign brands in the market. Apart from well-known labels like Zodiac, Louis Philippe, Allen Solly, Van Heusen, Park Avenue, Arrow, Pantaloon, Double Bull, etc., there are innumerable unbranded ones from the handlooms of the cottage industry.

There are also a lot of locally-made shirts which are usually export rejects with extremely competitive prices and designs. One can get a fairly decent shirt with designs copied from the premium brands in the range of Rs 185 to Rs 520.

Indian men, irrespective of their financial standing, now want to make a statement of sorts with the kind of shirts they wear. Know a man by his shirt, seems to be the latest buzzword and it is not far from truth. People have become not only brand-conscious but also style-conscious.

According to Ramya Rajagopalan, who handles public relations for Zodiac, "The Indian consumer has become extremely quality conscious. The consumer today is looking at quality that justifies the price not just the price *per se*."

Says Gaurav Bhargava, owner of a retail shop for Raymonds in New Delhi, "There is a lot of consciousness among buyers now about the kind of shirts they want to buy. They are aware of the style, the cut, even the cotton blend. And they ask for it specifically."

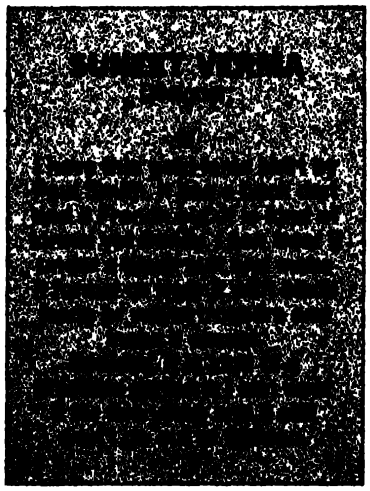
And they have plenty to choose from. Style-wise they have a

choice of single cuff, double cuff, button-down collar or plain collar, or even fusion shirts in *kurta* style. Among the fabrics they have a choice of cotton, terry-cotton, linen, poplin, canvas and so on.

Though, according to Rajagopalan, the market is moving towards 100 per cent cotton and half-sleeve shirts because of summer, for discerning customers, mere cotton is not enough. They have a choice of various blends, which basically means superior grades of cotton which are obviously expensive too.

One material which is loosing its sheen is silk. Only silk connoisseurs buy silk shirts, otherwise it has been relegated to being used only on special occasions.

For those who buy shirts irrespective of brands there is a wide array to choose from. Brands like Sir and Sharma's have a range between Rs 300 to Rs 850. Labels like Van Heusen, Louis Philippe, Zodiac, Allen Solly are priced at Rs 600 and above.



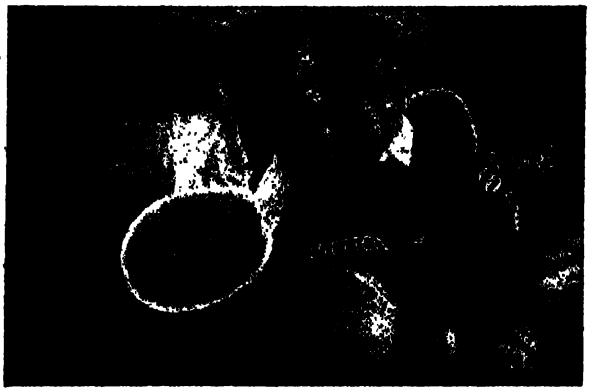
Park Avenue, a product of Raymonds is the only Indian label which is sold abroad too. Started about 15 years ago, the shirts range between Rs 500 to Rs 800. This season Park Avenue is also planning to introduce the Chinese collar apart from the button-down or plain collar.

Though summer sees the dawn of checks and prints, the all-time favourite remains stripes and plain shirts. Besides, probably because of the steep price range, the main clientele is of the executive level which is less experimental about its clothes. As one salesman in a menswear showroom says, "Most people who wear particular brands are usually in the age group of 40 and above. Few youngsters are brand conscious, unless of course, they are earning."

But with Zodiac's introduction of Eurochecks, checks have increased their scope. These neat checks can be worn with a tie with or without a jacket unlike the large checked semi-formal shirts. International brands are a fairly new phenomenon in India but they have really caught on, pushing Indian labels into the background. Only a few like Park Avenue and Zodiac among others seem to have held their own against their onslaught.

The credit for introducing international brands in India goes to Madura Garments, a division of Coats Viyella India Ltd. It launched Louis Philippe in 1989 which soon became one of the most popular brands in the super premium menswear category. A year later came Van Heusen targeting corporate executives. Allen Solly entered India in 1993, again courtesy Madura Garments and introduced the concept of Friday dressing. One factor which differentiated it from the rest was the range of colours, styles, designs and fabrics.

The most recent entrant in the field is Peter England, launched in 1997. Another venture of Madura Garments, it is pegged as an honest shirt probably because of the price range and also because of its more than 110-year-old history.

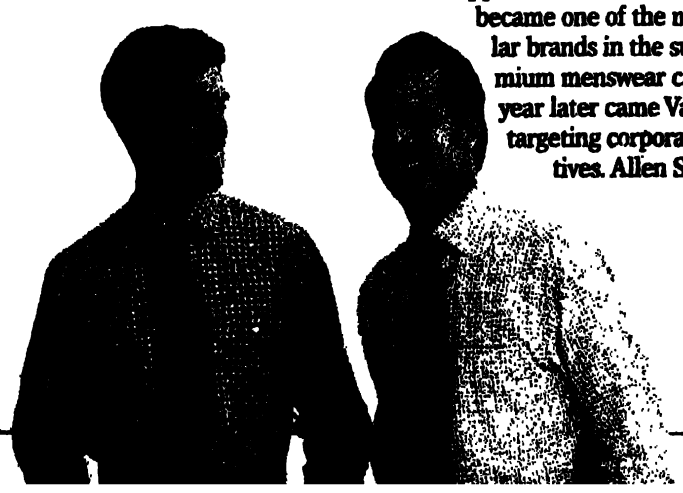


For the non-executive types who like indulging themselves there are the likes of Benetton and Mexx. Essentially a casual line, this year Benetton is focussing on the burgeoning shirt market. And as their catchline is United Colors of Benetton, one can expect anything, even orange shirts.

But men need not feel so smug about all this attention. Women too have discovered the no-nonsense, no-frill shirts. Remember the Bombay Dyeing advertisement featuring Lisa Ray in a man's shirt way back in the Eighties? It was not just a statement of sorts. It was probably the beginning of a trend.

Though women still prefer shirts in a feminine cut, many like the masculine cut. According to one salesperson almost 5 to 10 per cent of their customers are women who buy shirts for themselves.

Though shirts still form a small part of the total garment industry, trailing behind trousers and suits it is an evolving market. And with so many players in the fray it is definitely going to be an interesting one with consumers being the winner. ■



ARTS

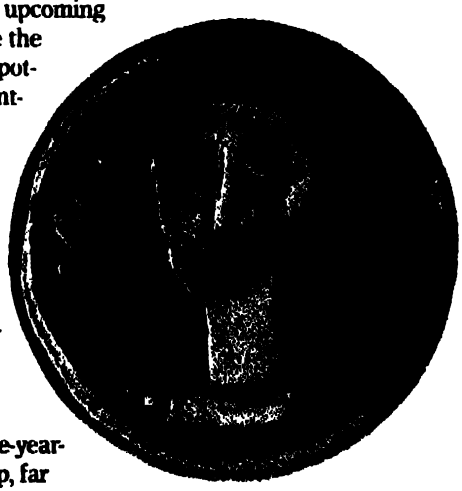
Canvassing for Harmony

Tina Ambani reinvents herself as a patroness of the arts.
Sudipta Basu reports

'Nurturing is probably the most difficult feat in the world," reads the brochure of the recently concluded week-long Harmony Show at the Nehru Centre, in Mumbai, "and in our small way, nurturing is what we hope to do. By welcoming young, upcoming artists to share the much envied spotlight often granted only to the recognised ones."

These days, nurture is the buzzword at the Ambani household as well, with Tina and Anil Ambani's seven and three-year-olds growing up, far away from the media glare. "I have to get back home by five," she tells her secretary, within an hour of arriving at the venue of the show. "My son will be home and has to be readied for his school camp."

Home is evidently where the heart is for the former film actress; so much so, that her current lifestyle hardly bears any resemblance to her movie star past. She is even reluctant to sign an autograph. "Why me? I am not in the movies anymore," she tells a teenager who has sauntered over to her. "There, get a signature from Poonam. She makes better pictures than me these days," she adds, pointing towards her former colleague and friend Poonam Dhillon, who has just walked into the gallery.





Tina Ambani: Second act; paintings by (top left) Rini Dhumal and (top right) Bikash Bhattacharjee



Then again, nurture is one aspect of living that might continue to ring in her mind, much after her kids are grown up and gone their own independent ways. For when she says of the Harmony Show that it is a platform for aspiring artists, there is also an understanding that without a similar launch pad in Dev Anand's *Des Pardes* over two decades back, perhaps there may not have been a

place for her in the glamour of Bollywood.

Cut to the present. Is it the mounting years or simply a sense of belonging, that the shrill tone in Tina (then) Munim's voice seems to have mellowed to a throaty resonance now that she is an Ambani?

Whatever the reason, this new voice sits easily on her ample form; as easily, in fact, as the crisp, peppermint green, velvet-embossed sari and doorknob sized emerald ring on her finger — a far cry from her Bollywood days — as she settles into a deep couch to discuss her new-found passion, the visual arts.

Tina has been organising the annual Harmony Show for the last three years at the Nehru Centre in Mumbai, which is a platform for artists across the country to jostle together under a single umbrella. And that is what she wants to talk about.

After bidding adieu to films following her marriage into one of the richest families of India, the only flashes of the Ambani *bahu* that trickled out through the media were pictures of a laid-back housewife seemingly soaking in all the goodness of the high life. She was pictured either at the inauguration of a boutique or at a luncheon with a group of corporate wives or at a mega *dandiya* show during the navratri festivals. By now one could also distinctly see her petite form ballooning faster than a polaroid develops.

Then, a few years of marriage and two children later, like other corporate wives, she was ridden by this overwhelming urge to do "something constructive". Which is why five years ago, she threw herself into the creative aspect of Reliance's textile design division, the Harmony line of fabrics. She has been travelling twice a month to co-ordinate with the weavers in Ahmedabad on their designs. And then three years ago, she launched the Harmony Show, an annual event to showcase both established and upcoming artists.

Is Tina Ambani then relaunching herself in a new avtar, since she has waved off a comeback into films? "It is more akin to involving yourself in a worthy cause," she says. "Every aspect of art, and all performing arts have a meeting point. I knew I had an aptitude for design and a good sense of colours, which is why slipping into textile designing and now, organising the show, came easily to me.

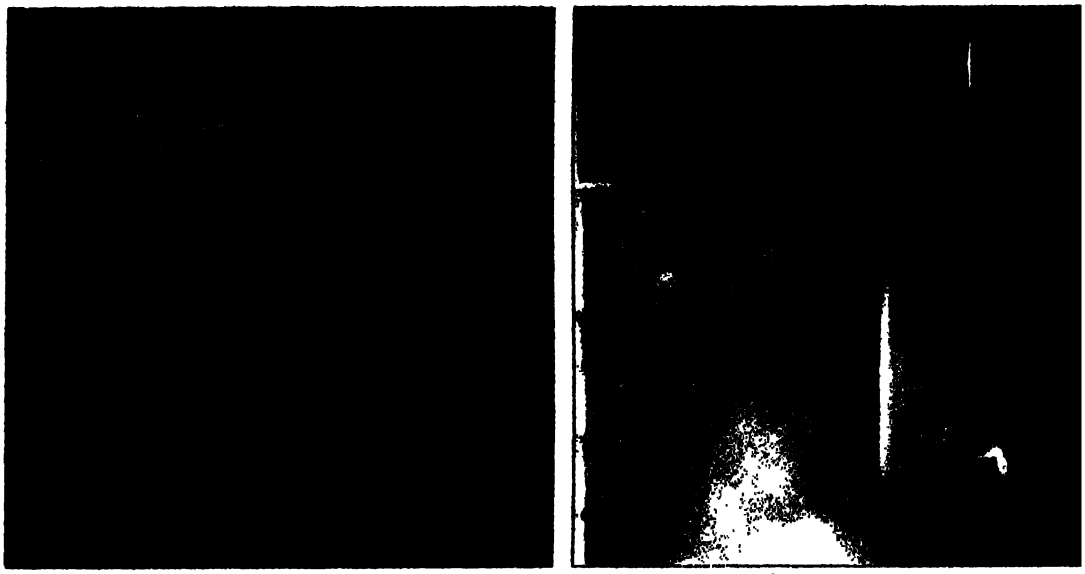
"I have a team that puts in a good eight to nine months of work. After the summer vacations this year, work for the following show will begin," says she. "This involves inviting participants, short-listing the artists and their works and working on an apt display." This year there were 170 entries, out of which 120 were chosen. She defends the rejected works, stating, "they seem amateurish now, but hold enormous promise, maybe in a couple of years they will display with us."

Some of the 120 artists whose works are on display at the 30,000 square feet gallery are Satish Gujral, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Brinda Chudasama, Gurcharan Singh, Jaideep Mehrotra, Karl Antao, Lalitha Lajmi, Manu Parekh, Raza, Wasim Kapoor and Yusuf Arrakal. The designs and concepts here are indeed a far cry from the glitzy Bollywood that Tina was so much a part of in the past.

Says Ambani, "Rarely do I have to step out of the house for my work. I work with my curator, Vickram Sethi and the team from home itself. If I am not happy with the slides of certain works and want to check the originals, then I simply order them here."

Samir Mandal, one of the water-colourists whose works are put up on display here feels, "while the show is a boon for struggling artists, Reliance should take the show to different parts of the country every year to offer a larger scope for people from the respective cities."

Brinda Chudasama, another artist, says she looks forward to this show every year for its vast range. "You can at once see the differences in the stylistic patterns of Calcutta, Baroda and Mumbai artists," she says. The diverse range swings from Bikash Bhattarjee's narrative treatments to Gurcharan Singh's touch of fresco, to Jaideep Mehrotra's three-dimensional sculptural methods in oil to Lalitha Lajmi's trademark distorted figures of women, among several others.



Paintings by S.H. Raza and Yusuf Arrakal on display at the Harmony Show

"We sincerely wish to be recognised as art promoters and supporters and want to contribute to the preservation of the Indian heritage," says Tina. "Much as I would like to travel with the show, I think it will not be possible for the simple reason that there isn't a single gallery as spacious as this one in any of the metros. I need all of the 30,000 sq ft to offer adequate space to each artist."

"Harmony," she adds, "is a metaphor for all art forms."

Harmony, one might add here, also connects several aspiring artists and a rich housewife in search of fresh modes of expression. ■

My



Footballl player Chima Okaste never tires of having chicken curry and *parathas*

Dashalayan Chowdhury

Passion for Parathas



Kishor Roy Choudhuri

TASTE OF NIGERIA:

Back home, we take a lot of *casava* and curries. *Casava* is a rarity in India but in semolina, I have found a good substitute. I have it for breakfast, lunch and dinner .A standard preparation is *ofe* (Nigerian chicken curry) consisting of *oha* (huge pumpkin leaves) and *okasi* (a bitter-sweet leafy vegetable)

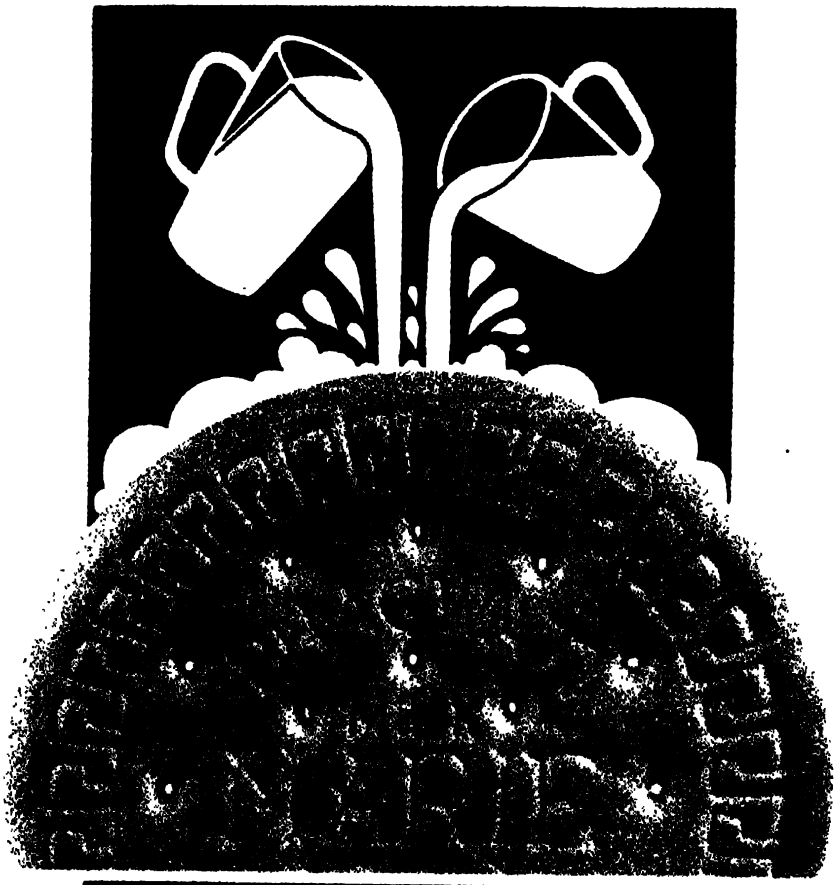
An enjoyable evening at home with select friends and wife Cathy in charge of the cooking—that's entertainment for me.

Having lived in Europe and India for the past 13 years, one has had to adapt to the different modes of hospitality. In India, for instance, the host either invites the guests over for an evening or afternoon of *adda* which follows a wholesome meal. But in England or Denmark, where I spend most of my time these days, it is the other way round.I like entertaining at home. Since I have friends spread over all age-groups and from different parts of the world, there really is no fixed pattern of going about it. Moreover, I believe that to make guests feel at home, one must cater to their tastes. A close friend is a septuagenarian and the dinner is deliberately kept bland and simple. Some other friends are in their teens and they are usually treated to some beer followed by food. Knowing they wouldn't really like spending the rest of the evening at home, we go to the disco. Most of my friends in India prefer beer when it comes to drinking although white wine is a personal favourite. It doesn't matter what food follows so long as there is either a fish or a chicken dish or both.It is easier to host dinners in Europe because of the Europeans' preference for Indian food, the preparing of which comes naturally to Cathy, a Calcuttan. A bowl of steaming chicken curry and home—made pulao is a great hit.When my wife is not around, and a guest drops in, I leave the task of venue-choosing to the person/s concerned. If, however, it comes back to me, it will be a place that serves soft, hot *parathas* and chicken curry. I can never grow tired of them.

It is but natural that I will like Nigerian food but I get to sample it only occasionally these days. Back home, we take a lot of *casava* and curries. *Casava* is a rarity in India but in semolina, I have found a good substitute. I have it for breakfast, lunch and dinner. A standard preparation is *ofe* (Nigerian chicken curry) consisting of *oha* (huge pumpkin leaves) and *okasi* (a bitter-sweet leafy vegetable). Cathy does not particularly care for it and my son prefers bland English food. That leaves just my daughter and I who have a yen for home food.

■ As told to Dhiman Sarkar

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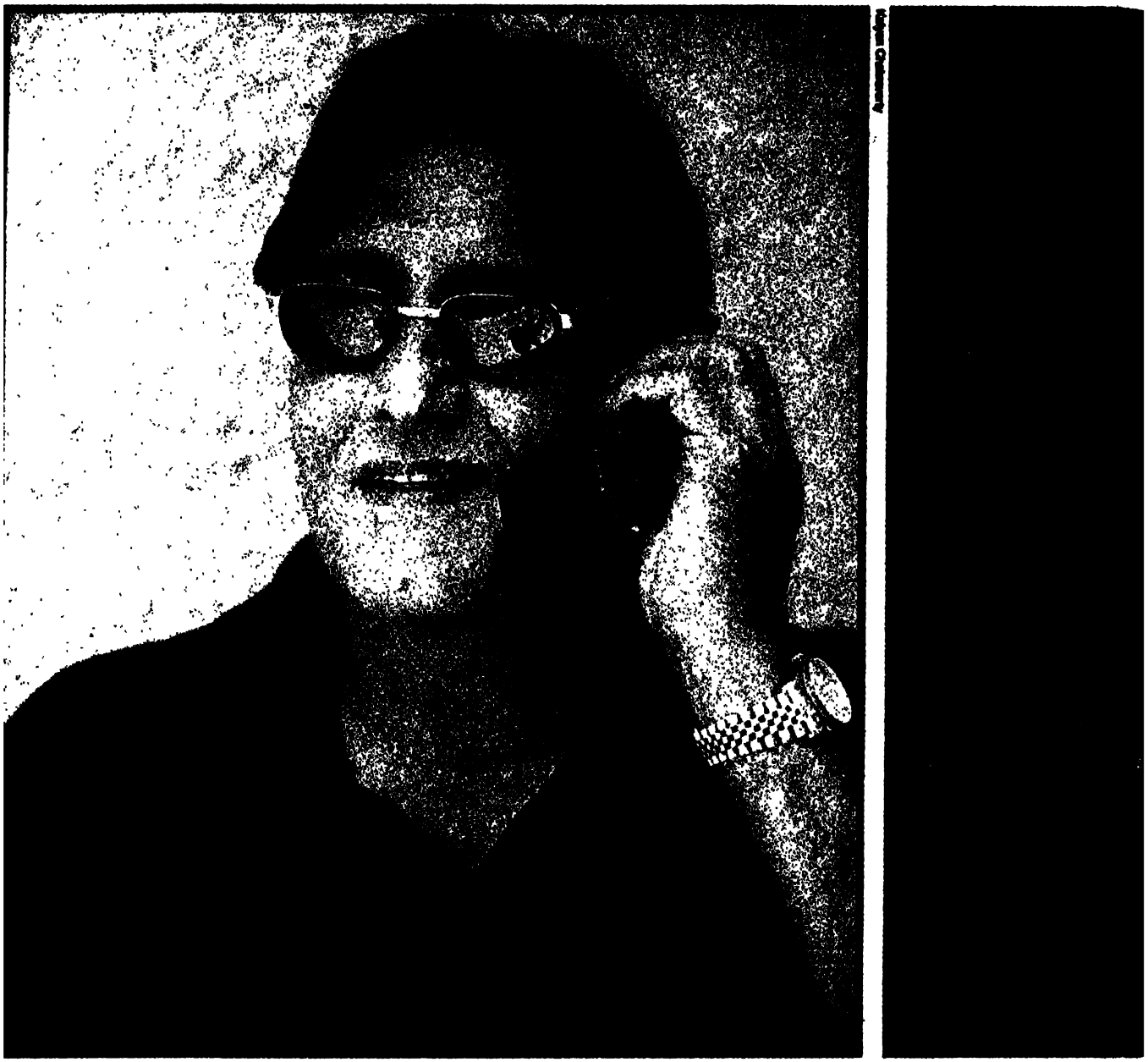
Film actor Vinod Khanna reinvents himself as a BJP politician. **Geeta Sharma** meets the new-look Khanna



The enthusiasm of the first-term MP is apparent. He arrives at the front porch of Parliament, dot on time, for the day's session, much to the glee of the Press photographers. He is also among the last to leave the hallowed interiors of the House at the end of the day. And that is after having sat, quite the attentive student, through gruelling hours of debate and discussion in the Lok Sabha.

When the session goes into recess, the debutant MP does not rush to Mumbai or rather Bollywood, where he belongs. Instead, he catches a train and goes straight back to his constituency — Gurdaspur in Punjab — to attend to the woes of his subjects. Once back from there, he parks himself in the national capital to work out ways

Vinod Khanna with wife Kavita (top) and (below) a new role : Leading an India Day parade in New York with his wife



The star MP : Enjoying the role of a real life politician and (right) the macho hero of Bollywood with Farha in *Kamama*

'Being a public figure I thought I could use my contacts

:o fulfill the promises he had made to the electorate that gave him a convincing victory at the hustings as the Bharatiya Janata Party nominee.

And yet, Vinod Khanna, the star-turned-politician ("no, no, call me star-turned MP") says he feels like a novice. "On the first day in Parliament, I didn't think it necessary to ask where to sit and sat on the Opposition benches. Someone came up and told me, *'Arre aap ki party to treasury benches mein bhaiti hai!'* ('Your party has to sit on the treasury benches)."

Besides learning the ropes of Parliament, "which one will, eventually," there are other more pressing concerns that he is involved with. An unshaven and bespectacled Vinod Khanna, with unkempt hair, sits head bent over a sheaf of papers and with a battery of friends and advisers, at Punjab Bhawan, his base in Delhi. The discussions are about a host of enterprises and private concerns that he is planning to get started in what he calls 'a really neglected and backward' Gurdaspur.

Besides education, health and development works, unemployment is the biggest problem there, he says. "I hope to help set up industry in a big way there. And, of course, there is the bridge across the Ravi river that I have promised them," he adds. The blue print of the bridge — which would reduce the distance between many places in the district by about 50 to 60 km — has already been drawn up.

For the 51-year-old six-feet plus Punjabi prodigal son, the switch over from reel life acting to real life politics is something that he is thoroughly enjoying. In fact, it was something that he had been contemplating for a long time.



and connections for a more concerted effort'



"I have already accomplished much in life. My sons, Rahul and Akshaye are doing well for themselves in their careers. As for my film career, I have reached a stage where I am no longer doing just about any roles but those that would suit my age," explains Khanna.

Besides, Vinod points out that he had already been involved with a whole lot of social causes such as AIDS awareness, cancer, riot victims, drug abuse, blood banks, etc., while in Mumbai. "And being a public figure, I thought I could use my contacts and connections for a more concerted effort." So one day, he casually mentioned his keenness to join a party to BJP leader and friend Pramod Mahajan.

With the mid-term elections being announced at about the same time, Khanna was asked to contest as the BJP candidate. Though the star had not expected to get a party ticket so early, he decided to take it up as a challenge and contest from Gurdaspur.

Even though his (second) wife, Kavita, had apprehensions about his decision, Vinod says the election results have allayed them all. Not only was he able to dislodge the Congress from its stronghold over the last five elections, but also win with a convincing margin of 1,70,000 votes.

What enthused him most was the response he got from the people of Gurdaspur. "Initially, of course, they came to see the star, but later, they turned up at the election meetings in great numbers with genuine hope," he says.

The place already seems to have grown on the star and his wife. The two have not only chalked out plans to buy



Vinod Khanna with his actor son, Akshaye

'Frankly, the Congress has had enough opportunity to perform

land but also make a house in the district. "Kavita has already said she wants to spend at least one week a month there!" he says. The cine star adds that if MPs only made it a point to visit their constituencies regularly, there would not be so much of political apathy.

"When I went to Gurdaspur, the people's lament was that they had got to see their MP (Sukhbans Kaur Bhinder) only once, during campaigning in the previous elections," he says.

As for his choice of party, Vinod was approached by the Congress a couple of years ago, but wasn't really ready for politics then. "Frankly, the Congress has had enough opportunity to perform these past 50 years and look what it has done." The star maintains that he chose the BJP for its ideology and the fact that it is a 'nationalistic political outfit.' His long-time admiration for Atal Behari Vajpayee and L.K Advani were also factors in his decision.

Ask him why actors-turned-politicians have made it big in the South, while in the north their counterparts have had to bite the dust (Amitabh Bachchan, Rajesh Khanna and the like), and Khanna responds that this is an unfair comparison. In the South, thanks to the near maniacal fan following, the stars are almost like gods. "If Rajnikant tells his people to vote for a person, they would do just that. There is no film or video piracy in the South, not for the fear of the police, but the ire of the fans!"

Besides, he points out, film stars such as M.G. Ramachandran, N.T. Rama Rao and J. Jayalalitha, have managed to make it big at the regional level. At the national level, it has been different. "Look at (Sunil) Dutt *saab*. He has been with the Congress for over three decades and is still not even a state rank minister."

The brawny 'gentleman actor' who made his film debut as a villain, feels that there is much need to bring some discipline in politics and Parliament. He says he is quietly learning the ropes before he can start debating and raising national issues.

Khanna, who made news in the 1980s by quitting a successful film career to join Osho (aka Rajneesh) in Oregon (only to return to the movies four years later) is as committed to Osho's philosophy today. "The journey was an incredible one in which I learnt and unlearnt a lot. The ability to be the master of one's own self, devoid of all conditionings and overcoming base instincts like greed and anger and above all detachment from the Guru, are some of them," he says.

In fact, Khanna's views on mandatory testing for AIDS, that had caused such furore at a recent AIDS awareness meet attended by Hollywood star Richard Gere and Shabana Azmi in Delhi, stem from his days in the Osho commune. He maintains that way back in 1983, when the world was not even aware of the AIDs menace, Osho had not only warned the 7,000-odd commune inmates about it, but also had them all tested for it.

"And there was nothing negative about it. It was not as if they were being segregated or ostracised. Only the commune members had an AIDs positive indicator on their I-cards which they carried in their pockets." The star MP insists that all the talk about Richard Gere being shocked at his statements was blown out of proportion by the media. "We have sorted all that out and in fact I am on Richard's committee on AIDS awareness," he says.

In his other role, as a father, Vinod has been as committed towards his four children — sons Rahul and Akshaye

Reel Life Hero

Vinod Khanna's film career has had its ups and downs

From villain to hero to anti-hero, he has played them all. And now, with more than a 100-odd films under his belt, the "tough guy with a good heart" has decided to go slow on the movie front. "At this stage, I have to be more choosy because there are not too many roles out there that would suit me."



Groomed to be a businessman by his family that migrated from Peshawar to Mumbai before the Partition, Vinod had wandered into modelling at an early age. Never really shy of the camera, he was not too keen to stand in front of it like a dummy. So when Vinod's 'villain' friend Manmohan introduced him to Sunil Dutt and the latter offered him a 'negative' role in *Man Ka Meet* opposite Leena Chandravarkar, he jumped at it.

Khanna, then studying Commerce at Sydenham College in Mumbai, quit studies for a full-time film career. Several negative roles later, he finally got to play a hero in *Nateejah*. What followed were such films as *Achanaak, Mera Gaon Mera Desh, Hera Pheri, Shaque, Khoon Paseena, Insaaf, Dayavaan* and *Satyamev Jayate*.

Even though he managed to act the tough guy with a good heart on screen and gained immense popularity, Vinod was never a bankable solo hero. There was always another star that he needed to have a hit, be it *Muqaddar Ka Sikander, Amar Akbar Anthony, Parvarish* or *Rajput*. There were awards, too, along the way. Among them were *Filmfare's* Best Supporting Actor award for *Haath Ki Safai* and the Best Actor Film World award for *Shaque*.

His sojourn in Osholand, which left many producers in the lurch, gave him a bad name in the industry. So even after his return, he could muster only a couple of hits, among them *Insaaf*. And when his big-budgeted films like *Mahasangram* and *Dayavaan* flopped, Bollywood producers finally decided he was not worth the trouble and Khanna had to lie low. Khanna insists that his career was strewn with a variety of roles that were never repetitive. From the dacoit of *Mera Gaon Mera Desh* to the rags-to-riches guy of *Haath ki Safai* to the well-defined Mafia don of *Dayavaan* to the policeman of *Satyamev Jayate* and an army general in the still to be completed *Dus*, he has played them all. If there is one role that he has missed out on, it is that of a politician. But then he is taking care of it in his real life!



in the past 50 years and look what it has done'

ted towards his four children — sons Rahul and Akshaye from his first wife Geetanjali and a son and a daughter, Saakshi and Shraddha — from his second wife Kavita. Khanna says he was earlier like a father to his sons. "But now I am like a friend to them and we talk about everything under the sun!" The elder son, Rahul, who prefers to stay in Singapore, is doing well as an MTV VJ. He has now branched out into films with a romantic role in Deepa Mehta's latest film, *Earth*. "Rahul is very clear and choosy about the kind of films he wants to do. He is not into commercial mainstream variety."

The younger Akshaye was launched by Vinod himself in the much acclaimed *Himalaya Putra*. With obvious pride in his voice, the father tells you that even though Akshaye went through the grind of rigorous training in gymnastics, the flips and flops of stunts, dance and dialogue delivery, he came out successful because "he is a born actor. He doesn't copy anybody and has his own style."

His wife, Kavita, whom he met at a party in 1990, is a highly qualified and successful entrepreneur and is into radiator manufacturing. Besides looking after their children, who are just six and two-and-a half, Kavita, a barrister at law from London, has already begun to help in her husband's political life by deciding to look after the women's welfare programmes in the constituency. Vinod clarifies that he has not bid farewell to his acting career. There is a blockbuster he is acting in as an army general. The film, half of which has been shot already with Sunjay Dutt, Salman Khan, Raveena Tandon and Shilpa Shetty, had got temporarily stalled because of its director, Mukul Anand's untimely death. Now that Ramesh Sippy has taken it up, it is likely to be completed soon, hopes Khanna.

From reel life to Osho and Oregon and now into real politick, it has been an involved journey for the star all the way. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 April 20



The focus is on research, discoveries, inventions new fields of study and also on meets and conferences interviews and committees—all in all, quite an action packed week for you There may also be a journey that may prove rewarding for you Travel for both, pleasure and business is indicated

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



After the frantic pursuits and hectic pace of the last week the mood is more contemplative You feel somewhat worn out yet restless It's a good time for foreign collaborations The emphasis is strongly on seas, water sources, lakes and rivers and places of worship near water You can expect a guest

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



This phase teaches you the joys of getting the most out of life of using time and resources to your best advantage and giving the best of yourself Those who have recently appeared for a major exam are bound to do well Time to contemplate on the present and introduce major changes in your life

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The moon brings into focus,bonds and ties of love—be it for romantic alliances, with your friends or your children Work at being flexible and adaptable both at home and at work and you can gain in popularity and authority Creative pursuits cinema, television, arts—may yield excellent results

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Loans and funds are important for you this week as is love On the flip side, there may be some neurosis, anxiety, minor ailments and an unsettled feeling to contend with Prayers and meditation help You can also turn to your friends and parents and they will provide you with ample support

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



Now is the time to ask for favours, to indulge in social and family activities, meeting new people and renewing old friendships Do not, however get too involved with excessive socialising as you may end up neglecting work Expenses mount as you go on a shopping spree Attend to your child's needs

Libra
September 23 — October 22



A mixed week for you Meeting up with old friends will be a source of great joy On the other hand, you might be reminded of certain unpleasant episodes of the past which you had long forgotten Avoid spending excessively on business concerns Time to take stock of finances

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



It's a swing of the pendulum back to the mental pursuits of two weeks ago—introspection, insight into life, the workings of the mind, even psychology and psychic ability What you need to guard against, however, is a tendency to dream up troubles, or to make the world's problem your own Pamper your beloved

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



New pursuits and new interests are foretold It would seem that you are truly breaking new horizons Trips and ties, whether for business or just with neighbours, relatives or friends are also important You may also undertake an intensive course of study Guard against arousing anyone's animosity

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



May be all the soul searching of the past few weeks has made you into a powerhouse of energy and activity You are now a veritable dynamo,ready to achieve the targets you have been hoping to achieve You have lately been in a bad mood Perk up and see the brighter side of life Cultivate patience

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



A time for joy in the sense of positive thinking, brushing up your image, sprucing up your life, going shopping for a new wardrobe and generally projecting attitudes which make a grand success out of you You have spent a lot of time thinking about the past Look forward to a successful future now

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



The domestic scene, with all its joys and sorrows, squabbles and bonds, completely engulfs you in a strangely pleasant manner The house is definitely what you focus on Do not, however, stagger under its burden or take it too seriously Take some time out and go for a long holiday

BIRTHDAY'S

May 3: Ganesha says that the moon's first quarter makes you plan for the future Expect sudden and dramatic changes in your life. You may lose a loved one

May 4: Moon trine Saturn: Your creative juices will flow freely making you happy and proud Parents and elders cause some confusion and some joy.

May 5: Venus sextile Neptune Despite a slow start, you end up in a blaze of glory. You need to, however, pull up your socks and be more enthusiastic in your approach

May 6: Moon trine Sun-Mars This planetary placing is extremely beneficial in every sense of the term. Success will definitely be your's. You might have to change your job Rest assured that you will succeed in your next placement.

May 7: Moon trine Neptune:The imaginative sympathy of Neptune blends beautifully with the popularity of the moon making you a much sought after personality.

May 8: Moon trine Uranus: Expect the unexpected, the strange, the bizarre to put you on top or very near it. You might meet a long-lost friend.

May 9: Moon opposition Mercury-Saturn: This opposition does mean that adversaries will be out to get you. You must thus learn to move and manoeuvre adroitly.

Triumph

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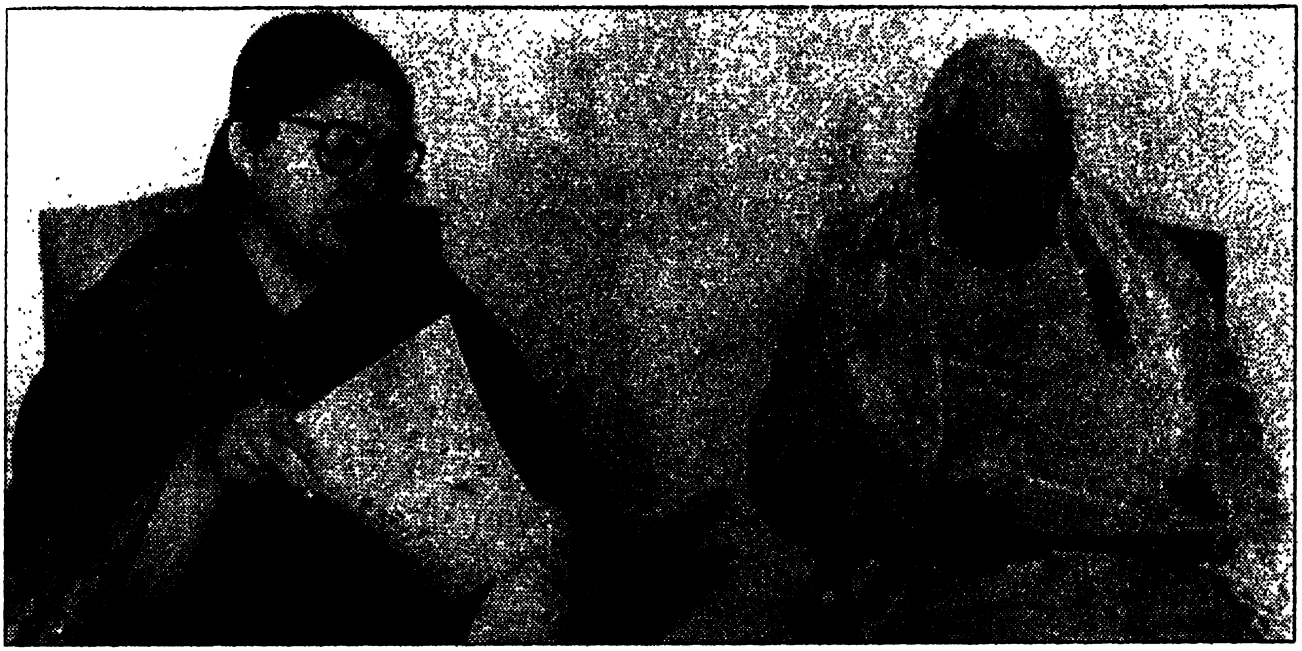
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SKETCHES

War Games

And the names who play them

This Week : Jayalalitha Vs the BJP government



Jayalalitha with Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee : Keeping the lady happy

It began: Badly, and then became much worse. In the run-up to the formation of the Central government, Jayalalitha made a trip to Delhi to discuss terms with the BJP brass. And then flew back to Chennai in a huff, saying that she hadn't been treated with much respect. What's more, the BJP had refused to agree to a special package for Tamil Nadu, so she would have to rethink the matter of support.

BJP sources, however, insisted: That Jayalalitha wanted her own men in such sensitive ministries as law and finance so that the cases against her could be disposed off as soon as possible. And when she wasn't allowed to have her own way, she refused AIADMK support to their party.

Matters were sorted out, though: Once Jaswant Singh flew out to Chennai to have long consultations with Jayalalitha. After the interminable meeting, the two of them emerged to announce that all differences had been ironed out, and the AIADMK would be supporting — and joining — the BJP government, after all. (This led to that infamous remark by Somnath Chatterjee in Parliament, but that, as they say, is another story.)

The truce didn't last for too long, however: Instead, all hell broke loose when AIADMK member and Union minister for surface transport, Sedapatti Muthiah, was asked to resign because of corruption charges that had been levelled against him.

Jaya got [illegible] though, asking that [illegible] Singh, who had been charged in the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) bribery case, also resign from the Cabinet going by the precedent established by Muthiah. And when Singh refused to oblige, he was sacked by Prime Minister Vajpayee, and had to be dragged out of the ministry kicking and screaming all the way.

Having tasted blood: Jayalalitha was in war mode, crossing swords with such high-ranking members of the government as Ramakrishna Hegde and Ram Jethmalani. And while Hegde was his usual circumspect self, Jethmalani lost no time in asking Atal Behari to stand up against such blackmailing tactics.

And did Atal oblige?: Don't be ridiculous. With the wafer-thin majority the poor Prime Minister has in Parliament he can't behave quite so courageously (or even honourably). [illegible] Vajpayee is trying every trick in the book to keep everyone happy [illegible] power because he'd rather have them in the tent...umm...looking in, rather than outside the tent looking out.

But how long will this balancing act last?: On current form, not very long. In fact, bookies are already offering odds that the BJP government will not be able to last out a year. But then, that's what they'd said about Narasimha Rao also. ■

EXTRACT

The Writing on the WALL

An extract from **Pavan K.Varma's** *The Great Indian Middle Class*

In mid-1991, the then Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao, ably guided by his erudite Finance Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, announced a series of economic reforms which would help dismantle some of the inefficient state controls on the Indian economy and facilitate its greater integration with the world economy. This liberalisation package, tailored to make India a player in the globalised economy, suddenly put the spotlight on the middle class for an entirely new reason: its ability to consume. If India was to open up to the world markets, it was essential to know how it could buy. The segment with the largest concentration of purchasing power in India was the middle class. Its consumerist prowess had therefore to be accurately gauged.

This exercise was important not only for the Indian government, which wished to advertise the strength of the untapped Indian market to woo the economies of the developed world, but also for the latter, always sensitive to newer pastures for the sale of their goods and technologies. The logic of economic reform, therefore, dictated that the middle class now be analysed,not for its lack of ideological moorings or its lack of commitment to anything but its own material well-being, or for its utter insensitivity to social and moral causes, but for its

Dr Manmohan Singh: The father of economic reforms in India



The Great Indian Middle Class by Pavan K. Varma. Published by Viking, Penguin India.
Price: Rs.295



Rising consumerism led to greater consumption

craving for and ability to buy what the developed countries could sell to it.

In this process the size of the Indian middle class became, for the first time, a matter of crucial importance. several figures were bandied around, ranging from 200 million to 500 million.

Overnight the consumerist thirst of the middle class became an asset, a sign of the dynamism of the Indian market. Learned proponents of the New Economic Policy (NEP) exulted in the revelation that 'urban India itself is the world's third largest country'. Several systematic surveys were carried out to reinforce perception with facts. Of these, the most thorough was in 1994 by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), appropriately titled 'The Consumer Classes'. The survey revealed that the Very Rich comprise about six million people or a million households. Below them, the middle class consists of three segments: the Consuming Class accounting for 30 million households or 150 million people, the bulk of whom could be in the market for all kinds of consumer durables; the Climbers, consisting of 50 million households or 275 million people; and the Aspirants numbering another 275 million. The last two segments would need good reasons to, first, buy the product you make, and next, to choose your brand. The NCAER survey was based on identifying consumption patterns rather than income levels. It sought to break the myth of a monolithic middle class with similar or undifferentiated consumption abilities. 'With the mass market sliced into three segments rather than being one seamless entity', the survey was intended to 'enable marketeers to understand the real priority of their consumers' buying decisions rather than assuming direct correlations between income levels and demand for specific projects. Other organisations, such as the prestigious Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), did their own spadework: CII concluded that there are 180 million people in India with an annual income exceeding $3197 or Rs 120.,000. The great Indian 'liberalised' economic machine was all set to roll with the middle class as its engine, but, unfortunately, many of these very surveys revealed that the power of the engine, was hardly in conformity with the wishful thinking of the enthusiasts.

★★★★★

Its numbers have grown and so has its purchasing power, and even more strikingly, its consumerist ambitions. But it is still far removed from the fast-growing middle class of even a country like Poland, as yet struggling for economic recovery, where almost all middle class households have at the very minimum a TV, a washing machine and a VCR. The fact of the matter is that 'the Indian middle classes does not generate a high effective demand, its buying capacity today is much lower than that of the South Asian elite , say a decade ago. And it certainly does not generate the kind of demand that can sustain rapid growth even in elite consumption sectors. This truth is already becoming painfully evident to the many multinational firms that flocked to India in the wake of the new economic policies to cash in on the great middle class market. 'Assets Freeze To Shelf Death' is how *Outlook* described the stacks of unsold white goods across the country in 1997. Trade sports spoke of two hundred thousand refrigerators clogging trade channels across India.Only 1.7 million colour television sets were sold in 1996-97, a meagre eight percent growth.Profit margins for white goods have crashed, with marketeers looking at a mere

three per cent. Automobile manufacturers, peddling a clutch of new models for the Indian market, have had to scale down production targets. The Indian automobile industry currently produces 2.2 lakh cars a year, and is unlikely to touch a figure above four lakhs by the year 2000.Mexico and Brazil today produce 10.8 and 14.2 lakh cars a year respectively and even Taiwan (population twenty-one million) makes a 3.9 lakh cars a year—eighty six per cent more cars than India.

'People who wake up in the morning thinking that they have no history, no ancestors are simply uncultured.' This was a comment made by a leading Russian politician to *Newsweek* in March 1996, and should have been profoundly sobering for those in his country who thought that post-communist Russia could at one stroke forget the legacies of the past and, much in the nature of a quick-change artist, emerge totally at ease in the new attire presented to it by its Western benefactors. Some such perspective is perhaps of relevance in the Indian context as well.The NEP may have put a new focus on the middle class , primarily as a consumer, but the middle class was not suddenly conjured out of thin air the day the policies were announced. The middle class had 'ancestors' and a 'history' before policy makers began to carefully assess its buying capacity and size. Its origins and evolution, its behavioural traits , and the nature of its interaction with other elements in society, should have been as relevant to the architects of the liberalisation policy as putting an accurate fix on its consumer choices or purchasing power. Such an approach would have been made immediately clear that in a country where the destitute are numbered at over 200 million by the same surveys that trapped the predilections of the consuming classes, the middle class could not be expected to achieve an economic miracle in isolation; the Indian middle class could not be an entity unto itself, defined solely by its material desires, and autonomous to the economic realities of the country as a whole.The error, born out of historical myopia, was two-fold: first, it gave to the middle class an economic clout that it could not possibly possess in a country as poor as India; and second, and with far more serious consequences, it failed to take into account what the policies of the liberalisation would do to a class which was already morally rudderless, obsessively materialistic and socially insensitive to the point of being unconcerned with anything but its own narrow self-interest.

As we shall discuss later, the intention here is not a simplistic critique of the policies of economic liberalisation . Our critique is of the assumption that the wand of liberalisation could cast its spell in a social vacuum, or succeed in magically



separating the past from the present, so that the middle class, for instance, could suddenly be dissociated from all its other defining elements and be reborn only as the great consuming class, each of its members a sterilised statistic in an aggregate map of India's purchasing power. Economic policies deal with real people; real people do not exist in isolation but are the products of an evolutionary experience, with identifiable behavioural attributes, which in turn influences the impact and consequences of such economic policies in a manner quite distinct to the sanitised calculations of cause and effect drawn up in purely economic strategies.

Given the dominant traits of the Indian middle class in its evolution upto 1991, the impact of the policies of economic liberalisation was to liberate it from even the pretence of any notion of restraint or reticence in the unchecked pursuit of its consumerist aspirations. For too long the professed bias of State policy was for the poor of India. The emphasis, however hypocritical, was on austerity, on restraining material pursuits in a country where the poor so greatly outnumbered the rich. No longer. Now it was state policy to open the economy to the objects of desire.

Gandhi was always for austere living





Consumerism was sanctified because the middle class' ability to consume was an index to progress. Material wants were suddenly severed from any notion of guilt. In a sense, it was the collective exorcism from the nation's psyche of the repressive and life-denying nature of Gandhi's idealism, an exultant, exuberant escape from his emphasis on an austerity that could not be ignored but was inherently unemulatable. Liberalisation provided the opportunity to make a break from the attitudes and thinking of the past, the moment to bring out into the open desires long held back and to say, 'Now at last, we can do what we had always wanted to do, without a sense of guilt, and, indeed, claim public approval for it.' Gandhi's love and praise of poverty and suffering and the ascetic life had a critic in Nehru himself. 'Personally I dislike the praise of poverty and suffering,' Nehru wrote. ' I do not think they are at all desirable, and they ought to be abolished.' But, however, much Nehru railed against what he perceived as the obscurantism in Gandhi's persona, he was acutely conscious of the moral imperative to orient State policy in favour of the poor. Nehru's socialism was the counterpart of Gandhi's emotional identification with the poor. If Gandhi was able, and willing to live like the poor, Nehru was equally convinced about the vulgarity of the flamboyant consumerism. Liberalisation rendered the economic legacy of both these stalwarts redundant, specially for a middle class weary by now of the ineffectual socialist rhetoric of a host of previous governments. Indeed, the judgemental pendulum now swung to the other extreme, if the policies of 'protection' and 'self-reliance' and socialism were economically inefficient, the only answer was to forget the poor for a while and concentrate on the opportunities for greater material gratification for those who could benefit under the new economic dispensation.



Its economic prowess may have been limited, but there was no ceiling now on the middle class' aspirations to good life. "The lifestyle of the Indian elite is amazing," commented Noam Chomsky during a visit to India in 1996. "I've never seen such opulence even in America." It was this lifestyle, replete with expensive cars, the latest consumer gadgets, designer clothes and accessories and five-star living, which became the role model for the middle class in the heady hedonism unleashed by the liberalisation process. The urge to move up the consumption ladder, to somehow put an unbridgeable gap between the squalor of the poor and the plush material insularities of the rich , was always there. But now this urge had the stamp of 'official' acceptance, the justification of an ideology. 'We should all get this clear,' wrote an ideologue of the new school of thought on the editorial page of a national newspaper, 'that a country of the sixe and importance of India has no choice but *to clamber to its new tryst with destiny inside shiny buildings of chrome and glassat the free market. There is no mileage in looking wistfully at quaint mud huts rushing by the car windows because they, and their ilk, cannot meet our burgeoning needs, and if truth be told, never have* [emphasis mine].' ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 4, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1630	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2130	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 965	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-965	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2100	daily
DELHI					
IC 763	0700	daily	9W 901	0805	daily
9W 511	0835	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 302	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 512	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-279	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W 511	1000	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1900	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1635	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W 211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ 195	[illegible]	4	RJ 196	[illegible]	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 474	1325	7	KL 475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1010	4			

IC 731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC 855	0755	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
IC-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC 856	1500	2, 6
AI 306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
BG-698	1250	2, 5	**BG-697**	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-536	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU 537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB-106	1000	2 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI-110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2 6	IC-728	1000	3 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19 15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya Varanasi Dep: Wed Thurs & Sun Arr. Tues, Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon, Tues, Fri. & Sat. Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun.	16 15	2304
2301	17 00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon Tues. Thurs, Fri. & Sat Arr Mon, Wed, Thurs., Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep. Wed. & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr. Except Sunday	21 10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues, Fri & Sat, Arr: Tues, Wed., & Sat	11 35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep., Tues, Wed. & Sat; Arr Tues., Fri. & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Tootan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21 05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5 10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15 15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri	7 55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kalimer Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBC Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8 20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr. Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19 40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20 40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8 35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22 05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15 45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep. Sunday, Arr: Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13 45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am 21 years old. I lost my mother when I was 2. Since childhood, I have heard stories about how, after death, we can establish contact with the souls of departed ones. Nowadays, I have this urge to die so that I can meet my mother again. Please suggest a way in which I can get rid of this urge.*



Sarita, Calcutta

A. Think about it this way — how would your mother respond to your negative life attitude? All of us are immortal because we live on in our children and those that we love. By entertaining such thoughts you would really be killing your mother all over again, and hurting her spirit wherever it resides today. I would suggest that you give vent to all your accumulated grief and sense of loss regarding your mother by deploying it in a positive way. Talk to all those friends and relatives who knew her, and compile their memories in a tape or in a notebook. Gather together whatever old photographs you can find. Keep them with you as a living memory and move on to living your own life, after incorporating your mother into yourself and the living present.

Q. *I am 24 years old and ever since the age of 16, I have got into the habit of watching movies, sometimes, as many as four to five a month. I realise that it is a wastage of time and money and I have tried not to succumb to this habit. However, as most of my friends live outside Calcutta, loneliness drives me to turn to movies again. How do I get rid of this habit?*



Name withheld, Calcutta

A. There is nothing wrong with watching films, it is a most rewarding and educative pastime. However, watching trashy films again and again can become a passive and compulsive activity. Forget the guilt, watch as many films as you want and at the same time observe your own reaction to the films. They are no substitute for real life and actions. Loneliness can drive you as well to exercise, to reading and writing, to new hobbies and skills. I do not really think you have a problem at all!

Being blackmailed by your former boyfriend? I always have the same reply — never appease a blackmailer. Take him head on.... Even if you do not feel as confident as you sound, do not bend. And do not ever expose yourself to such an indiscreet situation again

Q. *I am 16 years old and a few months back, I fell in love with a boy and even had a physical relationship with him. But unfortunately, he turned out to be a 'playboy'. Now, he is threatening me that if I do not give in to his physical demands, he will disclose details about our earlier affair to everybody. Please suggest a way to get rid of this helpless situation.*

Debolina Sen, Calcutta



A. Again and again I encounter letters regarding sexual blackmail. I always have the same reply — never appease a blackmailer. Take him head on. Tell him that he is in fact liable to legal action for rape of a minor and that you would be more than happy to help him write out a police statement to the effect. Even if you do not feel as confident as you sound, do not bend. And do not ever expose yourself to such an indiscreet situation again.

Q. *I am a 19-year-old college student and have a brother who is eight years older than me and is a government servant. My brother has been habitually rude to me but my parents turn a blind eye towards his obnoxious behaviour, as he is the only earning member of the family. In fact, they expect me to compromise. Please tell me how to handle this situation.*

Name and address withheld

A. Time is the great leveller in these matters. If you fiercely and dedicatedly pursue

your own goals towards a worthwhile and rewarding life-plan and career, one day not so far away you will find yourself on top of the heap as well! But do learn a lesson from your brother's behaviour and, however, successful you may become, never forget to spare time for an encouraging word to the others around you.

Q. ***I have grown bald all of a sudden and this depresses me quite a lot as I am only 22. As a result of this, I feel an acute sense of embarrassment and have stopped socialising, especially, as my friends make fun of me. Please advise me as I am having a tough time.***

Rahul, Calcutta



A. Sudden baldness could be due to a variety of reasons — genetic, stress-induced, or triggered by some medication you have been taking. It would be best for you to consult a medical specialist on this matter, but, of course, you do know that it is not the hair on your head but the grey cells in your skull that define you as a human being. Walk tall and do not let any silly jokes about your appearance scratch even the surface of your composure. In fact, you could even turn the situation on its head and make a confident "bald is beautiful" fashion statement. In many countries and cultures people have deliberately kept their heads shaven. I know for a fact that many women find bald men irresistible. Check it out!

Q. ***I am an exquisitely beautiful and talented student of a non-reputed medical college. The only problem that I face is that of loneliness. Those of the same sex do not confide in me as they feel inferior and those of the opposite sex are silently upto some unknown mischief. Coming from a lower middle-class family, I feel like an outcaste when I am relating to commoners due to an educational chasm and feel alienated from the elite crowd because of my economic circumstances. Please help me.***

Ranu Banerjee, Calcutta

A. I think your problem is not loneliness, it is vanity. You appear to have such a high and exaggerated image of yourself that you have successfully immunised yourself from any possibility of human interaction. If you were to forget about your exquisite beauty and talent and come down to earth for a while you would discover that human relations exist on warmth and reciprocity. You could try that old-fashioned device called a smile to make initial contact with other members of the human race, followed by genuine interest in other people, be they 'commoners' or the elite. Seriously, I think you have allowed yourself to fall victim to all kinds of complexes and class prejudices. There is nothing at all to be ashamed of in coming from a lower middle class family — and there is something to be proud of if you can improve your own circumstances and those of your family. Do not be so defensive and so afraid of the world — there are some really nice people out there if you only give them a chance.

Sudden baldness? Walk tall and do not let any silly jokes about your appearance scratch even the surface of your composure. In fact, you could even turn the situation on its head and make a confident 'bald is beautiful' fashion statement

Q. ***I have been married for the last four years and have a two-year-old daughter. My wife is living with her parents for the past one-and-a-half years. Initially, her stay was based on mutual understanding but now she, along with the tacit consent of her parents, wants me to stay at her parents' place as a ghar jamai. I have tried to change her mind but to no avail. I am in a dilemma — I am very fond of our daughter and at the same time faced with a cold marriage. Would it be wise to separate?***

L. N., Guwahati

A. I don't think your situation calls for a separation. You do not appear to have any real or permanent area of discord with your wife. Parents often tend to cling on to their children longer than is wise — as do children. The situation calls for tact and understanding and very careful handling. Living for a little while longer with your in-laws should not involve such a great blow to your machismo. A *ghar jamai* was a figure of ridicule in society until some time ago, but in today's fast-moving times it if often a blessing to have grand-parents around, whether they are your's or your wife's. If you find it really unbearable, make an organised plan to move out in six months or in a year, perhaps by seeking a transfer or relocation to another city. At any cost do not threaten or destroy the relationship between your wife and her parents — this would harm your entire family matrix. Good luck!



Illustrations : Debasish Deb

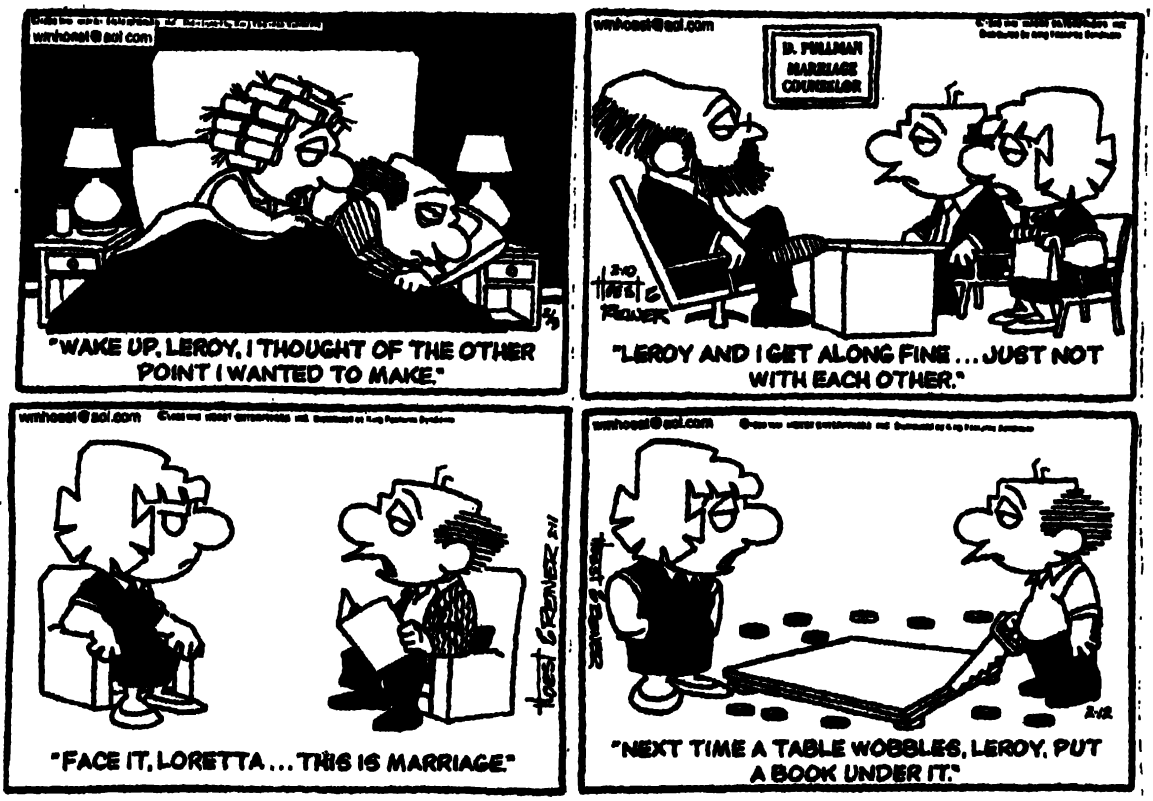
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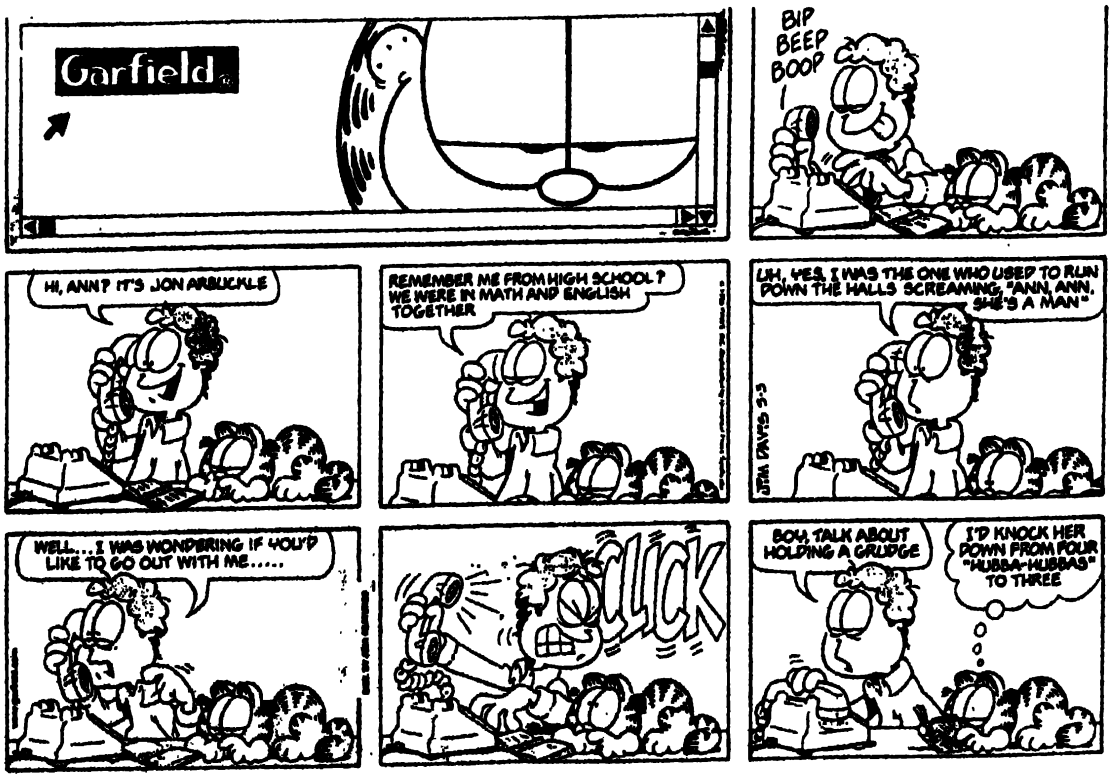
CALVIN AND HOBBES ◉ WATTERSON



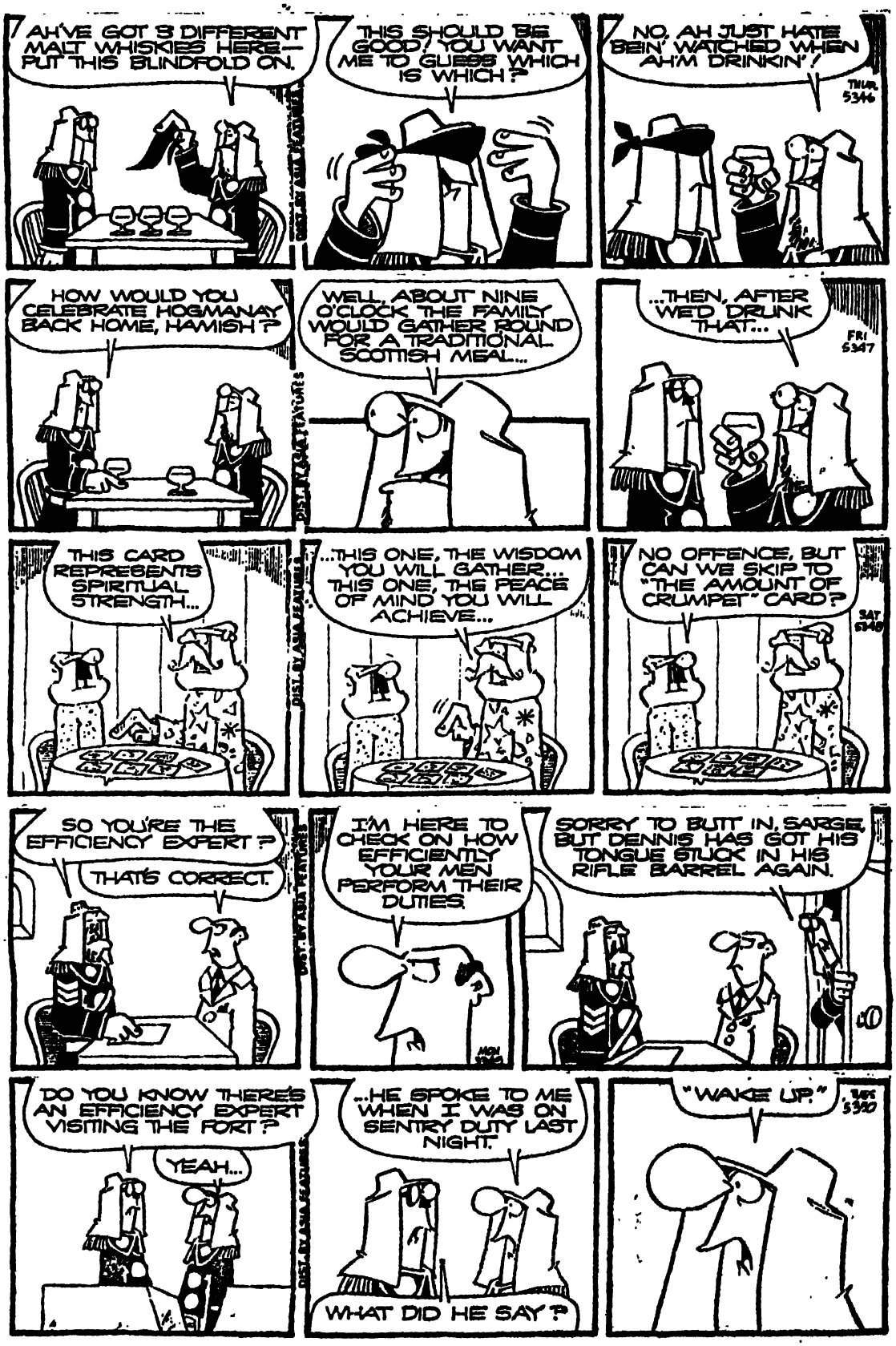
THE LOCKHORNS



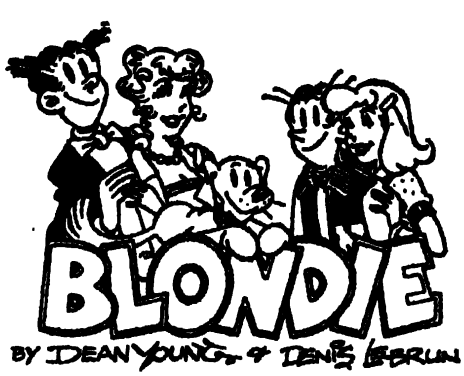
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THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

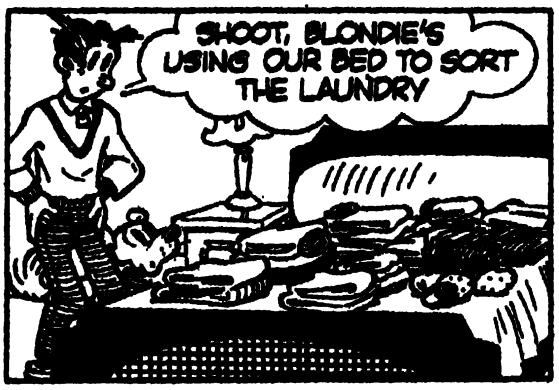


BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

















BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am a regular reader of your column. I have yellow-stained teeth. This embarasses me, especially when my friends tease me about it. I must add that I am very particular about my diet and hygiene. Kindly suggest a natural remedy to get rid of my problem.*
Dibyendu Biswas, Calcutta.

A My first advise to you would be to go to a dentist and get your teeth cleaned and polished. This will help remove plaque and help your teeth look whiter. Brushing should be a morning and evening routine without any exception. For whitening the teeth , take two tsp of bicarbonate soda with two tsp of salt and massage into your teeth and gums daily, using a tooth-powder as well. You can also use ashes of charcoal. Keep it in a jar and use it in the morning and evening as a tooth scrub.You will find the yellowishness disappearing.



To get rid of yellow teeth:

■ Use the ashes of charcoal as a tooth scrub

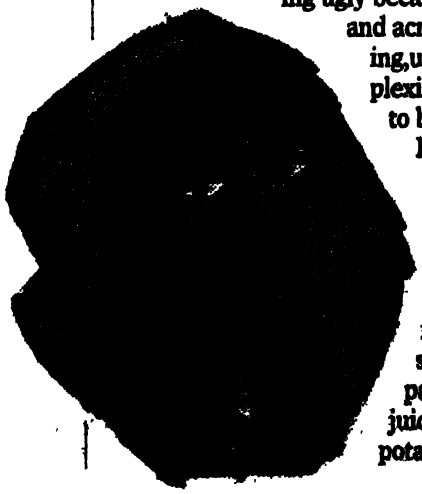
Q *I am a 24-year-old girl and have a normal skin. As summer approaches, I face many problems. On exposure to the summer sun, the area around my cheeks become red and itchy. I also get prickly heat rashes all over my body. Please advise me on the type of skin care routine I should follow before the summer really sets in. I also want to know whether rose water can be made at home. If so, how? If not, where can I get it from?*
Kalpana Kundu, Calcutta.

A You seem to have a sensitive skin and it is important that you use an umbrella, sunglasses and a sun-screen. Do not step out of your house without these. Make a pack of sandlewood, fuller's earth, lemon juice and ice cold rose water and keep it in the fridge. Apply it all over the face and neck daily. Not only will it soothe the skin, it will also remove tan and rashes.There are various prickly heat powders available in the market which will both prevent and soothe prickly heat rashes. A sandlewood-based one is usually better. You can make rose water at home by boiling six cups of red rose petals to a litre of water, preferably rain water. Boil for 15 minutes. Cool, strain and keep in the refrigerator. Distilled and bottled rose water can also be bought at chemist's and cosmetics shops.

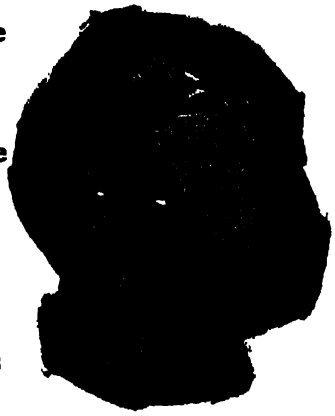


Q *I am a 17-year-old girl and I have a very dark complexion. I am very depressed due to this. I want to have an extremely fair complexion. Please advise as to how I should go about it.*
Name withheld.

A The grass is always greener on the other side. I would love to have a dusky, toned complexion like Rekha, Smita Patil and Naomi Campbell. I have seen the fairest of skin looking ugly because of pimples and acne. Sallow looking,unhealthy complexion is something to be dreaded. Potato extracts, lemon, cucumber and almonds, all seem to have natural bleaching effects on the skin. Make a pack of lemon juice, fuller's earth, potato juice and



milk and apply all over the face and neck area. Leave on till dry and then wash off with ice cold water. This will help to remove tan and help the skin look clearer. Make the most of what you have. Earth colours like *mehendi* green, saffron, turmeric yellow look stunning on dark skin. Use make-up and earthy colours to your advantage. You are bound to look stunning.I do not see any reason why you need to worry or feel depressed about your complexion.



Q *I am 20 years old and have fair and normal skin. My problem is that I have some hollow spots on my cheeks which I incurred as a result of an attack of chicken-pox. I don't use make-up and have never visited a beauty-parlour. Kindly suggest a way I can get rid of these ungainly marks.*
Julie, Calcutta.

A Sometimes, when we pick or scratch at chicken-pox marks, they leave behind stubborn scars. I would advise you to use a face pack made of the following ingredients -gramflour, powdered masoor dal, rice powder, lemon juice, turmeric powder, honey andsandlewood powder. Mix all the ingredients in milk to a thick paste and apply all over the face. Leave on till dry and then dab with very little milk and start to scrub in a rotating manner until all the flakes fall off. Wash face with cold milk first and then, ice cold water. This has to be done daily for atleast two months. You will start seeing a difference within the first week.

Q *I am 17 years old and a regular reader of your column. I would like to know what turban therapy means. I would be greatful if you could tell me how it is beneficial.*
Pummy, Ranchi.

A Turban therapy has been used in India for years, which is perhaps how it's name was derived. After oiling your hair, wring out a towel in boiling hot water, careful not to burn your fingers. Open the towel and wrap it around your head tightly, allowing the steam to penetrate into the scalp. This is excellent for the scalp and hair as it opens the pores on the scalp and allows the oil to penetrate deep, nourishing the hair follicles. You will see the difference in your hair once you start turban therapy. You must understand that it is the scalp that needs nourishment and not the hair. That is why turban therapy is so important.

The use of turban therapy:

■

It nourishes the pores in the scalp and helps to clean it.

Q *I am a 45-year-old woman and have never used a face pack of any kind. However, now I feel the sudden urge to use one. Will the use of a face pack be beneficial ? If yes, can you recommend a good home made face pack. I have a normal skin.*
Bindu Sharma, Calcutta.

A It is sad that uptil now, you have never thought of looking after your skin. It is important for every woman to start a regular skin care routine from an early age. This helps to maintain the suppleness of the skin. A face pack will benefit your skin but you also have to go in for a regular cleansing, moisturising and toning routine. You can make a pack of egg-white, fuller's earth, five drops of almond oil, one tsp honey, thejuice of half a lemon and cold water. You can use this pack atleast twice a week. It is also important that you message your face with a nourishing cream daily. Use an exfoliating scrub and also tone your skin by wiping it with cold rose water. Do this several times a day and let the skin soak up it's goodness.A well-balanced diet supplemented with regular exercise will help you age gracefully. Pamper yourself a little and be regular with your skin care routine.



Q *I would like to know whether gels are in any way harmful for the hair. Is there any home made substitute?*
Binod Bose, Calcutta.

A Anything in excess is harmful. There are various market brands of gels available to set the hair and give it a wet look. You can use gels once in a while,s but you must check the brand and only use a good one. You could also use oil instead. Oil is much more beneficial for the hair and the look you get is much the same.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



GITANJALI KASHYAP
Fashion Designer:

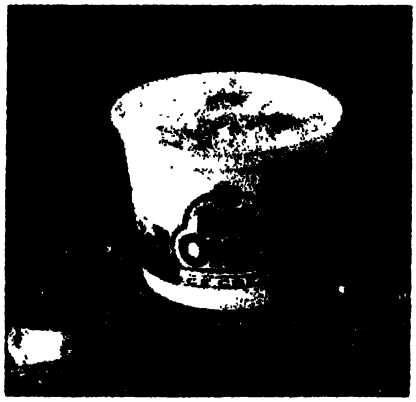
My favourite ice-cream is Hot Chocolate fudge from Nirula's. Since I have no weight problem, I can have one everyday. Though I travel abroad, I feel Nirula's is the best.



Breaking the Ice

When it comes to ice-cream, there are a range of flavours — and companies — flooding the market, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

You need to pamper yourself. With scoops of mouthwatering butterscotch; or is it strawberry that has caught your fancy lately? Forget those lean mean diets; have a binge.



Start with gorging on ice-creams.

It's the dessert of the decade. For, ever since Kwality-Walls, Vadilal, Rollick, Baskin Robbins, Nirula's, Mother Dairy and a lot more tried to break ice with people.

In the Seventies and Eighties, there weren't too many ice-creams to choose from. The shrill cry of the local ice-cream vendor as he hawked "K-w-ality" or "Farinni" had neighbourhood children running up to him. Ice creams have had a long innings since. Today, you can walk into a confectionery shop or parlour to satisfy your craving from a lip-smacking range of ice-creams.

The history of ice-cream goes back to the ancient Roman empire and the Arab world which had a particular fondness for its cousin, the *sherbat*. They were wrapped in straw and stored underground in a relatively low temperature. Ice-creams next made their appearance in the 1500s — during the Renaissance. Italian texts have made references to a certain Medici family in Florence enjoying parfaits (egg-based ice-creams) through Catherine de Medici who married into the family and came to Florence with a French cook.

"Even 50 years ago, egg was the binding factor, though most manufacturers now use Algae, beans flour or the artificial carbo-methyl cellulose," says Tarsillo Nataloni, who makes "fresh ice creams" at Flavours, his Italian eatery in Delhi.

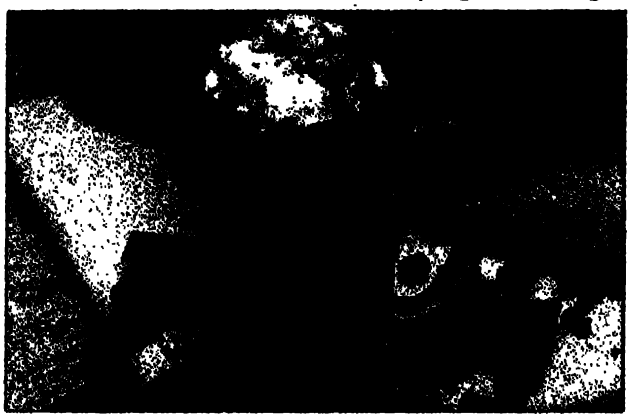


The Indian tradition of ice-cream is rooted in *kulfi* with the first references to industrially manufactured ice-cream made around World War II. The first batch of ice-cream was made for American GIs who were stationed in and around Delhi. Among the early pioneers of industrial ice-cream were the Lamba and Ghai families in Delhi who commenced manufacture, recognising a potential requirement beyond the

armed forces in areas such as restaurant and hotel menus.

Today, ice-cream is no longer the exclusive preserve of the rich and the famous. Kwality-Walls has taken the leader's mantle with over 50 per cent of the total market share. The second largest player is Vadilal which moved from being a small handmade outlet in pre-Independence days, to begin large-scale manufacture of ice-cream in 1972. The rest are, by and large regional, with the possible exception of Amul which entered the market in Gujarat in 1996 and has since, moved across the country.

The need for a wide consumer base got Mother Dairy into the act of selling ice-cream first through its milk shops, and later, through retail outlets in Delhi, Ghaziabad, Noida, Faridabad and Gurgaon. In the East, Rollick has its main factory at Calcutta and three franchise bases at Guwahati, Ranchi and Siliguri.



A lot of the wooing is centred round the colourful mix of flavours and textures. Kwality-Walls has launched an all-new ice-cream range this summer with over 10 flavours for children, teenagers, young adults and the family. "There is a lot of excitement for children in the form of Max ice cream," says Debashis Ray of Hindustan Lever which consolidated its ice-cream holding under the Kwality-Walls banner.

For teenagers, one can dig into Choconut Feast (for Rs 15); young adults can have Cornetto, the country's best-selling cone at Rs 20; adults may opt for a range that comprises vanilla, strawberry, chocolate and cashewnut variants, available in an all-new 500ml and one-litre take-home tubs.

Nirula's in Delhi lists 21 flavours with the more popular ones centred round Zafrani Badam Pista—made from saffron priced at Rs 45,000 per kg, and Butterscotch Crunch. "Our ice cream is comparable with the best in the world," says Samir Kukreja of Nirula's.

In Mother Dairy, there are a cool 11 flavours, says a company spokesperson, adding that vanilla and strawberry—both priced at Rs 5 per 50 ml cup—are great. Butterscotch and Chocolate (which come at Rs 11.50 per 100ml) and Mango (at Rs 10.50). Tutti Fruti, Kaju Kishmish and Kesar Pista (between Rs 10.50-11.50). Their new entrant, Casatta, acts as a complete food (at Rs 18)—a single slice contains cake, nuts, strawberry, jam, butterscotch and tutti frutti.

"Rollick has 20 varieties in the cup segment, 10 types of ice cream sticks and 20 types of party packs," says marketing manager, P.K. Mukhopadhyay. Consumers have also been ecstatic over their Keshar Kulfi (at Rs 16), Nutty Roll (at Rs 14) and Choco sandwich (a 10-piece party pack priced at Rs 100).

As for Vadilal, the product matrix of more than 150 flavours of ice-cream range from Rs 3 for Funtee to Rs 115 for a Rajbhog party pack in more than 80 different flavours. Says Hanish Somaya, product executive of Vadilal ice creams, "Vanilla, One Up Chocobars and King Cones are our biggest grossers." He does not feel that international players like Baskin Robbins, placed at the premium range, can do much to cannibalise the mass market where "the economy segment of ice cream exists".



MALINI RAMANI
Socialite:
My favourite ice cream is Hagen Dasz and the flavour is coffee chip in a cup. It is available all over the world, though sadly, not in India. Here, I prefer to have Nirula's Hot Fudge Sundae.

There are basically two schools of ice-cream: the American ice-cream which is 80 per cent white and 20 per cent brown, is a favourite among Northerners who need to rely on its high fat content to keep themselves warm. The other, lean ice-cream, is fruity and a great hit among people from the South where it is warmer.

Tarsillo Nataloni who makes lean ice-cream serves his clients with 'natural ice-cream' that is authentic in taste. "I use milk, cream, sugar, locust bean flour (from Italy) and Nestle's milk powder which costs me double," to make those "fresh frozen desserts'.



His flavours are known for their novelty—green apple, chocolate mint, tiramisu, passion fruit, hazelnut, peach, honey and cinnamon—clubbed under the 'Ice Gelati' range. They are so-called to abide by the Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA, 1954) law which requires that every manufacturer has to specify the heat treatment, the maximum content of air and the use of at least 36 per cent solids to call their products 'ice-cream'.

But such strictures notwithstanding, there is no denying the fact that ice-cream—in all its rich and creamy splendour—is the best, and often the cheapest way, of having fun. Slurp.

TELEVISION

Look who's Talking now!

The bad boy of television, Sajid Khan, makes the transition to the big screen. **Farida Shaikh** reports

The crow flew over Sajid Khan's career right on time — just when there seemed to be no end in sight to his endless banter.

The host of innumerable countdown and game shows on TV has landed with a plum role in Hrishikesh Mukherjee's comeback film *Jhoot Bole Kauva Kate*, opposite Juhi Chawla and Anil Kapoor. But then Hindi movies are second nature to Sajid. With script writers Salim and Javed Khan and choreographer Farah Khan in the family, cinema is his lifeline.

"It's the second lead role. I am playing Juhi's close friend who wants to marry her. But she is in love with Anil Kapoor. Her parents do not like him so I end up playing the mediator and help them unite," he explains.

In real life, however, Sajid saw his parents split up when he was just seven. He recalls a troubled childhood when he was almost kicked out of school. "I was a juvenile delinquent, also robbed a house once, started smoking at the age of 10, watching adult movies at 11, going to disco at 12 and then I grew up," he laughs. Thrown in the company of rich kids in school and later at college (Mithibai), Sajid was the eternal jester, taking recourse to tomfoolery to make friends.

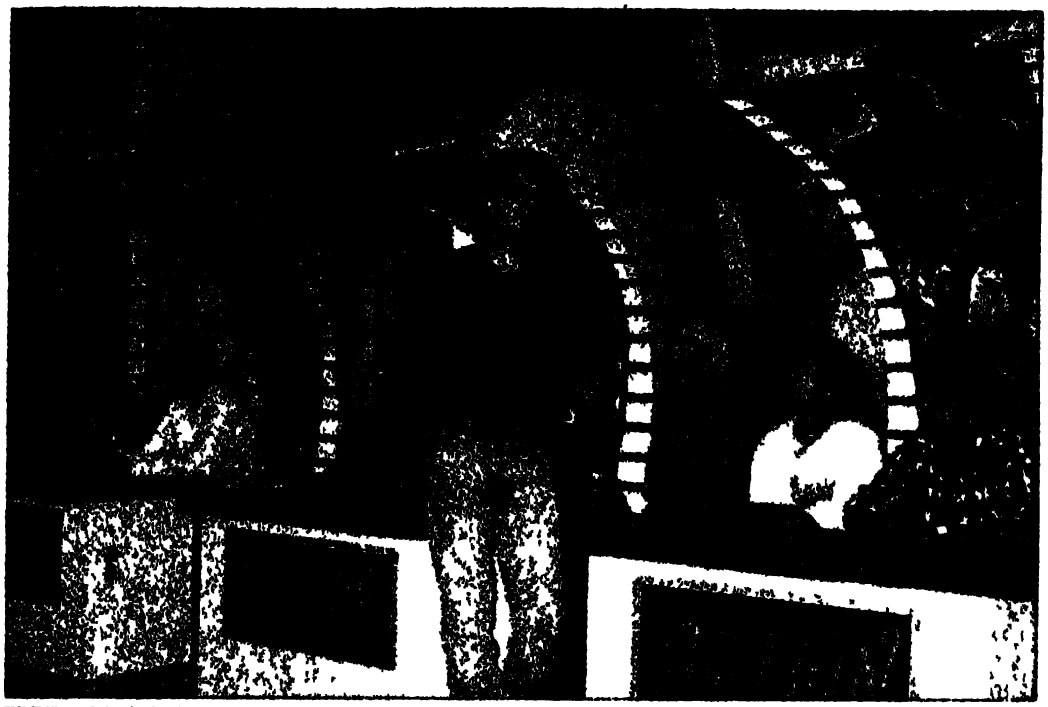
One thing, however, that remained constant in his turbulent life was his fascination for the movies. During a short stint as deejay in a Mumbai pub, he started experimenting with mixing Hindi film songs with Western ones which were lapped up by the crowds.

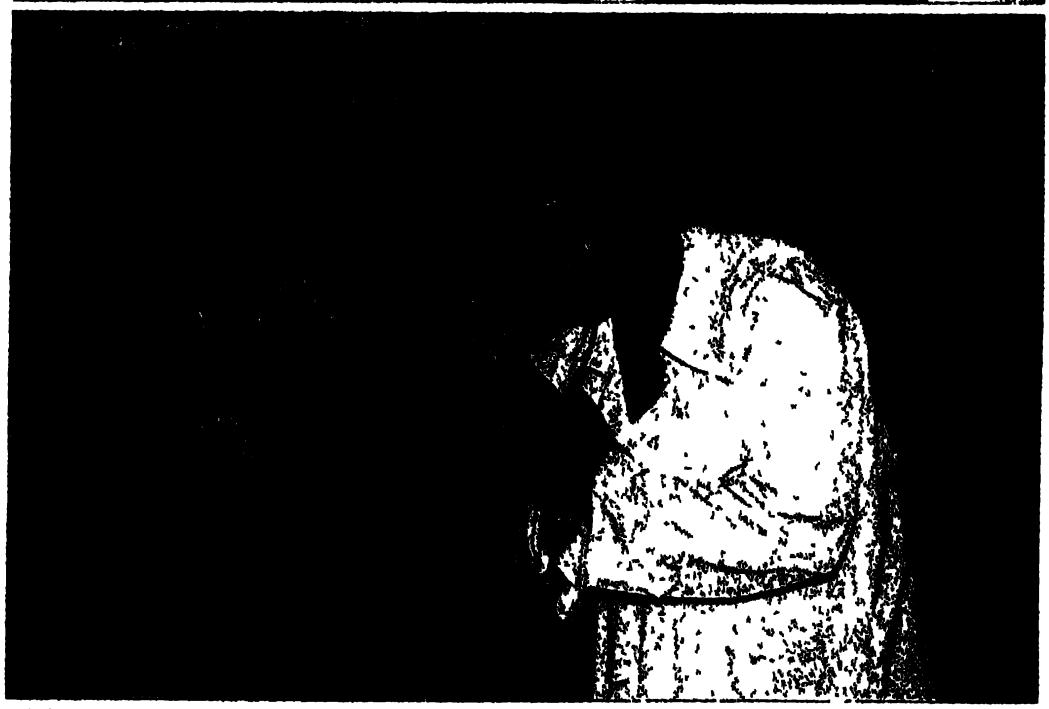
Not that Sajid has stopped hogging the limelight on TV with his foray into films. With *Kehne Me Kya Harz Hai*, on Sony TV, *Tele Housie* on In Mumbai and *Ikke Pe Ikka* on Zee cinema, he has got his hands full — and his mouth too — taking potshots at filmstars and other showbiz folks. When he's not describing how 'Mamta Kulkarni's belly moves like jelly,' he's tickling your funnybone dressed up as Sajidaben. Off screen too, the chubby 27-year-old and self-confessed 'harmless flirt' has his wacky humour intact and firmly believes that stupidity pays.

But surely his family's contacts with the filmworld must have given him that edge over the others? "Not at all," he retorts. "If you are talented, you need just that one break to make it in life. It all started with me auditioning for an episode of *Antakshari* which never materialised. Instead, I landed with playing host for a number



Sajid Khan : Improvised performance for all to see





Sajid Khan has got his hands full — and his mouth too — taking potshots at filmstars and other showbiz folks

of shows. Hrishikesh Mukherjee spotted me on TV and offered me a role in his movie. I've also been a stage actor for long", he says trying to dismiss any doubts you have about his 'struggle' to make it big.

And how does he feel being called the 'poor man's Jaawed Jafferi'? "Look, comparisons will always be made", he says with that slight hint of irritation. "Initially I tried to fight it, but now I have accepted it. There's a lot of difference between Jaawed's style and mine. He works on scripts. My performances

Sajid has however, toned down his jibes on filmstars, now that he is on the other side of the fence. He is also cautious about naming his favourites. "Anil Kapoor and Juhi Chawla", he says after putting in a lot of thought, picking his co-stars in his forthcoming movie. Of course, Govinda tops the list with Johnny Depp and the Marx Brothers.

"Why should I be scared of cracking jokes on people in showbiz?" he asks. "I only comment on their persona, not on what they do in their private lives or who they sleep around

Life's a roller-coaster ride to be lived for the moment, says this movie-buff who spends his day, when he's not shooting, watching movies in his room. The only other room he visits is the gym to lose those extra pounds. "My aim in life is to keep my CA happy and to see that people are entertained — be it by way of horror, emotion or comedy. That's why I get put off by art movies, because they don entertain. Even a look at their posters can put me to sleep".

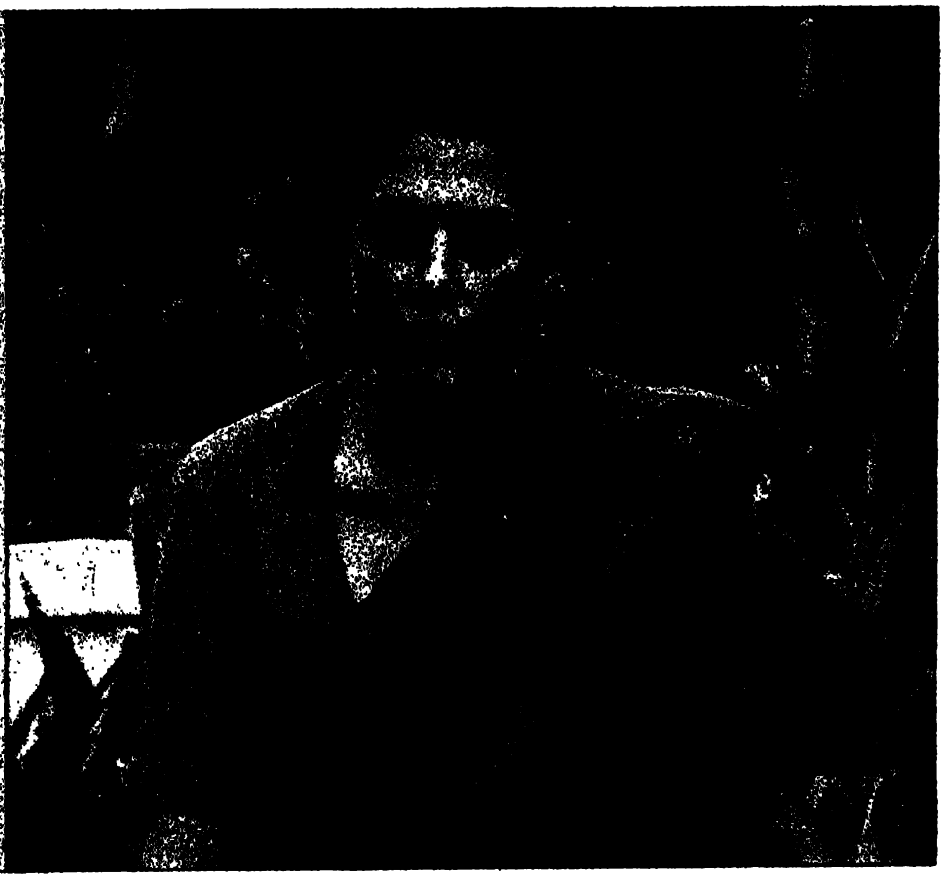
Right now, Sajid has kept his fingers crossed for the response to *Jhoot Bole Kauwa Kaate* due for release in a couple of months. "I have not used TV as a stepping stone to movies. TV will always remain my pedestal. The day it stops working for me, I will go back to stage".

And how does it feel having a fan following, to be recognised on the streets? "Why should I be bothered about that", he asks, obviously forgetting that just a while ago, he had said with pride that everyone in his area knows where Sajid Khan stays.

Beware of the crow, Sajid. Remember what it does to those

My Personal Space

That's what marks Sunita Kohli's Delhi home



Interior Design, not Decoration



SWEET SCENT OF NATURE:

I love plants and flowers, white being the preferred colour. Thus, most of the flowers that decorate the house are white — *rajnigandhas* or gladioli. White presents a perfect contrast to any other colour and I always associate it with a sense of peace. What's more, nature has deigned that white flowers should be the most fragrant.

My home is part of an old family house that was built in 1952 and was subsequently truncated. It's, in fact, a small flat within a family house. When doing up its interiors, my idea was to use the existing space in the best possible way. I've tried to retain as much of the original structure as I could. Since the house is nearly 46 years old, its flooring is typical of the time.

While I left the flooring just the way I had found it, it was only after many years of living in the house that I designed the fireplace. This was the first major alteration that I introduced.

What I did specifically provide for, was space for the innumerable books that we possess. They line the corridors, the bedrooms and can also be found under the beds! So a brass and glass floor-to-ceiling rack was built in the living room that could accommodate them. Another addition was a tall revolving book rack that I designed especially for the living room area. The rack looks streamlined but is designed to hold upto 200 books.

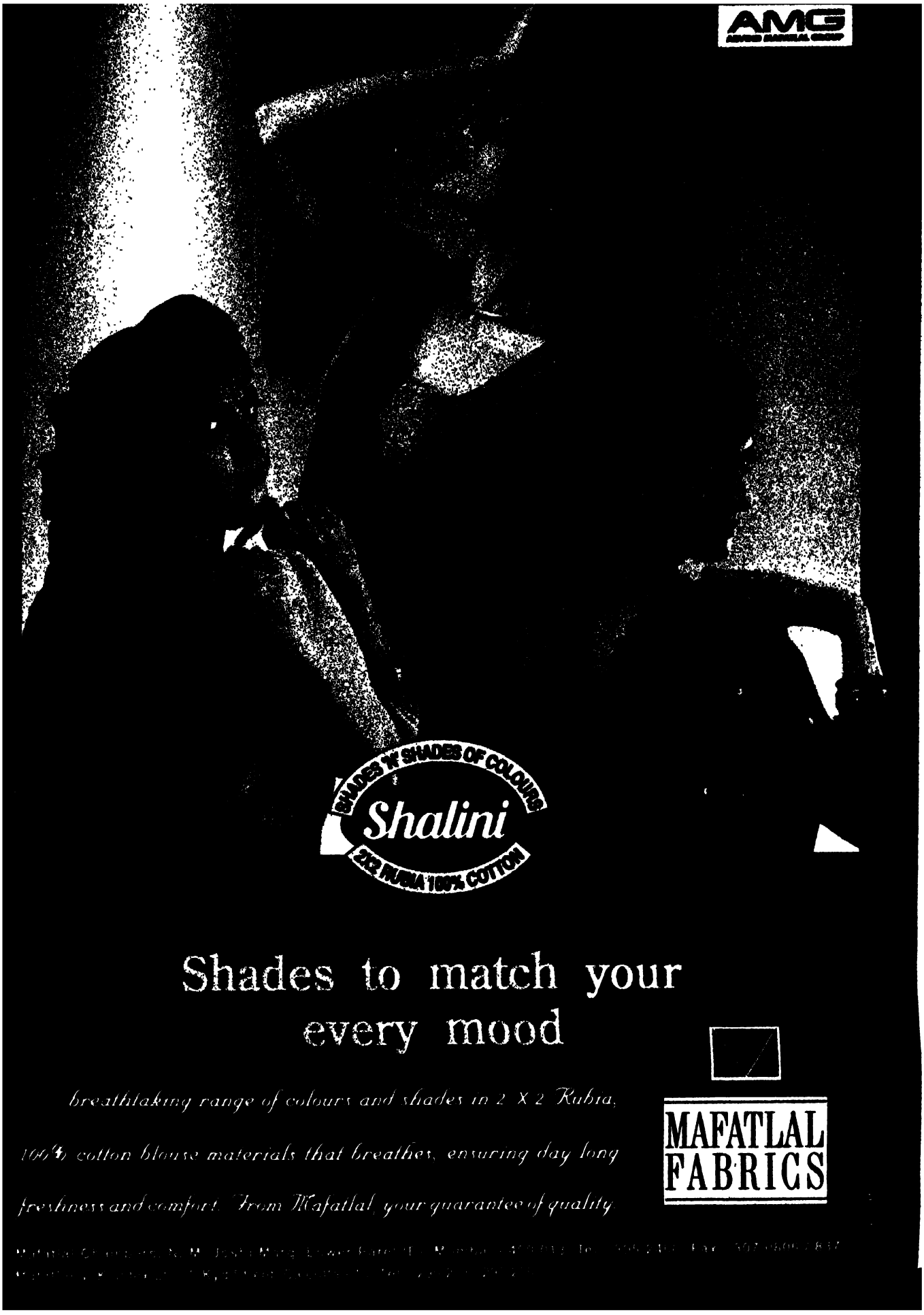
Most of the silver that you'll find in the living room has been inherited from both sides of the family. There are photo frames, *mathas* and vases that originally belonged to the pooja room.

On the walls of the living room, I've put up my old Tanjore collection. Tanjores have always been my favourite, primarily for their vibrancy. When I began collecting Tanjores, people didn't understand them and I had to live with (and ignore) comments that described them as garish. The furniture that I have in my home has all been designed by me.

I love plants and flowers, white being the prefeired colour. Thus most of the flowers that decorate the house are white — *rajnigandhas* or gladioli. White presents a perfect contrast to any other colour and I always associate it with a sense of peace. What's more, nature has deigned that white flowers should be the most fragrant. I like to add life to interior spaces by putting a profusion of indoor plants and white flowers in every room.

I have a plan for my courtyard. I would like to convert it into a perfume garden of sorts which will house every white flowering plant that I can think of.

■ As told to Sunita Bhatia



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Where science gets to the heart of nature

GUARANTEED BY LABORATOIRES GARNIER

POST MORTEM

The Whodunit Whiz

It is amazing how Ashok Banker managed to survive the ordeals of a most unpleasant childhood ('Suspense Account', March 29).Not many are able to overcome a traumatic past to emerge victorious in life. It is definitely to Ashok Banker's credit that he could rise from the ashes of his life, phoenix-like. Thank you very much for the cover story on the gutsy writer. It is praiseworthy that you feature people based not merely on their celebrity status, but on those who can overcome formidable odds to come up trumps in life.

Ayesha Banerjee, Calcutta



Ashok Banker is yet another rising star in the genre of Indo-Anglian writing. It is indeed a pleasure reading these works, as opposed to foreign writers, because they comprehend and write about the local milieu which Indian readers can relate to.

Anjali Mehta, Calcutta

It is heartening to find a writer who not only understands the inherent predicament that the Indian woman faces, but also has the guts to hold the man responsible for her plight. It is ironical that in spite of getting a raw deal from his mother, Ashok Banker still chooses to point fingers at his father. He rightly diagnoses the crux of the problem with Indian males when he says that they are all tied to their mother's apron strings. May his tribe increase!

Megha Sen, Mumbai

The art of writing does not entail the author to choose subjects which shock the finer sensibilities of the readers. Ashok Banker is clearly washing his dirty linen in public for crass commercialism.

What else can one call his sordid tales, culled painstakingly from the tumultuous episodes of his childhood? It needs to be reiterated here that literature is meant to move, not to shock or sensationalise.

Anjana Basu, Calcutta

Mightier than Sword

Technological revolution and wide choice of writing materials notwithstanding, the fact remains that most of the people in our country, who need to use pens, go in for the cheaper varieties, the prices of which range from Rs 3 to Rs 10 ('The Write Choice', March 29). The costlier the pen, the lesser they are used. A weird trend, isn't it? So much for designer wear!

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Pens are indispensable right from early childhood. One's class is reflected in the brand of pen one uses, but unfortunately, it has been taken far too much for granted. This apathy towards pens is sad as they can even be handed down generations as a part of the family heirloom. The seemingly humble pen is definitely mightier than the sword. Thank you very much for the write-up on pens at a time when computers are taking centrestage.

Kamala Kanta Barui, Calcutta

The Telegraph

10 MAY 1998



PAGE 4

Breaking Bread

A look at Delhi's Annapurnas, who have turned socialising into a fine art. An invitation from them is a thing to be coveted for the guest list is a veritable 'who's who'.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 28

Acting up a Storm

Lillette Dubey has her hands full with promising roles on stage, television and the big screen.

PAGE 26

The Best

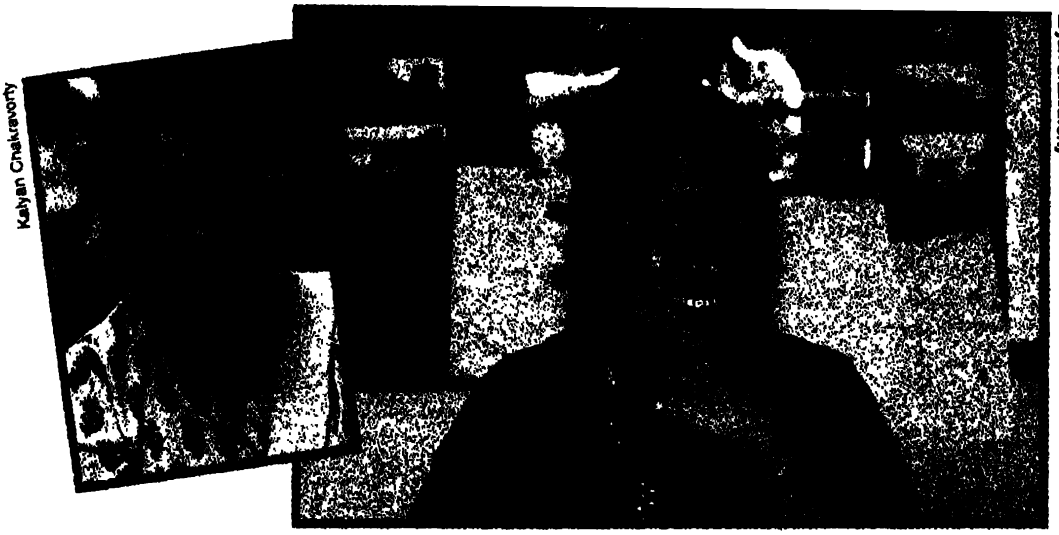
New cars, backed by superior engineering, are your key to sheer driving pleasure.

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Fashion model Nafisa Joseph feels comfortable in small flats.

Cover: Kalyan Chakravorty, Jagdish Yadav and Pallee



Kalyan Chakravorty

Kalyan Chakravorty

COVER STORY

BREAKING BREAD



Pallav



Kalyan Chakravorty

'To us,

With the most hospitable women in Delhi can be quite an experience. **Samita Bhatia** meets the ladies for whom socialising is an art



Jagdish Yadav



Kalyan Chakravorty

(Clockwise) Bim Bissel, Malvika Singh, Shirin Paul, Najma Heptullah, Sunita Kohli and Maheep Singh



Actress Sharmila Tagore, Baroness Shreela Flather, Lord Lawrence and Maheep Singh : Glamorous gathering

all our friends are celebrities,' says Bim Bissel

When Delhi's beautiful people get together, sophistication, intelligent conversation and celebrity co-habit comfortably. The gatherings are imbued with warmth, because be it a group of six or 150, everyone appears to know everyone, a feeling of well-being pervades and everything seems right with the world.

The women at the helm, the 'Annapurnas' behind the get togethers, are those who, while tackling the preoccupations of their demanding professions, find the time to "bring people together". Not for a bit of dinner diplomacy, but just to throw open their homes to "friends".

The map of Delhi's social scene is sprinkled generously with get-togethers that bring the capital's movers and shakers under one (sometimes designer) *shamiana*. Parties which, like Bim Bissel, former external relations manager, World Bank, says philosophically, "are a blend of all sorts of things — just like life."

The capital's who's who may gather for a purpose at any of the seminars that are graciously hosted by Dr Najma Heptullah, former deputy chairperson of the Lok Sabha. Heptullah, for her part, gives the term 'meeting with friends' a new meaning. Her Iftar parties of the 80s were eagarly-awaited events. However, after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in 1991 she never threw an Iftar party again.

The capital knows her today as the fountainhead of many a serious function hosted to discuss issues close to her heart. She's organised a conference on AIDS awareness with parliamentarians, another on social securities, women's issues and environmental concerns. She smiles, "If in the process a lunch or dinner is thrown in, I guess it's welcome," she says with a smile, "as long as the focus is the issue and not what's on the menu."

Delhi's intimate party could well be Padmashree awardee interior designer Sunita Kohli's little dinner to welcome the Wisners (former American ambassador to Delhi and his wife) who have been "very close friends" for

Najma Heptullah's Iftar Party in the capital : Friendly encounter





Sunita Kohli with Abid Hussein, former ambassador to the US, and Christine Wisner, wife of former US ambassador

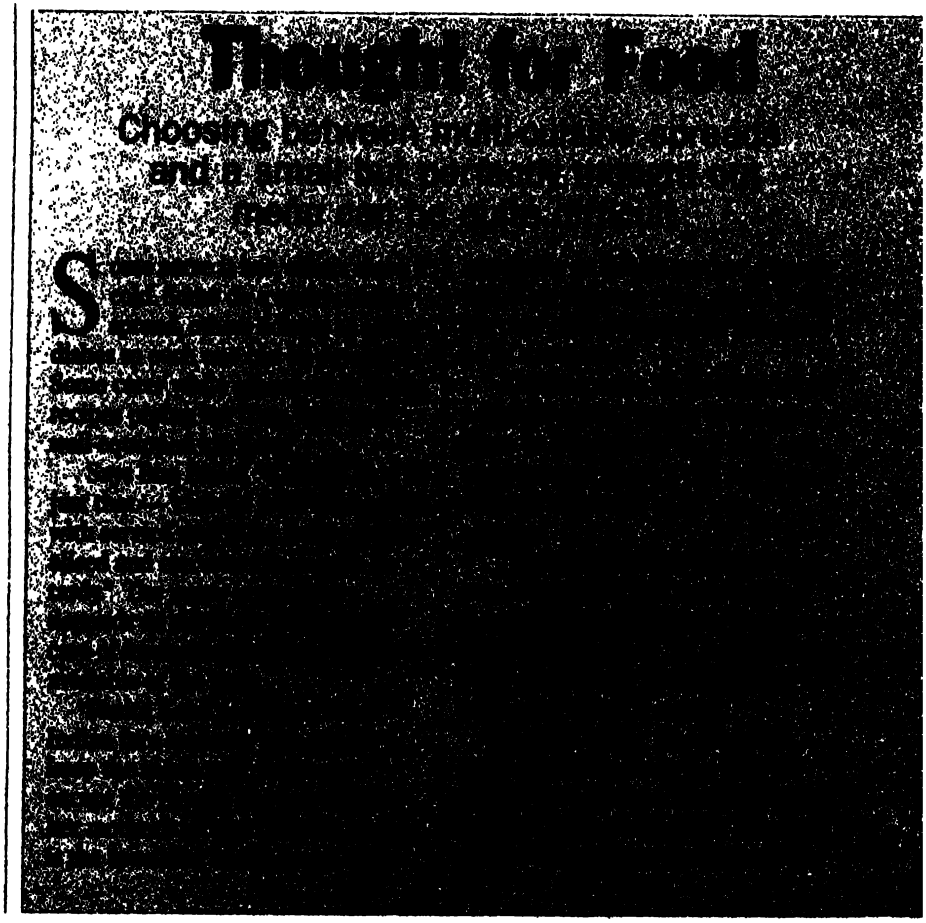
'I believe in *khulla dil* entertainment,' says Malvika Singh. If

decades.

Kohli has been known to surprise her friends with the most unusual *shamianas*. They've been treated to flights of parrots against a white backdrop or peachy pink tents which when complimented with uplighting ensured that "everyone looked beautiful" says Kohli, her eyes twinkling. The venue is always her swish home in Golf Links while the RSVP is her e-mail address is kols@de12.vsnl.net.in

Throwing a party may be her forte but sending out invitations certainly isn't. As one of Kohli's friends from Britain observed, "Though you can hope to meet a galaxy of people, you can also expect to receive the invitation by what seems to be a hurriedly scrawled fax." Something that has earned her a reputation of being "very cheap" from her children. Sunita laughs some more.

Delhi's big informal bash would perhaps be the annual *sarson-ka-sag-makki-ki-roti* party thrown by Malvika Singh, associate publisher, Business India Group. Her annual gathering sees some 800 people jostling in the Sujan Singh Park lawns while the



menu never varies. *Saag, roti, gur, kakori kebabs, rumali roti, paneer, raita, jalebis* and *gajjar ka halwa* topped up with the only beverage served, Bloody Mary. "I believe in '*khulla dil*' entertainment." If you've been there it's easy to believe her.

Then there are party disasters. This could mean a gentle unseasonable drizzle spraying the sophisticates in the midst of a garden party. Shirin Paul, chairperson, Apeejay-Surrendra Group, has been let down by the weather on more occasions than one. "Each time I've personally put together a garden party for any of the business associations that I'm a member of, it's bound to rain," she says good-naturedly.



Mixing business with pleasure : Supriya Banerjee of Galerie 88, Bikash Bhattacharjee, Anjolie Ela Menon and Shirin Paul at Bikash's exhibition in Delhi

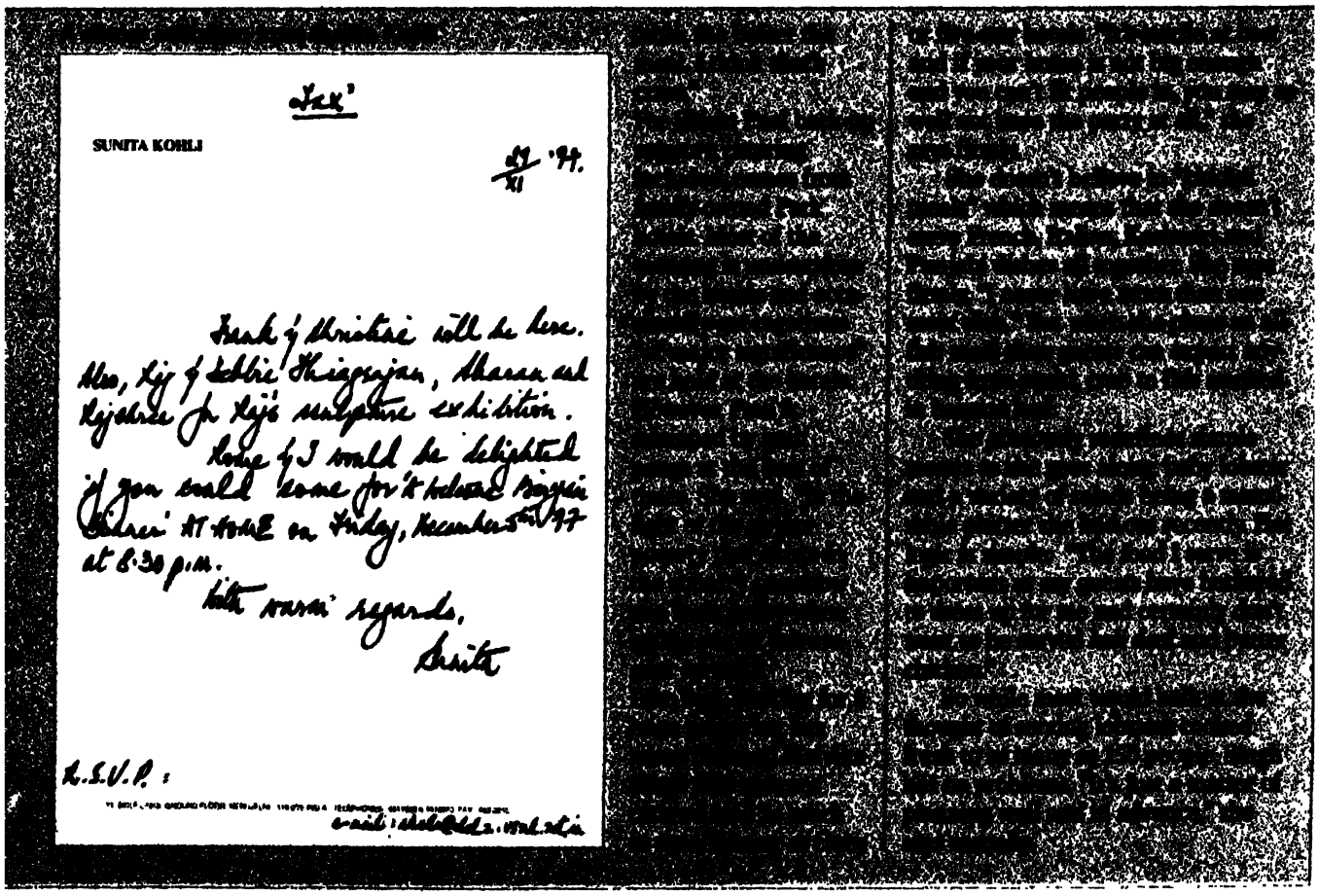
Sometimes Paul surprises her friends and invites designers Meera and Muzaffar Ali to unveil their latest collection within the portals of her elegant Aurangzeb Road residence. This, over dinner for the Delhi Commonwealth Women's Association.

Delhi's power lunches and dinners are a happy homogenous mix. As art connoisseur O.P. Jain observed of the guests at a recent dinner celebrating Sunita Kohli's 50th birthday, "*Saari dilli bulai hui hai* (entire Delhi is here). Your guests," he told Kohli, "are just like ... *ek mala jisme ek-ek moti chun ke lagaya hai*(a necklace in which every pearl has been picked with care)."

The 'pearls' have included former American ambassador to India and his wife Christine Wisner; and more recently Baroness Shreela Flather who had organised a visit to India of a delegation of peers from the House of Lords.

On that occasion, Kohli's guest list encompassed such British aristocrats as Countess Mountbatten and Lord Braybourne, The Marques and

you've been at her party it is easy to believe her



'Sue'

SUNITA KOHLI

27/XI '94.

Sue, Shirin will be here. Also, Vir & Sabrina Sanghvi, Sharan and Rajshree Jr. Vir's sculpture exhibition. Love, I would be delighted if you could come for a belated Birthday 'Get-together' AT HOME on Friday, December 2nd '94 at 8.30 p.m.

With warm regards,

Sunita

R.S.V.P.

Marchioness of Reading, the Earl and Countess of Lytton, Lord Lawrence and Belinda Gentle, Lady D'Arc De Knayth, the Earl and Countess of Elgin and Viscount and Viscountess Ridley — all of whom had an India connection, going down several generations.

In this charmed circle, when a PM past or present, a royal, a cabinet minister, ambassador or high profile media personality mingles with the guests no one is left awestruck.

Says Malvika Singh emphatically, "They aren't treated as celebrities (how she hates that word) or as special guests, which is why they are so comfortable at our place. They come to my home as friends — minus their titles."

So when former Union minister Jayanti Natrajan makes herself comfortable on Singh's living room floor or if finance secretary Montek Singh Ahluwalia is very much at home, no one is surprised. As Bim Bissel says, "To us, all our friends are celebrities."

For Dr Najma Heptullah, though, every get-together must be meaningful. "In a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society such as ours, we must find time to talk to people," says Heptullah. "Mrs (Indira) Gandhi started Iftar parties which indicated her respect for other people's religious commitments and intentions. Get-togethers that became symbolic for our minorities."

She feels that parties that celebrate festivals like Holi, Id, Diwali or Christmas become a platform to understand each other's sentiments, religions, traditions and customs, while Independence Day and Republic Day celebrations infuse people with nationalistic fervour. "Such get-togethers bring people together. And it's time we stopped treating them as mere holidays," she says firmly.

Bim Bissel's home best exemplifies such a mingling. Despite the preoccupations that came with assignments at the American Embassy and subsequently the World Bank, Bim always found time for Playhouse School run by her in the heart of Delhi. And between setting the curriculum for the year, she was hosting power lunches and dinners (though Bissel herself is surprised that meetings over a meal with friends can be labelled so).

But Delhi knows her best for the Christmas party that she throws every year. This began as spill-over of the 'Xmas bash in school where her late husband John Bissel would obligingly play Santa. "He'd arrive on a camel," she smiles softly. 'Xmas at home grew over the years into an open house. Explains Bissel, "Our close friends who don't celebrate at home are welcome to spend Christmas with us." The party is generally enlivened with bagpipers, singers, dancers and party games.

As the top functionary of innumerable high-powered business associations, Shirin Paul, often combines business with pleasure. The Anand Paul Children's Art Competition for the Underprivileged brings prominent artists together. Meetings of association members are often enlivened with concerts that promote Indian arts and culture. Says Paul, "Some sort of entertainment makes the interaction

'In a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society such as ours,

Shirin and Sunita with Viscount Ridley, Shreela Flather, Countess Mountbatten and her husband : Aristocratic crowd



between members easier and infuses an element of informality into a serious meeting."

The entertainment organised for her get-togethers "depends entirely on the focus and purpose of the party," she says.

Decidedly, throwing a hugely successful party is an art and requires some expertise. But these women feel that it takes more than just skillfully organising a great table or striking scintillating conversation that makes the party a success.



August company:Lord Lawrence,The Marchioness of Reading, Maheep Singh and the Countess of Lytton at a party

must find time to talk to people,' says Najma Heptullah

Says Malvika Singh, "Liking people has to be in your genes and thereafter it becomes easy to make your guests feel special."

A great party doesn't just happen. It requires much pre-planning, right down to the last detail. "It is only then that it appears effortlessly done. Everyone is at ease and the atmosphere down the line is relaxed," says Kohli. Industrialist ... Singh's wife, Maheep Singh's mantra for being a good hostess is largely her personal touch.

So the hostess must mingle with 'all' the guests seated at every table — "even if there are 200 invitees," she says firmly. More recently, another 'must' is generating a level of intimacy; so big parties are out.

According to Najma Heptullah being polite and well-mannered is what you learn from your family. "We develop these instincts. In our Indian ethos our guests are god-sent. My grandmother would be saddened if on any given day we didn't have guests over for dinner or lunch, saying that God hadn't sent anyone to share our meal that day." So a full meal was packed and sent to a mosque or an impoverished home.

"I grew up with this feeling of sharing. Which is perhaps why I invite people at the drop of the hat to share my meal. Mine is an open house," she says.

Malvika Singh too grew up in a home that epitomised the concept of an open house. Her parents Raj and Romesh Thapar's home truly defined *'khulla dil'* entertainment. "There were always people over for dinner," she recalls.

Her parents' legacy to her were their legendary New Year's Eve bashes. "It was a riot and the rum punch, a family recipe, galvanised four generations on the dance floor!" she reminisces.

The year they passed away Mala wondered whether it would be appropriate to carry on the tradition as a tribute to her parents. Eventually she and her husband decided not to issue invitations but simply left the lights in their home switched on. "It was amazing but we had 590 people over that night!" After she married, her own flat in Sujan Singh Park — not surprisingly — took on the ambience of "an open adda."

But be it an intimate or large gathering, strict budgeting is the order of the day. If theme parties were Maheep's forte, they were never "over-the-top expensive," she says. If black and gold was the overriding theme, Singh recalls scouring for fabric for the table linen and other accessories from Delhi's good-value-for-money bazaar, Bhogal. The village theme was complete with a paanwalla, *manjis* (string cots) and film-posters "accessories that were readily available and didn't cost much."

Most menus don't feature the most expensive ingredient that the market can offer (though salmon and tiger prawns are often on the table). The effect aimed for is a *ghar ka khana* kind of look (and taste) rather than the kind of food that caterers would serve. (See box)

And Delhi continues its celebration of life, its ethos, its values, culture and often its varied cuisines — with close friends, which can sometimes number around 500. ■

DANCE

Rhythm of Life

That's what inspires Pandit Birju Maharaj to explore new dimensions in kathak, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

He was the only boy born in the babies ward at Lucknow's Dufferin hospital. The rest of the newborns were girls. Neighbours called him Brij Mohan—Birju—after Krishna who, as legend goes, was surrounded by his gopis.

Birju Maharaj has not severed his natal link with the myths of Radha and Krishna. Today, he enacts them through an intricate twist of the fingers or a subtle expression of the eye. Carving a niche in compositions ranging from *Krishnayan*, to Jaidev's *Geet Gobinda* and *Hari dhoom machori*, he remains, one of Kathak's finest exponents.

In France, a scribe had once asked him to define Yashodha and Krishna. "I told him, the word 'Ma' on earth signifies Yashodha. And the two-year-old child who laughs and plays, hiding behind his mother's *pallu*, is Krishna," says Panditji universalising the experiences.

Panditji's gharana, which owes its lineage to Bindadin Maharaj—an outstanding kathak dancer who performed at the court of Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Oudh—was deeply committed to music and dance. Students were always practising on the tabla and the harmonium at the *taalimkhana* of his house.

People in his part of the world spoke Urdu; his father, Acchan Maharaj, was proficient in Arabic, Sanskrit and Persian. "After breakfast, I would enter the *taalimkhana* to beat at the tabla. Babuji observed I had a great sense of rhythm, teaching myself to play the harmonium when I was six." Till this day, he plays both the harmonium and the tabla with his "*ulte haath*", he claims.

Panditji follwed his father's footsteps and started dancing rather early. From the age of seven to ten, he travelled with his Babuji to social gatherings at Mumbai, Calcutta, Kanpur, Allahabad, Patna and the villages of Uttar Pradesh. "I was overjoyed when someone would give me a few coins as a token of praise." Acchan Maharaj would ask little Birju to perform for the first five-ten minutes on stage. "I did my own jigs and always felt I had to win by devising tricky rhythms for the music accompanists," he says.

When he was seven, the nawab of Rampur fixed him a salary of Rs 25, a big sum in those days. "I would tie my *pugree* and put on my *sherwani* at his dance durbar." During one such performance at Jaunpur, his father died. "I was sad at the plight of my mother, Mahadevi, but failed to understand the significance of his death." After his father's death, the family fell on hard times; they had to worry where their next meal would come from, pawning brass vessels and *zari* sarees to buy their rations.

His mother was always a pillar of strength. "Had it not been for her, I would have taken up a job in a hotel," says Panditji. "I picked up a lot of the *bols* and could recite them without much effort, starting off a litany of '*gadi ghide dha kat ta....dha*', which left





Pandit Birju Maharaj: Shedding new light on kathak's ability to evolve with time

my father—who was sceptical initially—speechless and proud."

After Acchan Maharaj's death, Mahadevi trained the boy in *thumris* and *bhajans* sung to her by his grandmother who imbibed them from Bindadin Maharaj. Panditji's gift as a singer did not end when he began dancing; he continued to compose lyrical *thumris* and *bhajans* of his own.

Uncles Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj imparted some training—though erratic—to the boy. "I acquired my sense of *abhinaya*, *chehera*, *aankhen*, and the articulation of the fingers through them, taking *taalim* in *lashya*—the softer grace of Parvati—from Lachhu Maharaj who was working in Mumbai's filmworld."

Birju Maharaj was a glaring misfit with the filmi people of chachaji's connection. "My mother fearing that I would lose touch with tradition, called me back to Lucknow." From the age of 14, he became a teacher at Sangeet Bharati in Delhi. Those were years of hard work when he would go straight to his classes from the station on returning from a performance.

He gave his first full-fledged recital at the Manmothonath Ghosh music conference in Calcutta. Only the best artistes—Ustad Amir Khan and Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan—used to be invited there. His performance impressed the crowd into demanding "the installation of speakers outside the hall or else they threatened to damage the place," says Panditji of the overwhelming response. For the sixteen-year-old, it was his first brush with fame. "The press gave me a wide coverage and it was not long before word reached Mumbai." Birju Maharaj has since then, danced his way to the top.

Married off to Annapurnadevi, the daughter of Benaras' music maestro Sri Chandra Mishra at the age of eighteen, Panditji is the contented father of three daughters and two sons today. "In my household, women remained at home to look after the children. They were a great source of inspiration." He recalls an incident where the Kathak Kendra had once asked him for a photograph with his wife. "I didn't have one simply because I never felt the need for one," he says, grinning coyly.



Kalyan Chakravorty

As a guru, he is popular among his students, producing some of kathak's best known exponents—Rani Karna, Saswati Sen and his son Jaikishen Maharaj—to sustain the traditions of dance. "But," adds Panditji modestly, "I might be a guru to everybody, but at heart I am still a student who is striving."

His whole life revolves round the metaphor of rhythm. "Everything on earth has a timing—a rhythm," he says, "From the flutter of a bird's wings to the movement of one's fingers..." and gradually switches on to Kathak's relevance to the movement of time. In the Raj durbars of yore, kathak's significance lay in speed; in its ability to compete with the pakhwaj. But he soon realised there is more to the dance than mere games. Says Maharaj, "Kathak has a rhythm shastra behind it, the depth of which can be likened to an ocean."

Water holds a special place in Birju Maharaj's life. He stands near it after a performance, revelling in the sound of its "*chanchanhat*" which reminds him of the tinkle of ghungroos; and the rains, which he claims, lulls him to sleep. A poet at heart, he was deeply moved to compose *Anamya* (Pliable) which recounts the fate of a piece of iron during the militant phase in the Eighties. "Everything has a story," he says, adding "It is a sign of life." He echoes that story through his interpretation of dance.

What sets Panditji apart, is his ability to fuse the tradition with the modern. Ghunghroo's tough rhythm and everyday events find reflection in his *Samachar Darpan*, an ironic statement on a newspaper's readers, each with a specific interest; his *File Katha* on bureaucratic lethargy and *Sampadana* on the amusing instance of rewinds during film editing have shed new light on kathak's ability to adapt and evolve with the times.

No less than Satyajit Ray invited Birju Maharaj to choreograph the dance sequences in *Shatranj ke Khilari*. "That is a very important *hissa* (part) of my life. I never felt like as though shooting was in progress, but that I was doing one of my programmes," he says. More recently, Yash Chopra had approached him to direct Madhuri in the popular blockbuster, *Dil to Pagal Hai*. "I sent my son, Jai Kishen and my disciple to Mumbai," he says, unaffected by prospects of glamour.

At sixty, Birju Maharaj lives life on his own terms. Age has not feebled his rhythm. Nor his spirit, which remains ever young. ■

EXTRACT

The Rise Of The Media Eves

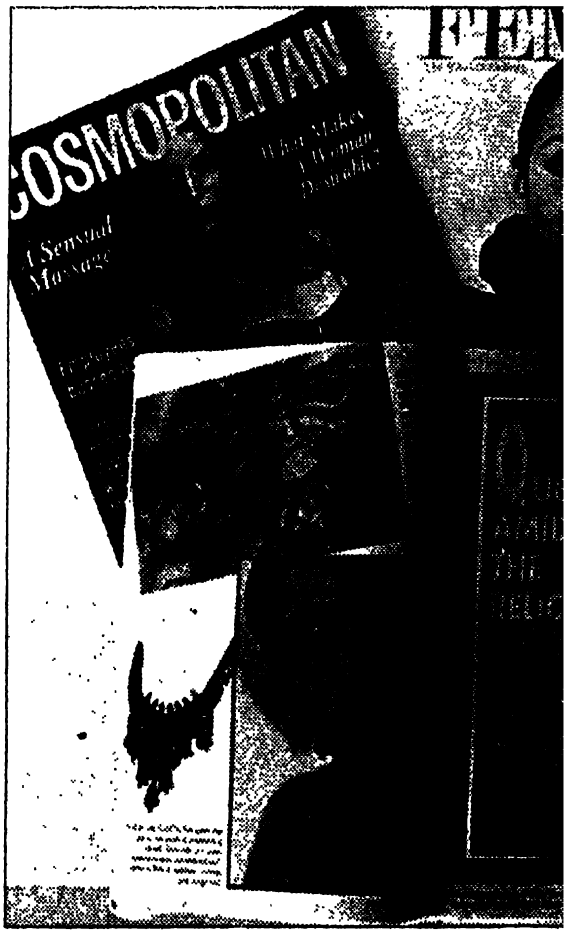
An extract from *The Fiftieth Milestone: A Feminine Critique*

Fifty years old? You don't look a day over 30! Not flattering, simply the fact that women haven't the time to grow grey in the media. They didn't start arriving on the scene till the 1960's. Today, the neophytes are taut and usually strident of tone, there is a welcome thickening of numbers at the middle, and the top is no longer a receding chance. Footloose and fancyfree, women now leave their mark on every avenue that print and television have to offer; it wasn't always like that. But, was it anywhere?

The history of the modern Indian press is velcroed to that of the freedom movement but her story had to await the official arrival of lib. It was only then that women really began keeping their tryst with the midnight shift. Yes, the redoubtable pioneers were there before that, fighting for their foothold in the media with all the push and shove that is the lot of the transition figure. But 1975 helped women journalists storm the barricades in a burst of burning issues. It is a convenient marker of an organised revolution.

Even earlier than the Skimming Sixties, there were any number of women writers who with a natural osmosis, permeated into the press. But there were also intrepid women who cut their writing teeth directly on newsprint. I can talk with the greatest authority on one of them, my mother. The closeted daughter of an indigent priest in a Gujarat hamlet, Jaloo Kanga had arrived as a teenaged bride to Calcutta in 1944, but her personal culture shock outstripped anything that a riot and war-ravaged city could thrust upon her. The shy girl, who had known only her limited books was flung into the world of firebrand newspapers by her martinet father-in-law, Eduljee Kanga, who had founded the *Navroz* in 1917 to spur the nascent dawn of Independence. Twenty years after those early and tearful traumas, the lady presided over the celebrations of the paper's golden jubilee as though to the matter born feted by Chief ministers and Gujarati writers across the country whose talent she had nurtured and showcased.

By the Sixties, eveyone had come a long way. The entry into the features was, for obvious reasons, more painless



The Fiftieth Milestone: A Feminine Critique; edited by Shanta Serbjeet Singh & Jyoti Sabharwal
Published by Sterling Publishers Private Limited
Price: Rs.450





The Eves who did their tribe proud: (from left to right) Anita Pratap, Vimla Patil and Amita Malik

than into news. The bright lights of Bombay and the magazines that flourished under them had drawn the first contingent into the profession. *Femina* and *Eve's Weekly* were the obvious choice, though Vimla Patil in one and Gulshan Ewing in the other were preceded by male editors. *The Illustrated Weekly of India* had Elizabeth Rao and Uma Anand and a succession of Aunt Wendys on its children's page. One of them, Fatima Zakaria, was later to inhabit a position there just beneath that of the editor, Khushwant Singh. After his exit from *The Illustrated Weekly* in 1978, she moved into the august portals of *The Times Of India* itself, again at a level virtually uninhabited by women. Her administrative abilities were an asset to her editors, but since her writing skills were modest, she became one of the earliest targets of the kind of salacious odium that still attaches itself to the trajectory of ambitious women, even those with clearly manifest professional talents.



It was also natural that women found their smoother passage in Mumbai. It was a city least shackled with conservatism. The people who gave it its distinct aura were those who had arrived here to free themselves of the small town mentalities of their native home; indeed, it has been built by communities marked by liberal thinking.

The conquest of the magazines and features was relatively bloodless. However, sights had already been set, invasions already planned on the tougher, more jealously guarded male domain of the daily newspaper, especially in Delhi. Whether Amita Malik, Promilla Kalhan, Kamala Mankekar, Aruna Mukherjee followed by Razia Ismail, Prabha Dutt (nee Behl) and Rami Chhabra's answer to the description of barbarians at the gate depends on your perspective, but today's lot, arrogant in its feminist assumptions, would be foolish to downplay or simply ignore the role of these women in cracking open the door. More than that, in ensuring, by the quality of their commitment, that their successors would be honourably admitted.

Razia Ismail contributed a delightful piece, "Ladies Don't Do Night Duty" for an anthology, *Between Bylines*, published in 1994 by the newly formed Indian Women's Press Corps, her characteristic acerbicity knocking the smaltz off the nostalgia. After describing how they struggled to overcome the hurdles as being told off: "*Crime beat aapke liye nahin hain, aap kya soch rahin hain? Aap feature likhiye na.*"(Crime beat is not meant for you, what are you thinking? You write features.)She wrote 'It was in the course of the years between the late 1960s and 70s that the 'lady' frame broke. . .The day came when we did not find a 'flower show' or 'interview with deaf Moroccan singer' or 'find out what Mrs. Gandhi is wearing' against our names on the assignment sheet.The day came when 'ladies' covered hard news and even got to be special correspondents with ministry beats and tedious politocos and bureaucrats to chase. The day came when tedious politicos and bureaucrats realised that we were not soft (in the head or otherwise) but as mean as our trousered *yaars* (buddies) and they stopped smiling at us or offering us special *elaichiwali chai* (cardamom tea).

These were not self-conscious flag-bearers of a gender crusade; they saw themselves first as journalists and



simply set about correcting the vision of colleagues and bosses who suffered from stigmatism. It wasn't a hostile 'Them vs Us' battleground ; what they resented was the patronising . Being killed by kindness is an equally painful way to find your career constantly countering dead-ends.

The continuing argument on 'hard' and 'soft' stories began with frontier journalists. On an obvious level, it was triggered by their efforts to shake off the flower-show trap into which they were being so paternistically thrust. But much subtly, even unconsciously, they were also the first to blur the distinction. Their forced interaction with the soft women-and-children stories gave them a unique insight into the root of the problems that made hard stories.

Later women journalists would reap the friuts without the back-breaking labour of sowing seeds. Tavleen Singh, Seema Guha, Smita Gupta, Anita Pratap, all vocal votaries and flaunting practitioners of the hard news, always bring that extra dimension to the political issues they cover. Thanks to them, in the public perception, stories on rape have moved out of feminist cliches and into the starkest of political comment. They bestow on these subjects the credibility they have won on a broader plane.

The tentative steps of the Sixties broke into the strides and stridents of the Seventies with the international Women's Movement cropping like a manna from heaven. It was simplistic, even ludicrous, but it seemed that the developing world had suddenly discovered the existence of 50% of it's population. If women held up half the sky, they began to find twice the amount of space they had earlier done in newspaper columns. Add to that the entirely new genre of women's magazines epitomised by Madhu Kishwar's *Manushi* dedicated entirely to serious and markedly non-commercial concerns. Of course, it didn't happen with the instant impact of a cosmic revelation. it wasn't that International women's Decade was declared and—bang!—all editorial male chauvinism collapsed into extinction.

It is not easy to state categorically whether this sudden effulgence of writing on women's issues was the cause or the effect of policy makers grudgingly beginning to acknowledge that women were indispensable to the process of development. Not that the sequence matters. What does is that activism were strongly reflected in the media. 'Soft' issues (a grossly misleading phrase considering that there is nothing soft about a charred woman's body, or for that matter, the instrument of rape) began hitting the comment pages; their arrival on the news pages was slower perhaps, because women reporters could not assert themselves as strongly.

Children, divorce, population, health acquired a new legitimacy also among those who had, till then, spurned the label of 'woman journalist'. In my 11 years at *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, I'd dismiss 'the *Femina* —type' story. But moving to the very feudal, *The Statesman*, in Calcutta as it's first woman assistant editor, I felt an almost gender-based *noblesse oblige* to break the unquestioned hegemony of politics over the edit page.

But between the desire and the designation fell the shadow of male chauvinistic pig-headedness. It used to be a war of nerves convincing bosses of the need to give prime placing to edits on women's subjects. I never had any of this problem when I wrote on urban development on civil aviation or other gender non-spcific issues.

This wasn't happening in some hazy dawn. This was in the Eighties under the noonday sun of '*The Decade*'. But Calcutta hadn't arrived at enlightenment at the same pace as Mumbai or Delhi. It was after all, a late starter even in employing women. When I was looking for my first job in 1969, local papers gave all kinds of excuses including ' but we don't have a ladies toilet'—as *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika* had so memorably cried off.

As the magazines had done first, the women's movement brought a fresh wave of women into journalism. It widened the base of writing on women, took it to a seriousness it had never been able to establish as it waded through the fluff of how to remove unwanted hair,stubborn stains and pesky male attention. The general press and women's magazines taking up these issues, to whatever limited degree was equally important. The first gave tacit acceptance to the fact that these were mainstream concerns; the second took the awareness and the aspiration for empowerment right into the constituency which would benefit from it most.

Skewed divorce laws were examined in the wake of the Shah Bano case, rape after Mathura's violation; child brides of doddering old Arabs after Ameena, even something as basic as the way women were portrayed in films. Young women bursting into fame were no longer attributed to faulty stoves. The unquestioned was questioned. The given no longer taken without cavil or demur.

The Press is often guilty of overrating its ability to engineer change, but if there is one area where its role cannot be undermined, it is in having catalysed the shift in public—or atleast official—attitudes to women. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



A tremendous renewal of faith, energy and confidence will be seen with the coming of the month of May. You will win fame, recognition, plaudits and glory. Financial matters will have to be dealt with. Serious planning for new ventures for the future is also required. Don't wallow in self pity.

Taurus
April 21 - May 20



There will be a kind of pendulum back to the doubts, anxieties and worries you experienced earlier. You will have to deal with repairs, construction at home, ceremonies, publicity campaigns and also a tremendous workload, but you will manage to do it even if you feel that a severe strain on your body and mind.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



The full moon brings in a time of rest, peace, calm and repose to your life and affairs. You will turn to meditation, contemplation and prayers in a big way and earn a bonus in terms of tranquility and inner joy. This will also create harmony at home and at the work place. Your frayed nerves will be soothed.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



ganesha says that the new, the different, the unique and even the strange will interest you greatly and draw you like a magnet. Your own talents, creativity and skills will blossom forth. It's time to assert your rights and privileges. Tihs can be done pleasantly but firmly. Try to spend some time with your family.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



The full moon sees you continuing the good trend of April. You will love and be loved, care and be cared for. Some wish or dream may come true in the coming weeks. You are popular at parties, gatherings, ceremonies and group outings. There may be marriage, fun, laughter, glamour and joy.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



You will step up the pace at your work, play and yet find time to relax and love. You will be powered by a tremendous, even mind-boggling upsurge of creative energy, determination and confidence. You will be making all out efforts to accomplish assignments, deadlines and targets. You will scale through.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



ıe to think and ilosophise. Your ; esonal self-image as well as your public face both benefit from this. You will be optimistic in your thinking and positive in your approach At work, you may have to be a little more patient if you seek success—After all, Rome was not built in a day!

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



You will strive to be quite a homebird this week. You will acquire all kinds of gadgets, gizmos, luxury goods and new furnishings to make everybody around you to feel happy and content. In doing so, you will have to spend a lot of time and energy , but you will do it all quite willingly. You are ready to take risks.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The mysteries of the universe, of the other world, of psychology, life and death in the hereafter interest you even as the nitty-gritties of life bother you.You need to pull up your socks if you wish to succeed. Health also needs attention. Go for your annual medical check-up. A holiday could do wonders for you.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Funds, finances, money matters have to be attended to, especially vis-a-vis the home and family. Your health will be much better. Love and marriage are almost definite and will bring much joy and ecstasy. Death of a close relative,however, is possible. Be prepared to face facts and do act with maturity.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Contentment with your lot and the way your life is going at the moment is what this week brings. You will face conflicts but your peace of mind helps you deal with it. Misunderstanding with a very close friend or relative is a possibility. You are, therefore, advised to avoid any controversial situations.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Children, beloved, parents and in-laws are all a part of the magical circleof care, love and warmth around you. You are yourself responsible for this as you havehelped needy people, offered advise and have been a strong shoulder to cry on. In addition, work-wise, new ventures and projects come your way.

BIRTHDAYS

May 10 : Mercury trine Pluto: Ganesha says that this conjunction can only add to your personal fortune and joy. You will just have to learn how to take things a little easy.

May 11 : Full moon: the full moon helps you to win your way through.Disputes and arguments are a possibility. Children will be both, a bane as well as a boon.

May 12 : Sun-Mars and Mars-Jupiter fine placing: Both these placings have Mars, the energy and enthusiasm planet as the common factor. Professionals are bound to do well.

May13 : Moon trine Venus sextile Uranus: Publicity, power, passion and pelf are the 4 P's for you. This is indeed great going for. You will have money and love in ample measure as well. Meditation will bring you peace of mind.

May 14 : Moon trine Mercury-Saturn: You will have to hurry a little bit to gain advantage.A major change is indicated. Do not, at any cost, neglect your health.

May 15 : Moon square Venus, Venus sextile Uranus: Whatever happens will happen for the best. There will be an emotional see-saw. Risks can be taken.

May 16 : Moon trine Sun-Mars: Ganesha says that journey, publicity,ceremony and fanfare will play an important part in your life this year. Success will be your's.

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TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2 4, 5
IC 741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5 6	IC-744	1220	1 2 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4 7	IC-744	1620	4
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4 6
IC-715	1620	3 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1 2 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4 5
			IC-202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2, 3 5	IC 722	1625	1 2 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0805	daily
9W 502	0845	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 412	1730	daily	*IC 855	0755	2 6
*IC-856	1545	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 512	2015	daily	9W-911	1925	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1130	1 3, 5 7	IC 702	1440	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	3 5, 7
			IC 730	1310	daily
IC-701	0715	1 2 3 4, 5 6	9W-612	1250	1 2 4 6, 7
IC 730	1050	daily	IC 702	1405	6
			IC 702	1625	2 4 5
			IC 702	1655	1 3
9W 511	1000	1 2, 4 5 7	IC-714	1430	4 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC-779	0910	2 4 5
IC 777	1815	1, 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
IC 764	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1 3 5	CD-256	1000	1 3 5
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD 213	1300	2 6
IC 713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0950	2 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3 5	9W 622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201 203	0715	1 3	IC 204,202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 702	0630	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2 4, 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0530	2, 4, 5	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AMMAN					
RJ 185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 4?6	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2 6	KB 106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC 855	0855	2 6	IC 732	1610	4, 7
TG 314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
CHITTAGONG					
BG 698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3 4 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	6	BI-108	0715	7
BI-109	2145	3	BI-110	0925	4
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB-106	1000	2, 3 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB 105	0925	4
BI-108	0815	7	BI-107	1940	6
BI 110	10300	4	BI-109	2045	3
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed, Thurs & Sun Arr. Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs., Fri & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues, Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr.. Except Sunday	21 10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues, Fri & Sat; Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep: Tues, Wed & Sat. Arr Tues, Fri. & Sat	06 00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr: Sun, Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18 10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5 00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22 30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21 45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue & Thurs, Arr. Mon., Thurs. & Fri	7 55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed, Sat & Sun., Arr: Sun, Wed & Sat	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Saraj Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues, Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6 15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4 15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep: Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03 50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14 10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

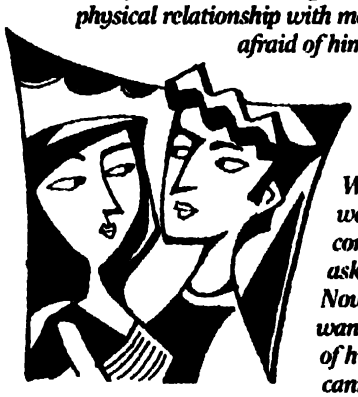
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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am a 22-year old woman. Recently my parents have arranged a match for me with an engineer of a reputed firm. I accepted the match and even like the man because of his serious nature. But of late he is insisting on having a physical relationship with me. Now I am afraid of him because I think sex before marriage is dirty. Whenever we meet, he is constantly asking for it. Now I simply want to get rid of him. But I cannot discuss the problem with my parents lest they get angry about my decision to cancel the wedding. Please help.***



Ranjita, Calcutta

A. Arranged marriages are increasingly dangerous in an individualistic and uncommitted world. You must honestly assess your feelings regardless of your parents' wishes—after all, they will suffer equallly, if not more, if your marriage breaks up later. Tell your fiancee quite bluntly that under no circumstances do you wish to enter into a physical relationship before marriage. Please analyse your feelings towards the sexual act honestly; if you continue to find it repulsive after marriage you will have a new problem to cope with. I think you are still very young in emotional terms and need to grow up a little. Maturity simply means a realistic and wise assessment of the world. Give it some thought.

Harbouring guilty feelings about pre-marital sex?

First, analyse your feelings towards the sexual act. If you find it repulsive after marriage, you will have a new problem to cope with. Make a realistic and wise assessment of the world

Q. ***I am a 25-year-old woman and the only issue of my parents. I have been brought up single-handedly by my mother as my father lived abroad during my childhood and adolescent years. My mother is a working woman and I have grown up to be lonely, insecure, immature and very rebellious. Recently I married much against my parents' wishes (due to differences in our economic condition). My problem is that I can neither stop visiting my parents, specially my mother, every evening nor can I swallow the unpleasant comparisons that come up between the two families. I come and narrate everything to my husband who is an excellent person but has a lot of self-respect. I feel that we are gradually drifting apart. I am trying to get a job but will that improve the situation? My DoB is 01/09/72 and my husband's is 06/11/73 and we got married on 23/0/97. What kind of future do you predict for us.***

Shona, Calcutta

A. The only problem seems to lie with your self-confessed immaturity, in spite of which you have had the good sense to marry a decent and self-respecting man. Any marriage involves a process of endless and never-ending adjustment. I would strongly counsel you to stop making economic comparisons between the two families and invest instead in your husband's self-confidence and self-esteem. Behind every successful man there is usually a woman who stands by him through thick and thin.



Your date of birth indicates that you are born in the year of the Rat by the Chinese calender, and yor husband's sign is that of the Horse. To be frank, these signs are not very compatible in terms of marriage, as Rats are often charming, opportunistic and ambitious while horses tend to fall in love much too easily. However, the famous Rat tenacity should carry you through, and make a success of your marriage.

Q. ***Please let me know through your***

column, the various signs or symptoms of AIDS. If a person contracts AIDS, how many days would it take for any external manifestation and what are the latest methods of prevention.

M.B., Uttarpara, Hooghly

A. AIDS or acquired immune deficiency syndrome, is a viral disease that affects the immune system of the human body, leaving it susceptible to a variety of infections. The disease is transmitted by contamination of the bloodstream with HIV-infected body fluids, particularly blood, semen, breast-milk and vaginal fluid. The most common means of infection are through intercourse or through the sharing of HIV contaminated intra-venous needles. It is not spread by casual physical contact or airborne means. Once a person is infected, the incubation period is about eight years before symptoms appear. After a few years, many people with an HIV infection develop a condition known as AIDS related complex, (ARC) with symptoms like persistent fever, weight loss, swelling of the lymph nodes etc. Later, the body continues to lose its resistence and faces a succession of new and relapsing opportunistic infections that eventually bring about death.

Prevention against AIDS comes from safe sex, and extreme caution in the use of intra-venous needles. Homosexual relationships and casual or promiscuous sex are tantamount to suicide in the modern world. However, it would not be out of place to say that we are all ultimately mortal, and it is possible after contracting the disease to live one's life with dignity and without shame. Its a disease, not a stigma or a moral judgement.

Q. ***I am a 25-year-old engineer working with a reputed private sector enterprise. My zodiac sign is Virgo. My girlfriend is an 18-year-old Aries. She is a very warm person and is the youngest in her family. I have read many astrological books which state that Taurus, Gemini, Capricorn and Pisces are the best options for a male Virgo man. Though I wish to be rational, I would like to know if zodiac signs have anything to do with a happy, married life.***

Name withheld, Calcutta

A. Very honestly, zodiac signs, especially the sun signs, are nothing but party game indicators of personality. All human beings make and live their own lives, and all systems of understanding of our lives, whether they be astrology, tarot or even logical thought are tools to rationalise what we do or what has happened to us. I would very strongly advise you to follow your instincts where your love is concerned, and marry your girlfriend in good time. I do feel that 18 is a little young for marriage, and that waiting another two years would ensure a greater degree of maturity to cope with the demands of marriage.



Preventing AIDS:

Prevention against AIDS comes from safe sex, and extreme caution in the use of intra-venous needles. Homosexual relationships and casual or promiscuous sex are tantamount to suicide in the modern world. However, it would not be out of place to say that we are all ultimately mortal, and it is possible after contracting the disease to live one's life with dignity and without shame

Q. ***I had been a victim of homosexuality for the past few years. But I want to lead a normal life desperately because I am in love with a girl. I am trying my best to give it up but my gay partners threaten me that if I part ways, they will disclose everything to all. This is a depressing as well as a nightmarish situation for me. How do I get out of this?***

A.G., Calcutta

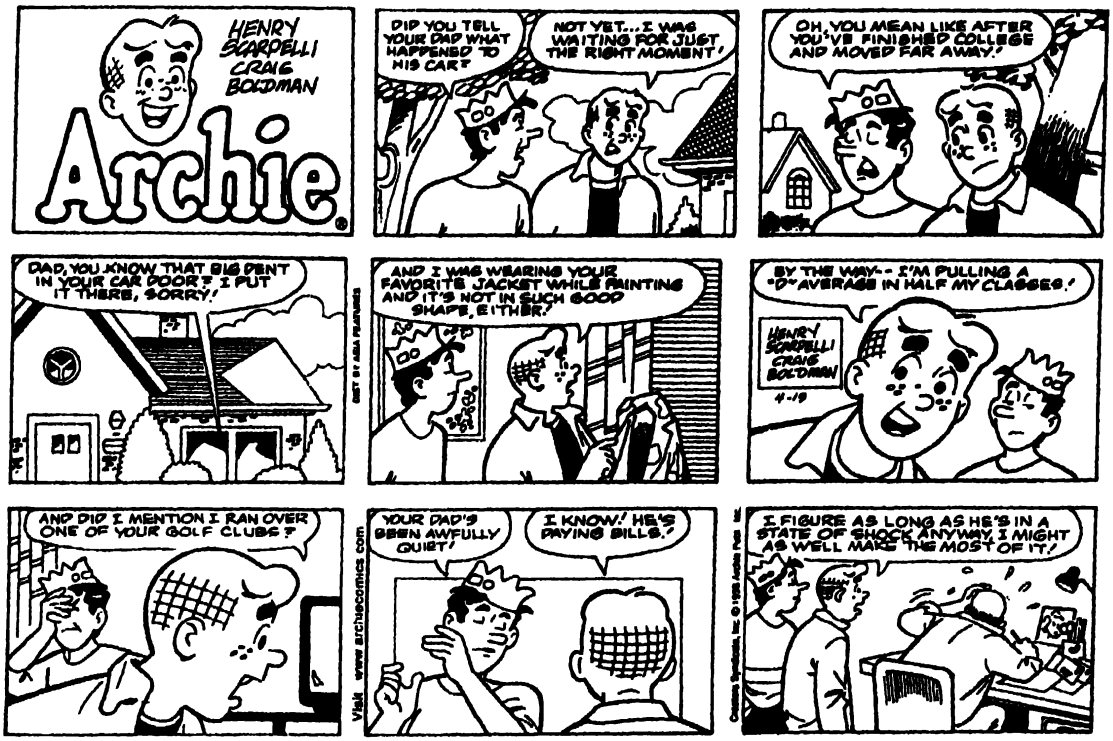
A. You will very definitely have to take a stand upon this, even at the risk of losing your girlfriend. Sexual blackmail should never be appeased and being gay is no longer the stigma it once was. Everybody has the right to choose their sexual preferences, and also to change them should they so desire, as long as there is no conflict of duties or responsibilities.

The first thing to do is to stop feeling ashamed or defensive about your past. The second action you must take is to call their bluff and go ahead with their plan to "expose" you. This will bring as much damage and disgrace to them as it will to you, and you must stand your ground regardless of the consequences. The third and the most important initiative is to tell your girlfriend the truth about your past. Whether or not she can handle it is immaterial — the point is to take your life into your own hands again instead of being the victim of passive relationships.

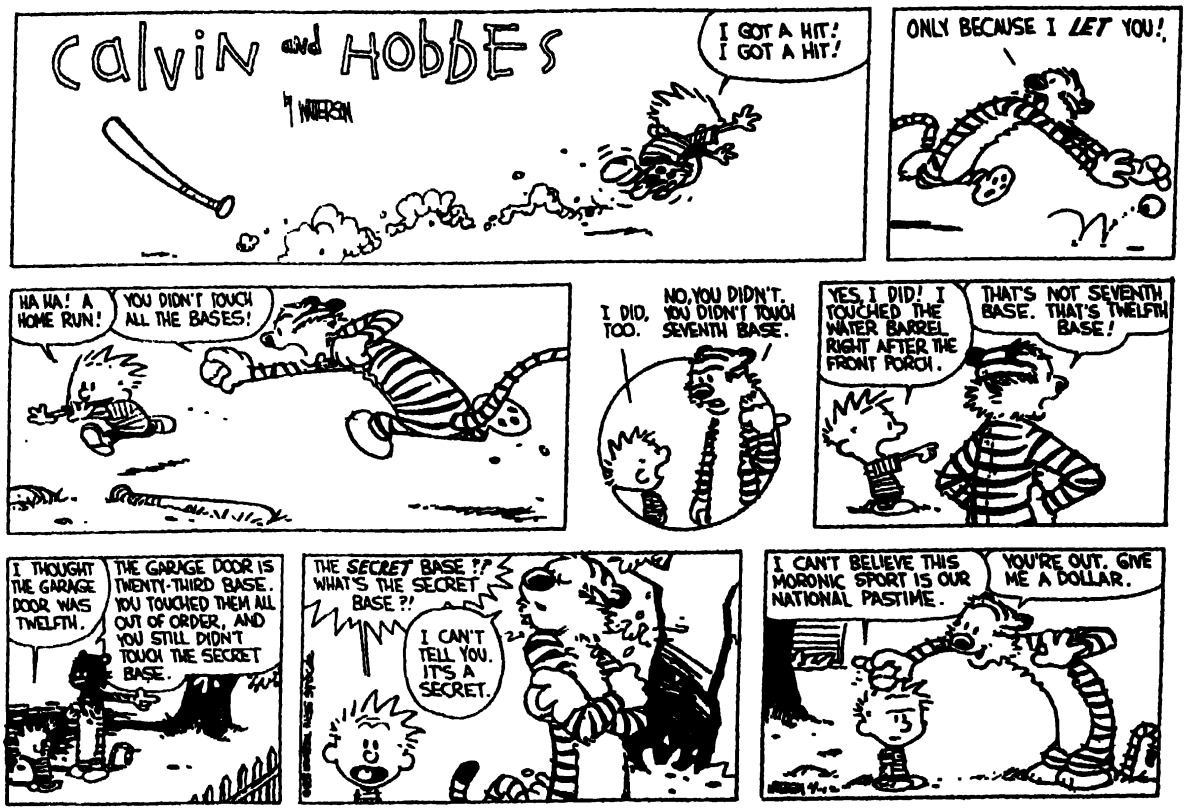


Illustrations : Debasish Deb

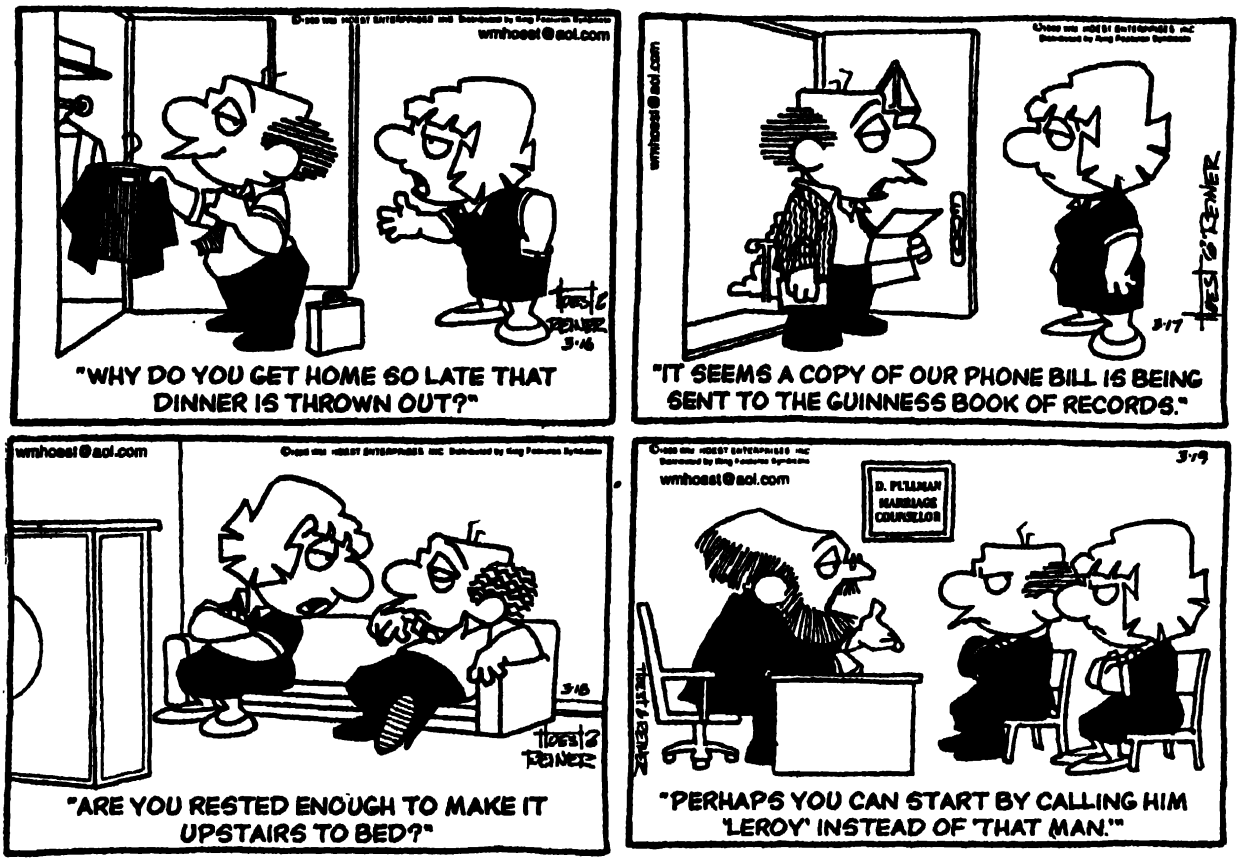
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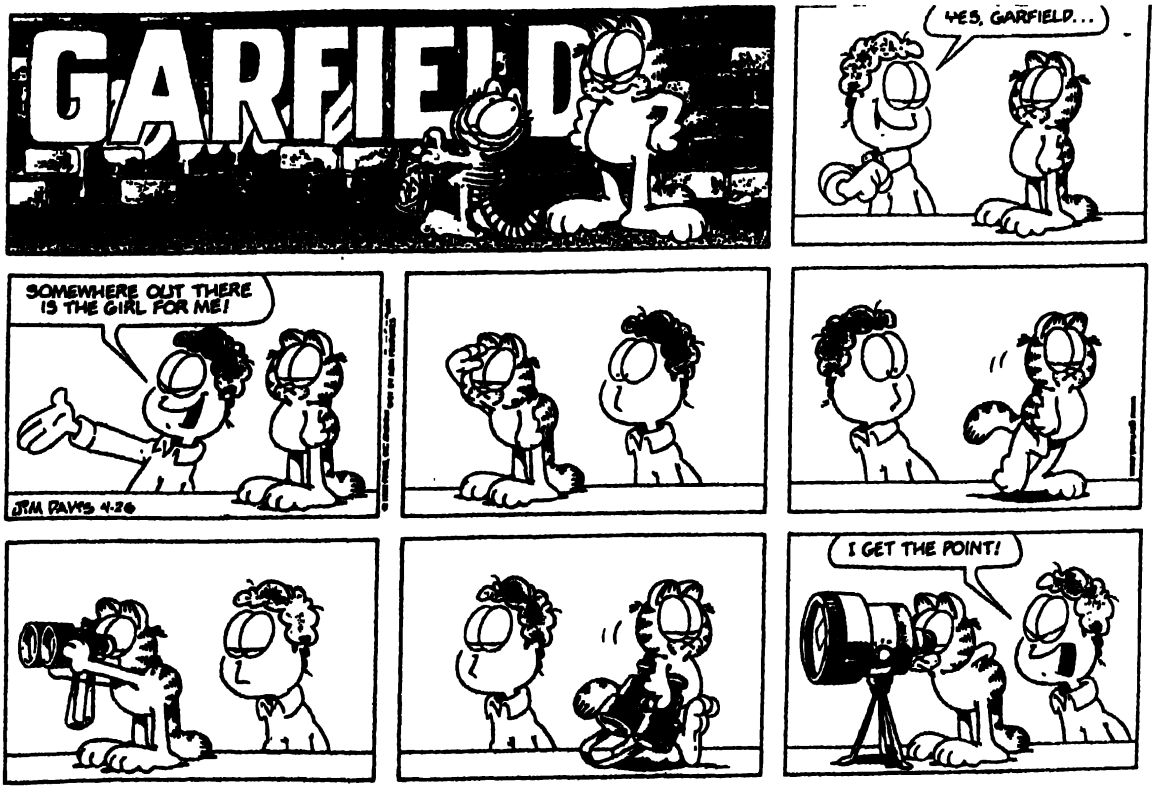
CALVIN AND HOBBES ▪ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



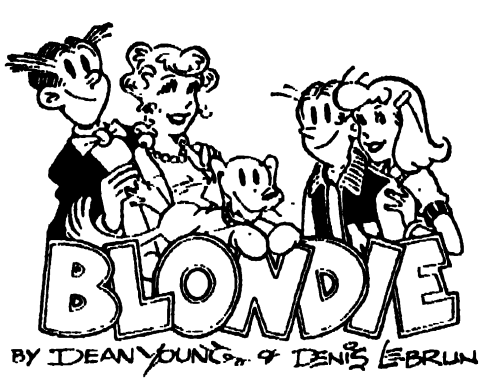
GARFIELD ▒ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP

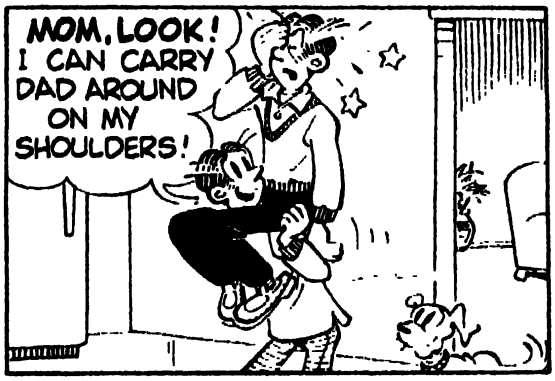


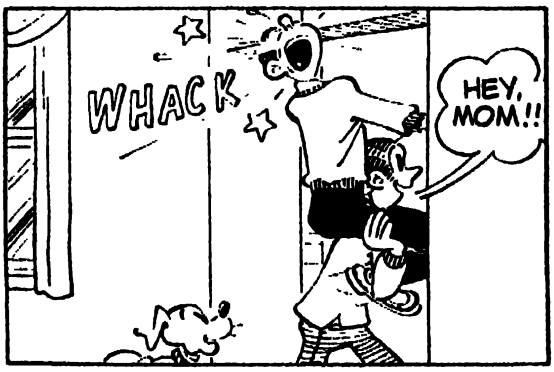
BLONDIE ▣ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

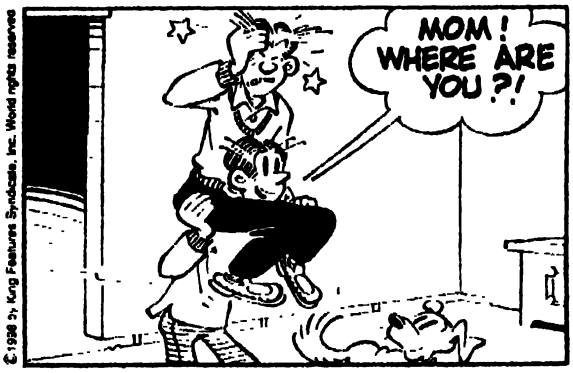












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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



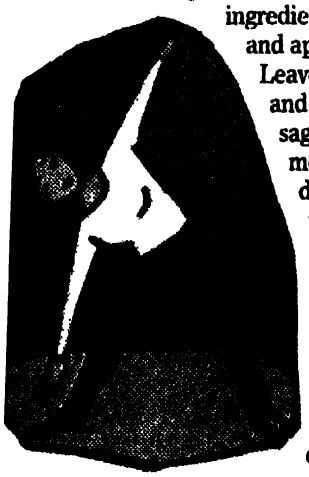
Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To look after your knees:

- Massage coconut oil and lemon juice on them

Q ***I am a 10-year-old girl and my knees are black in colour. How can I clean them?***
Srutoma Ghosh, Asansol.

A Many people have this problem and it is good that you are concerned about this from such an early age. The accumulation of dead and extremely dry skin gives your knees a dark colour. This region of the body is generally neglected. Massage the area with warm coconut oil to which you have added the juice of half a lemon. This should be done before bathing. Make a mixture of the following—powdered rice, orange peel powder, gramflour and milk. Mix all the ingredients to a thick paste and apply on the knees. Leave on for 10 minutes and then wash off massaging in circular movements. This should be done atleast twice a week for a month. The use of a pumice stone on the knees while bathing will also help reduce the darkness.



Q ***I am 16-year-old and am lean and thin and want to remain that way. How do I go about it?***
Vaishali Chanda, Agartala.

A It's good to know that you are slim and trim and wish to remain that way. I wish there were more conscientious teenagers like you. I would advise you to include lots of salads and fruits in your diet. Avoid rich, fried food such as gravies as well as sweets and aerated drinks. A regular exercise programme would help to keep your muscles toned and help you keep trim. Swimming, jogging, aerobics or even yoga would be ideal. You will have to work out your personal body care programme according to your lifestyle and what suits you best. Remember , however, that you should be regular in whatever you do. Frantic exercising for a few days and then reverting back to being a couch potato will never be of any use and will in fact leave you feeling frustrated. If you have made up your mind towards looking good, work towards it. All the best!

Q ***My lower arm and the back of my neck are darker than the rest of my body. I am unable to wear short-sleeved dresses. Please advise.***
M.S, Calcutta

A Make an uptan of the following ingredients—ground masoor dal, lemon juice, fuller's earth, mint paste, grated potato and rice powder. Apply this on the darkened areas and leave on for 20 minutes. Scrub off in a rotating movement. Massage the area with warm almond oil and leave on for about half an hour. Wipe the skin with a moist cotton wool. This scrub and oil massage is to be done daily for about a month for results and soon you will be able to wear short sleeved shirts as well as low back necklines.

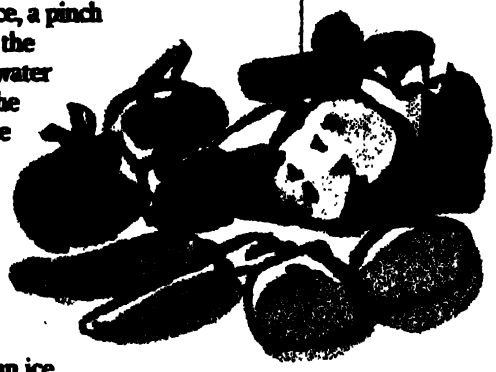


Q ***I am 20 years old and my skin is dark and oily and there are several marks left by pimples and open pores. I apply packs and scrub my face twice a day. Will that cause wrinkles on my face. Please suggest a daily skin care programme for me.***
Sundari Ghosh, Calcutta.



A I really do no know what type of face packs you are

using but they are definitely not to be used twice a day even if your skin oily. Excess of anything is bad. If you still have acne, please do not scrub the face with anything. Make the following face pack for the excessive oiliness and marks—fuller's earth, mint paste, half a tsp of camphor, lemon juice, a pinch of turmeric. Mix all the ingredients in cold water and apply all over the face and neck. Leave on till dry and then wash off. This pack can be done three times a week. If there is no acne, you can continue to use the scrub. Rub an ice cube all over the face after the pack. This will help reduce open pores. The regular use of ice cold water will also help tone the skin. Wipe face with cotton pads dipped in rose water. If you have an oily skin , it is important that your daily skin care programme includes 10 glasses of water as well as fruits and salads. If your skin still feels very oily as by now it must be used to the excessive use of face packs, rub half a tomato all over and leave on for five minutes. Let the skin soak up its juice and then you can wash off with cold water. Tomatoes are known to reduce oiliness.



Q *My hands and face are quite dark. I apply mustard oil daily. How can I make my hands and face a little fairer?*
Timmy, Calcutta

A If you are using mustard oil to moisturise your skin, then stop at once as this will only make your skin darker. Instead, use coconut oil to which you have added the juice of one lemon. Massage this into the skin as it will lighten the skin. You can also use almond oil to which you have added a bit of coconut oil and lemon juice. This is extremely nourishing. The application of powdered almonds to which you have added grated potato, gramflour and lemon juice will also lighten the skin and make it look clearer.

Q *I am 25 years old and have very thin and weak hair. I have tried shaving it off but that did not improve its texture or thickness. Should I go for hair transplant? Please advise.*
Bobby, Calcutta.

A Start to henna your hair because you are far too young for hair transplant. Mix a good quantity henna with warm water and add two eggs. This should be done once a week for a month. Also, massage your hair with *bhringraj* oil followed by turban therapy. This will help but you must be patient and regular with your hair care programme.

Q *I am 26-years-old and am terribly thin and short. In fact, I look positively malnourished. I want to put on some weight. Can you tell me how I should go about it?*
Gaurav Agarwal, Calcutta.

A It is ironical that you wish to put on. For most people, it is the other way round. You should try and put on weight through healthy means and not by gorging food. Have plenty of cheese, curd butter, eggs as well as fruits and vegetables. You can also be given the green signal as far as the sweet temptations are concerned. Of course, you must remember that nothing in excess is good. You have not mentioned your height or weight and so it is difficult for me to tell you what your ideal weight should be. You should also seriously consider enrolling in a gym and working out with machines.

To treat rashes produced by bleaching:

■

Apply almond oil to the affected areas and dab with cold water

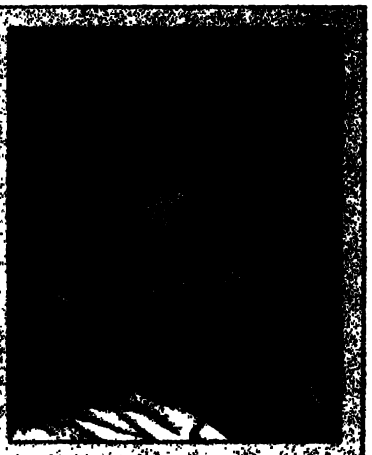
Q *I used a strong bleach some days ago and the after effects have been terrible. Rashes have appeared all over my face andthey resemble burn marks. To top it all, they are also very painful. all. Please advise.*
Sunaina, Mumbai.



A You have not acted very wisely by using a strong bleaching cream which you applied on your face without doing a hand testing earlier. My first advise to you would be to not touch the affected area too much as this would only make matters worse. Do not go out in the mornings in the hot summer sun for the next 10 days atleast. Apply almond oil to the affected areas and then press with cotton dipped in ice cold water. Do this regularly twice a day for a month for best results. You can also apply lacto-calamine lotion for soothing the affected regions.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

DALER MEHNDI
Singer:
■
I have been driving Toyota's Land Cruiser for the past four months, which I imported from Dubai. Before this I was driving a Mitsubishi Pajero but I felt I needed a vehicle that is safe and drives well. In the Land Cruiser the air-conditioning is very effective which keeps the pollution out. For a singer this is very important.



RASEEL GUJRAL ANSAL
Interior Decorator:
■
I drive a Maruti Esteem VX essentially as it is the best of the evils available. I primarily look out for functionality in a car as opposed to style and the Esteem fits the bill perfectly. It's reasonably good to look at and not flashy, unlike the Cielo





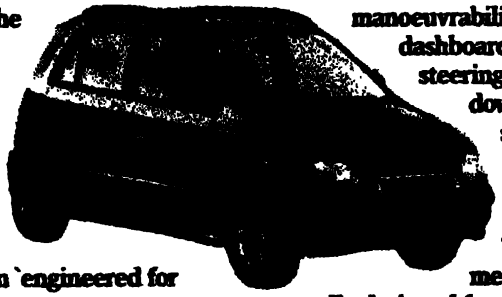
In the Fast Lane

The car market is expanding fast, with more models and better features being added on everyday. **Samita Bhatia** reports

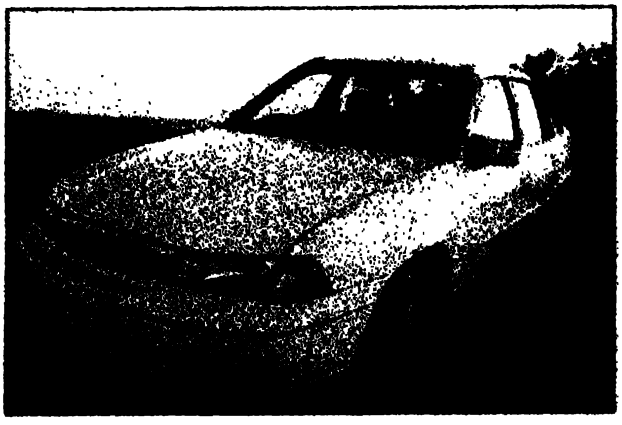
Not very long ago the one car that most often bumped along pot-holed Indian roads was a battletank called the Ambassador. Or if you got lucky you spotted the relatively less gauche Fiat. Few could imagine then that cars could be cute, young, fashionable, sleek or could become enduring status symbols. Or that you could buy even the most expensive of them on credit.

Then the people's car, the Maruti, rolled in while the liberalisation of the 90s ushered in global automobile giants. Names that paved the way for a new segment of 'luxury' cars in the country: Ford, Mercedes, Peugeot, Opel and Daewoo left the Indian wide-eyed. And today you can pick up a brand new set of wheels anywhere from Rs 1.89 lakh to Rs 22 lakh.

Today cars come packed with a lot of 'power this, power that' (as the Cielo ad goes), a lot more headroom and luggage space — the works. Some like Maruti's Zen, says the product promo, have been 'engineered for exhilaration'.



Latest add-ons are greater manoeuvrability, padded dashboards, power steering, power windows, rear windshield wipers and above all safety reinforcements. This could mean ergonomically designed front seats with reclining and sliding mechanisms and large adjustable headrestraints to avoid whiplash injuries on collision.



The cars come in different versions — standard and luxury, diesel and petrol. Every player in the market claims to offer value for money, better dealer and service networks and above all, easy finance.

The current best seller in the luxury car segment is Maruti's Esteem. It's three models the LX, VX and AX

versions — priced at Rs 4.69 lakh, Rs 5.35 lakh, Rs 5.95 lakh respectively — drive away with the honours. The Esteem's market share is an estimated 38 per cent of the luxury car segment.

Also in the limelight is Telco's sports vehicle, the Safari, India's answer to Mitsubishi's Pajero. The Safari comes with every possible upgrade, from rear wash, headlamp wash, a cooling system that can be adjusted separately for the front and back seats to an adjustable steering column.

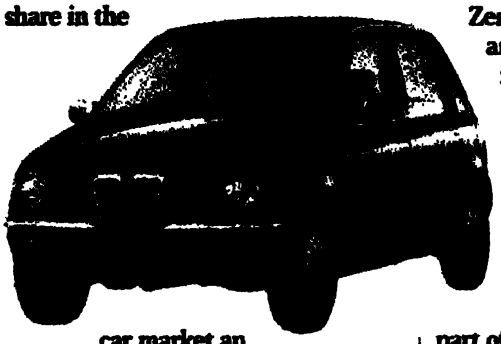
In the luxury car segment innumerable models claim customers — apparently in the following order. Daewoo's Cielo (Rs 4.9 lakh), Ford's Escort diesel (Rs 7.90 lakh) and petrol (Rs 7.30 lakh), the Opel Astra (Rs 7.62 lakh), Telco's Sierra (Rs 5.4 lakh), Estate (Rs 6 lakh) and Safari (Rs 7.5 lakh), the Contessa (Rs 4.5 lakh) and the Honda's City (variants priced between Rs 5.8 lakh-6.99 lakh).

The big draw that comes with these cars is the easy-interest payment deals that they offer customers. Says Raj Naresh Singh, managing director, Bhagat Ford, "The Ford Escort adheres to European standards of quality besides which it offers customers in-house financing from Ford Credit."

Daewoo Motors India Ltd (DMIL) went a step further offering a price correction of Rs 1,29,800 in the first week of January 98. This is in keeping with its policy of making Daewoo products popular and affordable. Explains S.G Awasthi, managing director, DMIL, "The consolidation of our market share is a true reflection of the price sensitivity of the Indian market. At Daewoo we recognise this."

The sensational price cut, which the company labels as 'cost advantage', has been achieved as a result of increased indigenisation levels at the Daewoo plant at Surajpur.

However, the wide choice notwithstanding, the Maruti rules the roost, its overall market share in the



car market an estimated 83 per cent.

The company's USP, says Arun Arora of Maruti, is its product range. He explains, "Cars are priced between Rs 1.89 lakh to Rs 5.95 lakh, with innumerable variants and models in-between. This gives us an edge over other companies."

Arora adds, "Maruti's inherent strength lies in its after sales service support and the ready availability of spare parts."

The Maruti 800 continues to be the most popular model in the small car segment. However, giving the people's car a run for its money will soon be other small cars (with some big features), in the lower price segment. The end of the year may witness a number of new players in the segment, but Maruti is not worried. Says Arora, "We hope that when competition comes in the lower price segment it will also bring about an expansion in the market."



Come November and Telco's Mint shall be unveiled. The car will come with the swanky exteriors of the Zen (though 20 per cent longer and wider than it), the spacious interiors of the Ambassador, the fuel efficiency of a diesel engine and the price efficiency of a Maruti 800. The car's basic version is to be priced at Rs 2.5 lakh and the deluxe version for just under Rs 3 lakh.

Hyundai Motor Company, a part of the Hyundai Business Group, is poised to launch the Santro, a car engineered — according to company sources "to ensure maximum driving comfort and pleasure." The car has been specially designed by Hyundai for the high volume segment of the Indian market.

The multi-functional Santro (Rs 2.90 lakh) is expected to be among the more advanced small cars in the market.

Hot from Daewoo Motors will be its 800 cc car currently named d'Arts (Rs 3 lakh). Soon in competition with Opel Astra and the Ford Escort will be Mitsubishi Lancer, a product of Mitsubishi-Hindustan Motors. This while at the very top end, the Mercedes-Benz too will upgrade, launching its new E-class model W210. The price? Ahem ... a cool Rs 26 lakh.

Diesel cars are obviously in. An interesting development of 1998 might just be the launch of diesel cars by companies already operating in India: the Maruti Zen diesel, the all-new Mahindra Voyager and Zen's diesel version. Also coming up is the Fiat Uno diesel and the Opel Astra diesel.

Backed by superior engineering, refined styling and adapted to Indian conditions, these new cars are your key to sheer driving pleasure. ■

THEATRE

Acting up a Storm

That's what Lillette Dubey is doing on stage, television and the big screen, says **Sudipta Basu**



Lillette Dubey: Theatre is where the heart is

The thin crowd at the Bandra Reclamation grounds to watch the much-acclaimed play, *Jaya*, which has just closed in Mumbai after playing for over a month, might have irked some of the senior artistes of the play. But director Lillette Dubey is unruffled.

"What can one do? The venue of the play is not exactly next door, the tickets are expensive and there are so many parallel activities happening in the city — people have a vast choice to pick from," shrugs Lillette. Adds Amit Behl, who plays Arjun in the play, "This is far better than most other occasions. We once did a play that had eight people in the audience and six members in the cast. So after the play got over all of us went out for dinner together!"

Lillette doesn't let thin attendance worry her—or even youngsters who walk up to enquire what the play was about

But Dubey doesn't let such matters worry her. Or even the odd bubble gum-chewing youngster who walks up to her to enquire what the play was all about. "After all, my knowledge of the Mahabharata was based on the Bhagwad Gita, and sundry snatches of the epic as well," she says.

It was only after *Jaya*, a musical montage based on the epic Mahabharata, rendered in contemporary English language by scriptwriter and music director Sandeep Kanjilal, came to her that she brushed up on the details of the epic. "I was aware of the treatise and the complex philosophy at heart, but in order to offer the ancient drama in an accessible language, one had to delve deep into the complex nuances of the play as well," she says.

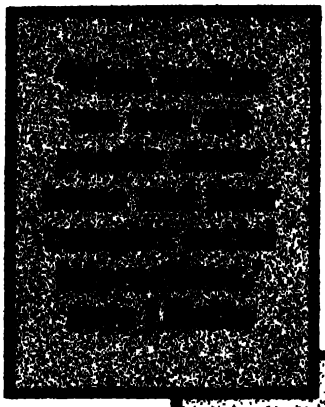
After achieving that, *Jaya* became yet another endeavour for the director to offer the English language theatre-going audience a slice of their own lives as it were. The 2000-*shloka* play fuses Carnatic and folk music with rock and jazz, with dialogues smattered with contemporary forms of expressions like 'chill out', 'what makes you tick' and 'what's your problem.' Just as the dances are sourced from modern and jazz ballet and chhau.

"The greatest challenge of *Jaya* was the fact that we are putting up a play that has no denouement, no element of surprise or mystery," she says of the play which takes off with Yudhishthira questioning Krishna about their victory. "Which is why one is faced with the burden of seeking a fresh method of keeping the audience glued to their seats."

Consequently, the actors don their respective persona, but retain and

work on their own body language.

"If the character who plays Karna has a stud-swagger, then I encourage him to work around it to build up the character. That way the audience is brought close to this young man who was wronged all his life," she asserts. "The characters are symbolic, but they are again princes and princesses and must be looked up to, so they cannot come up so close, to be able to perform in jeans and T-shirts, if only to keep that illusion."



An endeavour to strike that right balance was what kept the director ticking. "The script is in original English, and from the moment it landed on my lap, I saw the entire visual thing in cinematic proportions," says Lillette. Consequently, putting up the play itself cost ten times the average expenses.

Also, owing to elaborate characterisations, it needed the space that only an open-air theatre could offer, so it could not 'move' from one theatre to the other, as is the tradition in Mumbai. "There are keen theatre-going people here, but most of them wait for the play to come to their neighbourhood," says Lillette. "But *kya* cannot be performed in a closed space." What she can do is to take the play to other cities. Plans are in the offing to take the play to Delhi, Madras, Bangalore and Calcutta.

A Delhi*walli*, Lillette Dubey stepped into theatre 25 years ago, after graduating with honours in English from Lady Sri Ram College and later, sought a Masters degree in English from the Delhi University. By the time she was through with college, she knew where her vocation lay, and after a moment's debate between migrating to England to study drama — as was the fad those days — and a Masters course, she settled for the latter.

"While I knew I wanted to do theatre full time and England would have been suitable then, I also knew that I had to eventually come back to India and do Indian theatre," says she. "At that time I observed an actor like Roshan Seth, one of the very best in the industry till date, and saw what a hard time he had trying to secure work there. I would have had absolutely no chance. And the question of doing bit roles as Asians was certainly out."

Marriage and a couple of kids later, she took a small break from work, to plunge into theatre full time thereafter. Her memorable roles have included Lady Macbeth, Desdemona, the lead in *Amadeus*, *Wait Until Dark*, *Suddenly Last Summer* and Oedipus' mother. Having migrated to Mumbai in the last couple of years, her directorial ventures here have been Mahesh Dattani's *Dance Like A Man* and *Prisoner Of Malabar Hill*, both addressing contemporary Indian problems in a contemporary language.



Addressing contemporary Indian problems in a contemporary language

"It is time now for us to break free of the yoke of performing traditional English theatre. Milan, Paris and London are precisely what their names sound — distant," she says. "What excites me now are people closer home and their complex social interactions."

What also sets her mind ticking is a script "of reasonable quality", and a possibility of what is left behind after the curtains are down. "A good light-hearted comedy, which draws full houses is fine, but if it is not etched in the minds of the audience, then I would feel I have failed as an artiste," she says. "I have a husband to take care of all my material needs, so with whatever resources and time I have with me, I have absolutely no business making a mockery of my job. It is a labour of love."

If theatre is for the soul, television keeps a steady cash flow running. After series like *Vakalat*, *Mouthful of Sky*, *Newsline* and *The Janpat Kiss*, her latest venture on TV is *Kabhie Kabhie*, where she plays "somewhat of a bitch". "It is like exploring another medium," she says of television. "In the beginning, in the absence of a human audience, I found it difficult to communicate and emote on shoots, the camera seemed very cold in comparison. I have overcome all that now, and have warmed up."

Not content with the small screen, she has also ventured into Bollywood, with Kailash Surendranath's *Love You Hamesha*, where she plays "the young and sexy mother of the male lead, one with whom he majorly bonds with". "I have even danced to an Ila Arun number here," she laughs. "With this I guess I have touched everything possible in showbiz."

And after the arclights are turned off, it's showtime again on stage, "which is infinitely more exciting than the screen. There is instant rapport and communication with the audience. And that is magic," she says, flashing a beautiful smile. ■



Small is Beautiful



HOME, SWEET HOME:

I think that a house mirrors the personality of the resident. You are what you are in your own home. Everything that you put in it will, therefore, reflect some aspects about yourself. I like to therefore, design my house in accordance with my personality and moods.

My entire childhood and some years of my teens were spent in a pink bedroom. So the only look that I knew was soft, while the colour that I grew to love was pink. However, when I turned 16, I grew out of the soft-pink syndrome really fast.

I think that a house mirrors the personality of the resident. You are what you are in your own home. Everything that you put in it will, therefore, reflect some aspects about yourself. I like to therefore, design my house in accordance with my personality and moods.

Trends in interior designs or garments have never affected me. If I have to do up my house, I'll do it the way I like it and will not try and duplicate my neighbour's flat just because 'that' look is in vogue. My home is a very personal part of me.

Living in Mumbai, I have developed a distinct preference for smaller spaces and have actually begun to like apartments. Somehow I feel much more secure in a flat than I do in a big place.

I like to change the decor of my home every six months. An ideal living room for me in summers is one that is complete with a lemon-yellow or lime-green carpet, peach furnishings and lace curtains. The overall look and texture has to be soft. I would love to have a stark white drawing-room if it weren't for the fact that the colour is so difficult to maintain. I really love white for it reflects purity to me.

I go for drastically different and contrasting looks with the change in season. While in summers I go for light shades, I could just go for a dingy look in winter.

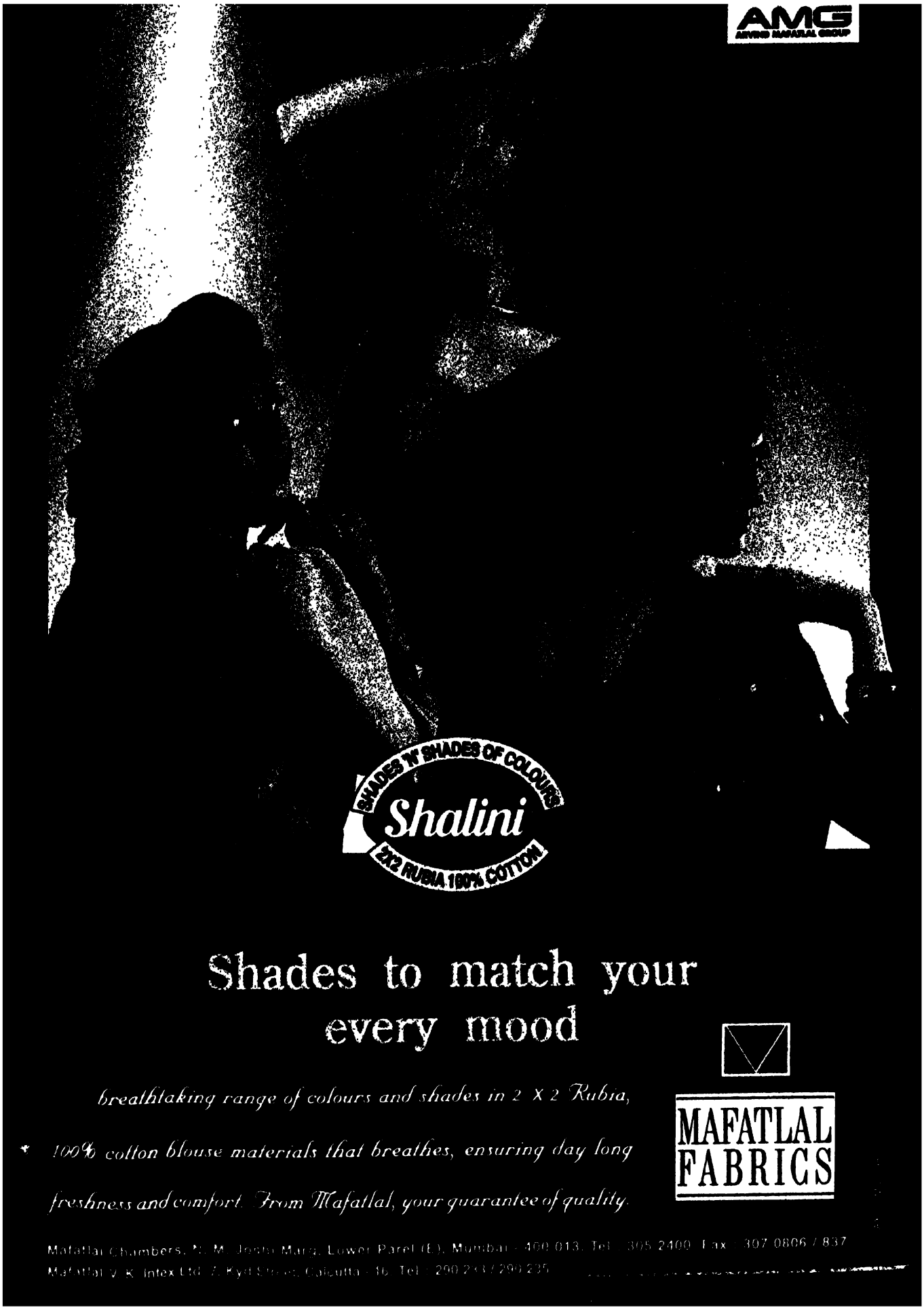
Winter colours are dark — mostly black. The living room in my flat in Mumbai is currently done up in black and white tones. I picked up a zebra-print carpet and printed curtains to match. The upholstery is black while plenty of animal print cushions have been thrown around casually. There are synthetic fabrics in cheetah patterns, tiger stripes and snake-skin. Even if the interior bares a casual feel, it has to be well-done.

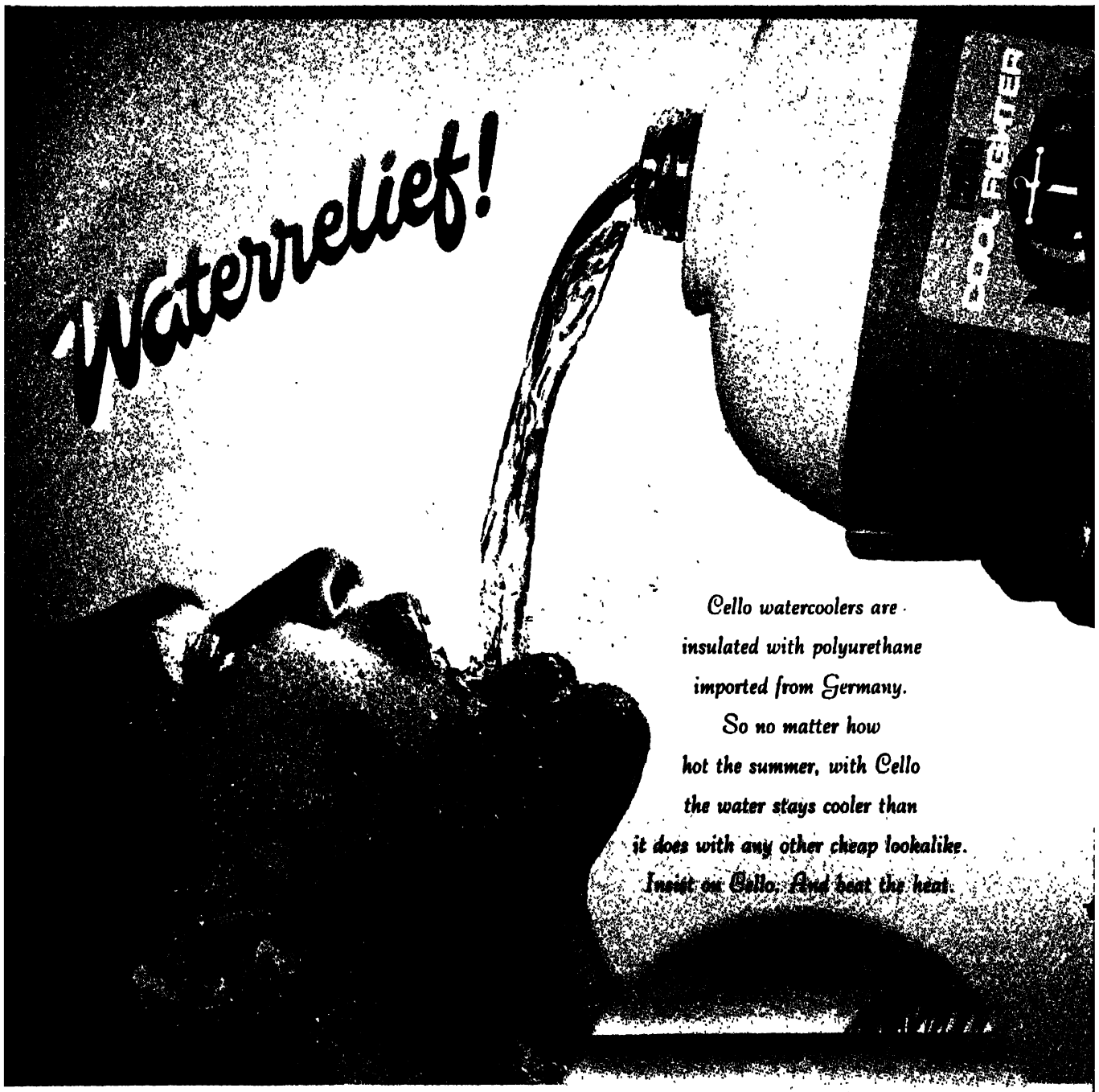
In my home I like to strike a balance with the furniture — it's neither ultra-modern nor heavy antique. My dining table is glass while the chairs are metallic, I like low sofas and tall tables. I like to intersperse the setting with vases. The kitchen is equally important. It has to be squeaky-clean, even if it's not very spacious, and preferably should be grey-black.

It's also not true that a good interior demands huge budgets. I love to mix and match, scout around shops and get things upholstered to suit my requirements.

Above all I find that a house can never be complete without lots of dogs and cats for company.

■ As told to Samita Bhatia


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POST MORTEM

Poetic Verses

Thank you for the cover story on Kaifi Azmi ('Poet Patriarch', April 5). Azmi is a philanthropist in the true sense of the term. To love and be loved — this is the basic principle of his life. This very spirit of love — in this case, for his country — motivated him to join the freedom movement and fight for the rights of his countrymen. Similarly, a loathing for the economic difference that separated his countrymen, made him turn towards communism.

Rashid Ahmed, Calcutta



Kaifi Azmi is a poet par excellence and his *mushairas* continue to strike a vibrant chord in our hearts. His unstinted faith in his ideology and secularism should serve as an example to the largely uninspired youth of today.

Muzaffar Murshed, Calcutta

Your cover story was a fitting tribute to one of the greatest stalwarts in Urdu poetry, Kaifi Azmi. The 'Poet Patriarch' has played the role of Abbajan in the film *Naseem* which deals with the demolition of the Babri Masjid, which seems to have stirred him. Though no sane Indian can condone the deed, one wonders whether it affects him as much when the temples in Kashmir and Bangladesh suffer a similar fate.

Nirmalendu Chakraborty, Cooch Behar

Behind every successful man, they say, lies a woman. The world might be mesmerised by the sheer power of Kaifi Azmi's words but we must also see the role played by his wife in moulding his personality and thereby, his verse. Brought up in the lap of luxury, Shaukat chose to forsake everything for the man she loved. She has also seen to it that their children realise their potential in their chosen fields and in the bargain do their father proud.

Pavan Sachdeva, Howrah

Jeans that Matter

Thank you for the story on the various brands of jeans available in the market ('It's all in the Jeans', April 5). In today's fast-paced world, it is almost impossible to think of life without jeans. Thus, the article was not only timely, it was informative as well because one got to know exactly what brands are good. This is very helpful for consumers as they can now buy a pair of jeans with confidence, without being confused by the sheer number of brands that are available in the market.

Neeta Guha, Calcutta

Jeans may have captured the imagination of the bubble-gum chewing crowd but it is still not a garment that most of our countrymen can identify with. At the risk of incurring the wrath of the teeny-boppers, I would, in fact, say that it is an inelegant and a rather audacious dress. Jeans may be long lasting but can they be ideal for our weather conditions?

Debjeet Sanyal, Howrah

The Telegraph

17 MAY 1998



PAGE 4

Brothers in Music

Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash are the young torchbearers of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's family tradition. Apart from emulating their illustrious father, they have also learnt how to handle their lineage with quiet dignity.

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 26

The Nowhere People

India has a refugee population of around 2,60,000 which include Tibetans, Sri Lankans, Chakmas from Bangladesh,Burmese, Africans and Afghans. But rehabilitating them is a difficult proposition for a country plagued with its own problems.

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Photographer Raghu Rai loves spending a lot of time tending to his garden.

Cover: Pallee

Ameen and Ayaan Ali Bangash are all kids emulate their ultimate role model, Hazrat Ameer Ali (a.s.)



'You think you are going to get away with this because you are your father's son," shouted the teacher at the boy. Silence was the child's only rejoinder to the barb, as he was by then too dazed to cope with the barrage of taunts. But a few years down the line, Amaan Ali Bangash, 20, has learnt to handle his lineage with pride.

At first glance, he could pass off as the prototype of an upcoming actor — sharp chiselled features, lithe jean-clad body and an inherent charm. Delve further and he is a far cry from the smart urbanite. Parents Amjad Ali and Subhalakshmi Khan have groomed Amaan and younger brother, Ayaan, 18, in etiquette unheard of today, ranging from greeting visitors to the house with a formal '*namaste*' to the art of sharing and giving to people around them.

"Even if it is a bar of chocolate, I ask my sons to share it with the servants," says Subhalakshmi, who has made it her life's passion to bring up the boys in the best traditions of the Bangash family. "I tell them, give the world the best you have and the best will come back to you."

It is this striving for the best that has bound Amaan and Ayaan to a life of strict practice. They are very aware that though they have an illustrious father in Ustad Amjad Ali, that is no guarantee of success or even of the fact that they will appeal to audiences long used to enjoying the best in sarod renditions.

The youngest torchbearers of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan's family tradition, Amaan and Ayaan, had their first *jugalbandi* on November 24, 1996, at the Shiela Theatre in New Delhi.

'Even if it is a bar of chocolate, I ask my sons to share it with the servants,' says Subhalakshmi. 'I tell them, give the world the best you have and the best will come back to you'

Amaan and Ayaan with their father at a function : Well groomed





Bringing up the sons in the best traditions of the Bangash family : The maestro and his wife

'My father made it a point to make us sit on stage even if we were not playing the sarod,' says Amaan. The maestro believed the first step towards becoming a good musician lay in overcoming stage fright

They chose the noble strains of the morning *raag Bhairav*, delighting audiences in a short passage where the brothers created harmony by playing the same line in perfect synchronisation, but at different pitches.

In about two years, the composition — released early this year — formed part of a double album, *Legendary Lineage*, marking the passage of the sarod through the renditions of Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan, Amjad Ali and sons Amaan and Ayaan.

Bringing three generations of the same family, united by the same music and instrument together is a special achievement, and is widely believed to have been Subhalakshmi's idea. The album, a throwback to the *guru shishya parampara*, bears witness to the passing of traditions orally from master to pupil, which existed for centuries in the families of professional musicians where knowledge was handed on from father to son.

"But," clarifies Amaan, "I am not a prodigy." His name, often mistaken as Aman, is derived from Amaanat — meaning, in God's protection. "My father made it a point to make us sit on stage even if we were not playing the sarod," he says. The maestro believed the first step towards becoming a good musician lay in overcoming stage fright.

The brothers' grooming came early. Unlike



films, in the world of classical music, building up a rapport with one's audience takes time. Says Ayaan, "Since we were born, our father sang something in our ears." The initiation continued with the boys being handed toy sarods at the age of four; by the time they were eight years, both of them were not only playing the instrument but were giving their first concerts in Delhi.

The son of a musician has no special place in school. If anything, their parentage made matters more difficult. "I had no explanations as to why I didn't do my homework — there was no point in telling them I was practising music or performing at stage concerts," recollects Amaan. Despite the constraints, both he and Ayaan managed to do well at their board exams.

But since time was running out, the boys were asked to make certain decisions. Says Amaan, "My father told us to make a choice between a college education and a lifetime of music." Both chose music. "It was never a question of forcing them to take up the sarod," recalls Ustadji. In a way, the atmosphere at home contributed towards the siblings' resolve.

Life has not been a cakewalk, considering they could have taken the predictable path of bagging "fancy degrees from abroad to do reasonably well as professionals". Remarks Subhalakshmi with conviction, "One's destiny is written from the moment of birth, and it was inevitable they play the sarod."

The family name 'Bangash' which Ustad Amjad Ali Khan revived in his sons, has a history that goes back to Mohammad Hashmi Khan Bangash, who migrated from Afghanistan. He brought the plucked instrument called rabab that was modified by the next few generations into the present-day Indian sarod.

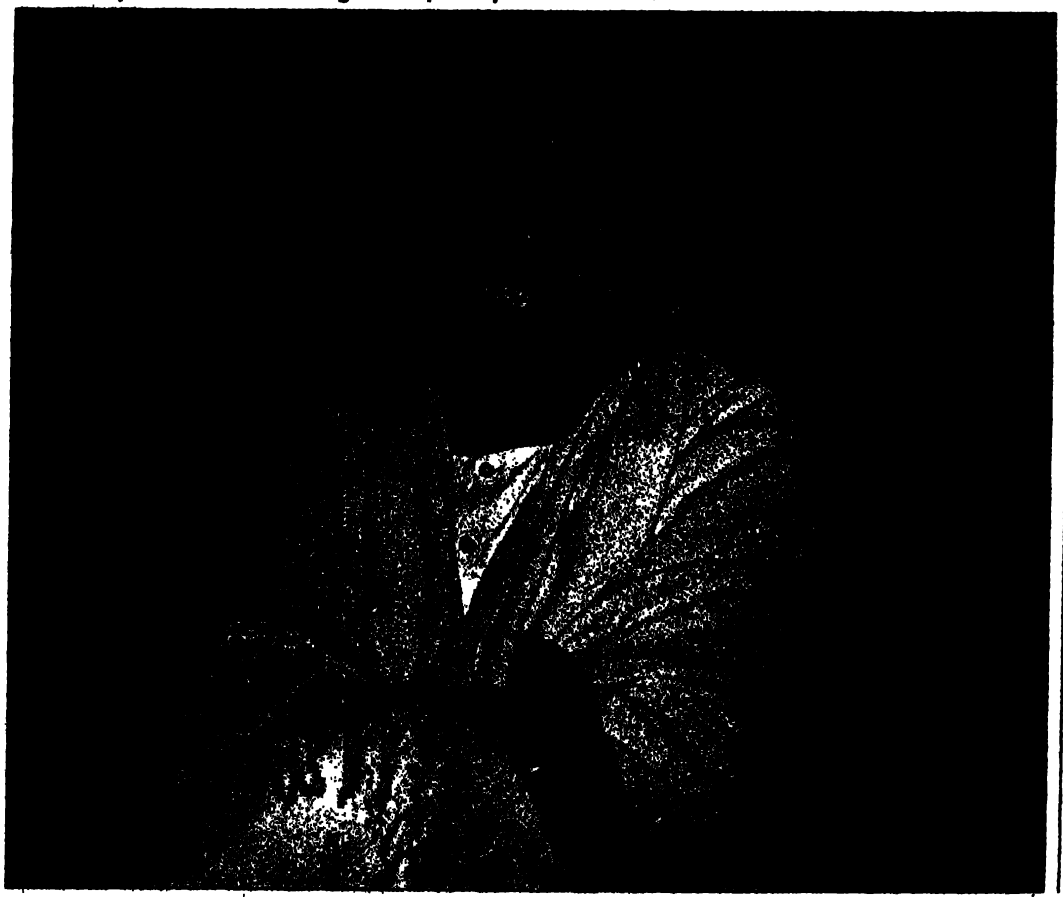
The fifth generation was represented by Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan, who died in 1972. As his youngest son, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan (born in 1945) was the first to popularise the family instrument abroad. His sons, Amaan and Ayaan, represent the seventh generation testifying to this continuing tradition.

As *shishyas*, both Amaan and Ayaan have not had any special privileges extended to them. "The other *shishyas* are not born in my house, that is the only difference," says the Ustad.

While the sons are in dead earnest about their music, some people have been prone to judging the two boys in a negative light. Critics watch their every stroke for the slightest error, magnifying their mistakes with pleasure. Some students associated with the Ustad for 15 years

'It was never a question of forcing them to take up the sarod,' recalls Ustadji. In a way, the atmosphere at home contributed towards the siblings' resolve

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan : Passing on the *parampara* to his sons



Jagdish Yadav

left out of sheer jealousy, unable to accept the idea of his sons' involvement with music. "Everyone was happy when we were in school," says Amaan.

In a world where expectations run high, the boys have sacrificed themselves to a gamble, fully aware that "this line does not spare anyone, young or old, father or son".

There is another misconception that has irked the boys — the notion that musicians' sons don't struggle in life.

As Ayaan sees it, "Struggle is the need to achieve accuracy of your notes". It is like walking a tightrope not knowing whether your future is secured. To Amaan, "Coming out of our father's shadow is itself a lifelong struggle; it need not be a struggle for bread and butter. We are foregoing a lot of fun for music which people say is '*fakiro ka kaam*' — the job of a troubador."

Then what if their dreams turn to dust? Amaan feels he would hope for the best, and should the need arise, can think of starting a business with his brother. Ayaan adds it would have to be music-related and if nothing else, says casually, "I could always sell my paintings on the road."

The boys are unanimous on the need for commercial ventures — like composing one of the signature tunes for Doordarshan, a task assigned to them by Ustadji recently. "One never knows where we will land up," says Amaan looking gloomy, admitting concerts are often not enough to sustain a musician.

A toehold in the music circuit means long hours of *riyaz*. Amaan claims he has no fixed hours for it. There are times, when he plays all night to stop at the crack of dawn. Guidance from Ustadji — who is mostly busy — does not come as often as they would want.

"Sometimes he would not come to teach us for weeks though he may be listening to our music from somewhere in the house," says Amaan. "Abba probably wants us to develop on our own." He recalls how, as the naughtier of the two brothers, he escaped the 'rod'. "My close resemblance to grandfather (Hafiz Ali Khan) usually saved the day."

Having a Muslim father and a Hindu mother has made both Amaan and Ayaan products of a liberal faith. "I have lived in a house where we have had the best of both worlds," says Amaan. As children they were taught to recite both Sanskrit *slokas* — there is a temple in the house upstairs — and read the Aayatein (verses) from the *Koran*. Amaan once shaved off his hair at Tirupati but "the Anupam Kher (bald) look" made him go off stage for a year.

Ayaan's nursery teachers, expecting him to be a Muslim, were surprised that his first sketch was of a Ganesha. It is an obsession that endured, compelling him to produce Husainesque watercolours of the elephant-God. "My mother framed them saying I was the only painter she could afford," laughs Ayaan, making light of his talent. In any case, the ambience at home is distinctly multi-cultural. Hindi, Urdu and Assamese vie for attention, the last serving as the family's "code language".

Both musicians are deeply conscious of the importance of family ties, instilled in them by Subhalakshmi, the strength of their lives. "She has taken all our headaches, from the roti in



Tapan Das

As Ayaan sees it, 'Struggle is the need to achieve accuracy of your notes'. It is like walking a tightrope not knowing whether your future is secured

the kitchen to the mikes on stage, the kurtas we wear and the forks we hold," says Amaan. Subhalakshmi, a vegetarian herself cooks "very good biryanis," says Ayaan. Both brothers are non-vegetarians, but get occasional 'green' attacks lasting for 5-6 days by the end of which they revert to their meat-eating.

While their father would be away for months, it is Subhalakshmi who would check up on their practice. "We know the extent of my mother's sacrifice. After all, there used to be a time, when as a performing artiste, my mother was earning more than my father," says a proud Amaan.

Their father, says Ayaan, was not one of those strict task masters who would flog them at four in the morning, leaving it to their conscience to work hard and practice well. "It is up to a person to keep himself and his luck well," observes Ustadji at a certain point in the conversation.

Praise from him is rare; the utterance of a simple '*thik tha*' is usually indicative of a lot of trust. The boys have learnt to expect no more than that.

The sons' musical inclinations are as classical as they are popular. Amaan might listen to Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali or Pandit Ajoy Chakraborty depending on the *raag* he wants to hear. But he relaxes with Bryan Adams and Lucky Ali. He also confesses to a watch and car fetish — "not necessarily expensive," he adds, wondering if he sounds bratty.



Ayaan is open to both Elton John and Daler Mehndi but his classical preferences would include *raag Malkaush and Baageshwari*. "We grew up with them and it reminds me of certain special moments in our lives."

Both are of very different temperaments. "While Ayaan is an indoor child and the quieter of the two, it is Amaan who gets tense — maybe, he feels he has the responsibilities," says Subhalakshmi. Despite this, the brothers have been the closest of friends. Agrees Ayaan, "We share a very different kind of relationship where our profession comes second."

Both Amaan and Ayaan realise they cannot just close their eyes and play for themselves when they are on stage. Says Ayaan, "It is important to cultivate one's stage presence and body language rather than play to an empty hall."

The boys' career has moved from the staid to the eclectic — into the realm of fusion music. Both have recorded with a Swiss pianist in Geneva while a fourth album with a German violinist is scheduled for release next year. "Sarod has not been exposed to much fusion due to differences in scale," says Amaan, beaming.

While such performances can widen their musical skills, says their father, it is important they receive the blessings of their own people. His words have a prophetic ring. For nowhere else does one hear the ecstatic '*wah, kya baat hai*' or the spontaneous '*Subhanallah*' except in audiences populated by Indians. And praise in your own tongue can often be the best praise of all. ■

Young Amaan : Dreaming big



Praise from him (their father) is rare; the utterance of a simple '*thik tha*' is usually indicative of a lot of trust. The boys have learnt to expect no more than that

PROFILE

Daughter of the Dargah

Known as the female Nusrat Feteh Ali Khan, Abida Parveen has established herself as one of the finest exponents of the Sufiana Kalam in the subcontinent today, says **Geeta Sharma**

Her plush hotel suite in Delhi is packed with friends, acquaintances and sundry admirers. And Abida Parveen, despite her apparent tight schedule in the capital, where she performed in a concert for the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation recently, makes room for all.

She is a little late in arriving at the hotel from an outing with her college-going daughter Miriam. She apologises to the visitors and explains that the delay was due to something she has always made it a point to do while in Delhi—offer prayers at the Dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.

And anyone who knows Abida Parveen's music knows that it is her complete and selfless devotion to the supreme being that has made her one of the foremost Pakistani exponents of the ancient tradition of Sufiana Kalam today.

One of the first artistes to synthesise the canons of classicism, the evocativeness of the qawwali and the emotive content of the ghazal, Abida has chosen the spiritual route to recognise and understand the maker.

Gifted with a full-throated voice and style said to belong to the Begum Akhtar School, Abida is considered the youngest entrant into the school of classical singers which boast of names like Iqbal Bano and Farida Khanum. Though Abida stands out in this group as one of the finest exponents of the devotional songs in Sindi, Multani and Punjabi, she is equally at ease with her renderings of ghazals.

And so the ever-widening canvas of her repertoire includes poetry of Tulsidas, Amir Khusro, Nasir Akbarabadi and Bulle Shah on the one hand, Daag Delhvi and Faiz Ahmed Faiz on the other.

"To me, whether it is ghazal or Sufi *gayaki*, they are all the same, because my singing comes from within and helps me reach out to the core of the heart of my audiences," she maintains.

Her Sufiana renderings, that speak of the journey of the inner-self seeking union with God, had her 3000-strong audience mesmerised as Abida performed at the concert in the capital organised by HMV. Whether it was Bulle Shah's kalam, *'Tere Ishq Machaya,'* or simply the rendering of *'Chaap Tilak Rang Deeni,'* the way she threw up her hands and sang to the heavens above, symbolised the gay abandon of the spirit.

For Abida, the apparent therapeutic effect her renderings had on the charmed audience, which had them clapping and swaying to the magical rhythm of her music after some time, was reward enough.

"To me, an erudite, discerning audience is as good and as great as an *ustad* or a guru. In India, as in Pakistan, I have found that mood in the audience," she says, flushed with the warm response.



The depth and power of her voice being her greatest assets, Abida has often been referred to as the female Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan. That is perhaps because she has been able to carve out a niche for herself in the subcontinent in the hitherto male-dominated field of Sufi kalam.

It has apparently been a long, hard road for Abida and



Abida Parveen with daughter Miriam: Selfless devotion to music

she has used her stupendous talent and dedication to win the day for herself. On her part, Abida chooses to play down her achievement and simply says, "It has been made possible because I have been nurtured by the dargahs and also because I see myself as the daughter of mazars and dargahs where I have sung the Sufi kalam."

Abida was born into a family, in Larkana, a province in Sind, where music was a way of life. Abida's father, Ustad Ghulam Haider Khan, was a music teacher and a singer. As he taught his students, he also taught music to his little daughter, who showed an unusual interest in it from among all his four children. Later, as her interest grew Abida went under the tutelage of the famed Ustad Salamat Ali Khan of Lahore.

"Sind, my homeland, is full of shrines, which are the cradle of music. In each mausoleum or dargah, there is some devotional singing or qawwali going on all the time. There is a *'ruhani kaifiyat'* (spiritual state of mind) about this singing that touches a core deep inside you and through you reach the heart of the people who come to seek God. And it is this *kalam*, that I have grown up in the midst of," she says.

Though the inspiration for singing came to Abida Parveen from the dargahs and shrines, it was the selfless devotion and dedication to the learning process that helped her create a distinctive and personalised style of singing.

Comparing the *talim* (learning) during her times with that of today, Parveen says there was never ever any laxity or hurry in learning anything, because it was not just a "*shauk*" (interest) but a life-time's devotion. So there was "*dheemapun*" (slowness) in learning where it took years to master an "*astai*" or an "*antara*" (musical note and raga.)

As for the current trend of rendering of ghazals in the "pop" style, Abida, says such phases are not to be condemned or looked down upon as "impure." "They are all fine in their own places and one should not cry about the purity of the classical form being compromised. The pure form stays. So there can never be any threat to it," she maintains.

Abida feels that among the Indian artistes, the best exemplification of ghazal singing is Jagjit Singh. "There is a newness in his singing and yet there is so much meaning and message in what he puts across." Among the Pakistani artistes, she admires her guru Salamat Ali Khan and the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan.

As for her making it big in a traditional male bastion, Abida says it was not that difficult for her, perhaps, because of the devotional nature of her singing. "In any case, women today are in the forefront in all fields, whether it is *mausiki* (music) or mushaira (poetry recitation session), so my achievement is nothing so great," she insists.

What has also propelled her towards a committed career in music is the fact that Abida's husband has stood by her. Director with Radio Pakistan, he understood the compulsions of her career that meant literally living out of bags. "In fact, I have missed out on being by my daughters' side — Preah, an artist and Miriam, who is in college — as they grew up. But whenever I am at home, I make up for it and my husband understands," she says.

But did she ever have to make any extra effort, make an extra sacrifice to be where she is? "No," says Abida simply. "Looking back, I can say there was no struggle that I had to go through, if that is what you are asking. It was just me and my interest in divine singing that brought me to this *maquaam* (position)." ■

Wealth is Health

With AIDS becoming the fashionable disease of the decade, those suffering from TB, malaria, leprosy and the like have become the forgotten people. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports

The glitterati had a field day. But then, so did the press. Held to raise funds for AIDS, the charity ball had dollops of glamour but not an iota of gravity. Hollywood star Richard Gere was there to lend his name; never mind if the cognoscenti did not register a single word of what he had to say. But at least, AIDS was a fashionable enough cause for the Beautiful People to turn up in full strength.

There is no denying that AIDS has become the disease of this decade, with the entire world having gone into a tizzy over it. In the Indian context, however, tuberculosis, leprosy, malaria, diarrhoea and Hepatitis B continue to claim far greater lives. But, alas, there isn't a Richard Gere to draw attention to, or champion their cause.

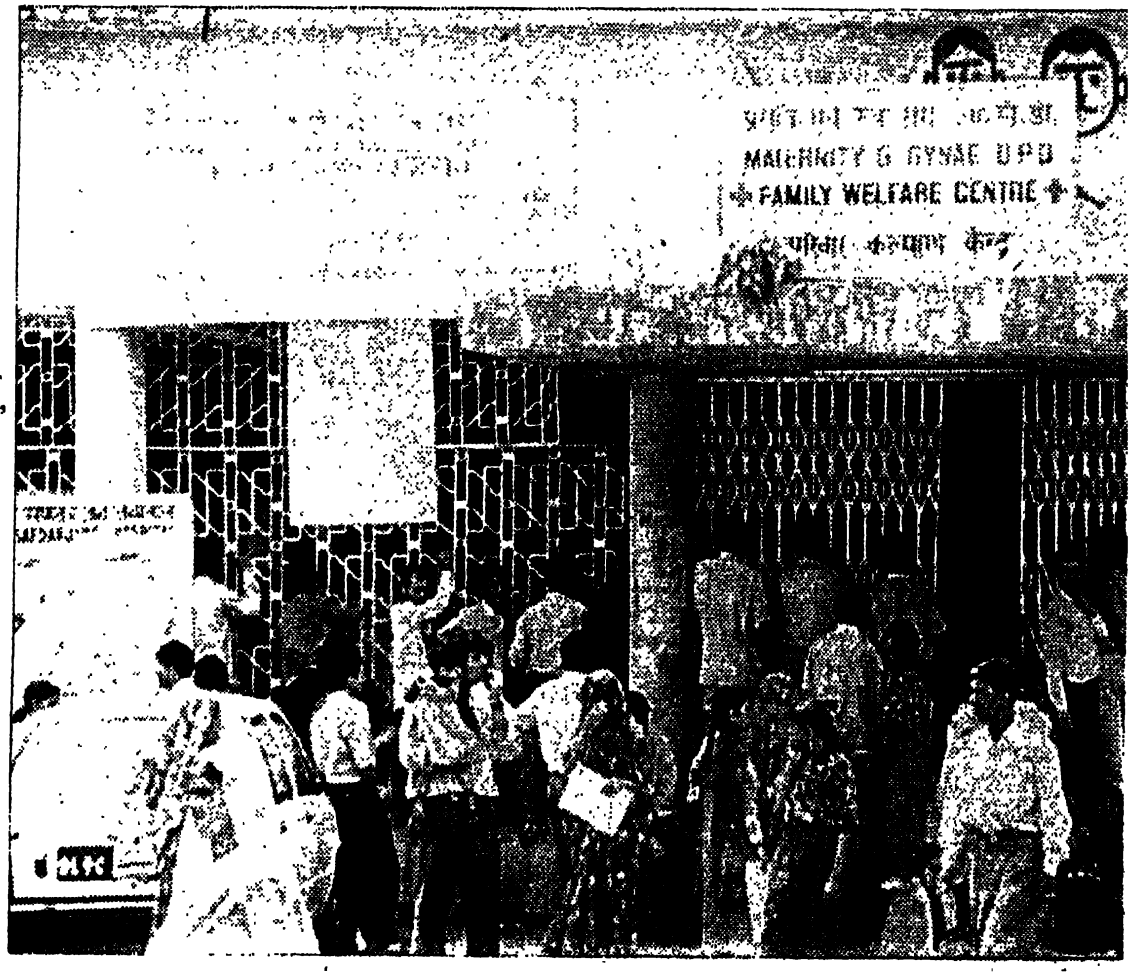
Says Pavan Varma, a foreign service officer and author of several books including *The Great Indian Middle Class*, "The concern shown by the elite for AIDS without turning their conscience towards fundraising for 1.5 million babies dying of diarrhoea—which means one baby every three minutes—speaks volumes about the Indian insensitivity to Third World diseases."

He acknowledges that "The cause (AIDS) is good but the circumstances in which it was given the profile it has, is a damning critique of a priviligentia who pretend to show interest only when death is associated with glamour."

Consider this. Malaria in Rajasthan claimed 4,000 lives but not a single workshop was conducted to investigate the disease, when all that was required were four tablets of chloroquinin per patient. Around 52 per cent of our children are malnourished, a situation which is worse than Ethiopia and Sahara. Over 14 million Indians suffer from tuberculosis, with 2.5 million people being infectious and over 1,000 dying daily.

In India, more than 4 per cent of the population is chronically infected with Hepatitis B, second only to China. It is estimated that 20 per cent of these chronic carriers will die of liver cirrhosis which roughly translates to 8

The need of the hour: Fertility awareness, not a hypocritical concern for glamorous ailments

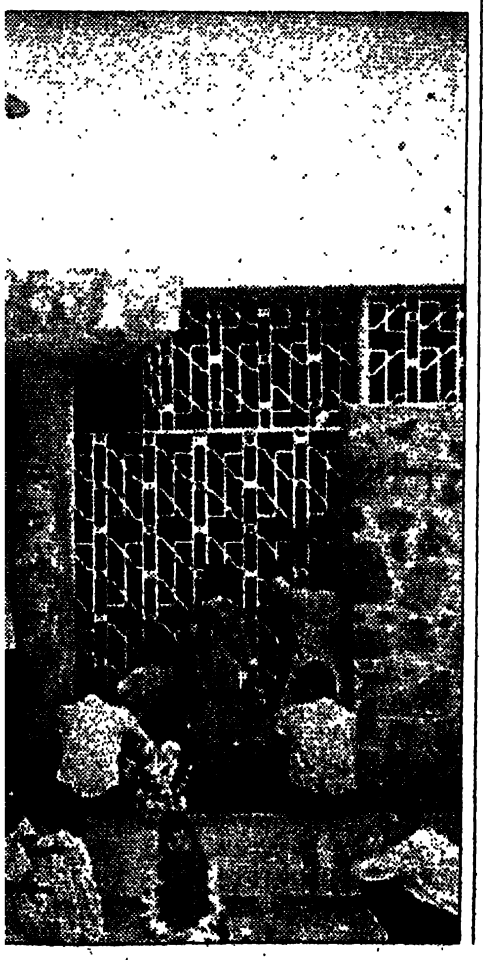


million people.

Yet allocation of funds towards the treatment and prevention of these glamourless diseases is grossly inadequate. If AIDS has attracted the bulk of foreign aid, it is simply because people sitting in the West are not affected by other lesser-known diseases. Admits T. Walia, public health administrator of World health Organisation (WHO), "TB has been killing more people than AIDS and malaria combined."

Counters Sridhar Venkatapuram working on health and human rights issues, "There is not a huge amount of money which is going towards AIDS. It is more in the mentality than in the evidence." Agrees Shabana Azmi who has been been actively espousing the AIDS cause, "It has to be understood that people do not die of AIDS. They die due to diseases that occur because the body's immunity system packs up."

Azmi adds that in India, this means the diseases that we have been trying to eliminate like TB and malaria





The pioneers in public health awareness: Meera Shiva and Dr Pavan Verma (below)



in fact get exacerbated because of AIDS. What both Azmi and Sridhar point out is that the social and economic impact of AIDS is far greater than other diseases. When you have malaria, you won't have people evicting you from the work place.

Sridhar agrees that AIDS does not have the same mortality rates as those suffering from TB and malaria but he adds that in the coming decades they will far outnumber those suffering from malaria. As of January 31, 1998, there are 6,154 AIDS cases reported within the country. "Even if it is one per cent people getting affected, they need addressing," he says.

Adds Azmi, "People's lack of understanding on AIDS has led to a large incidence of human rights violation." She calls for the need to launch a massive sex education scheme in the country. "Women—from all sections of society and not just sex workers—are not empowered enough to negotiate condom usage. Ultimately, it is the underprivileged who are the worst sufferers because they get denied access to medical help and are socially ostracised which has severe repercussions on the families they support."

Mira Shiva, head of Public Policy at the Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI), objects to the flagrant advocacy of condom usage for AIDS prevention on the premise that it is a Western priority. "The question of AIDS treatment does not address the real issues of male sexual behaviour in matters of contraception, sexually transmitted diseases (STD), sexual violence, growth of red light areas, trafficking of women, spread of pornographic literature and blue films, the growing market for aphrodisiacs and male potency drugs." What is ironical, she says, is that the role of male sexual behaviour, gender relations, sexual and gender responsibility and sex determination factors have been overlooked in the obsession with costly, imported, contraceptive technologies. "If the AIDS cause had sincerely addressed these issues, I would say the money for AIDS was justified. Since no technology seller stood to gain, fertility awareness was never considered important enough. Years of protests by the women's health movement have met with indifference and even hostility."

It is not as if there are not enough strategies to counteract the 'other' diseases. The WHO regularly comes up with health programmes which are technically sound. But their half-hearted implementation due to government apathy has worsened the situation.

Take for instance, The Directly Observed Treatment, Short Course (DOTS), pilot-tested in India since 1993 as the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP) for curing TB. It is supposed to shift the responsibility for cure from the patient to the health system. Both DOTS and Multi-Drug Therapy(MDT) for leprosy is expected to be administered free. But ask any person

about it, and he will claim to know nothing about it.

The fact is, "nine out of ten TB syringes allotted free are sold in the open market. Not only is free health care which is a fundamental right in this country non-existent, the dangers to people's health waiting outside for hospital beds is completely ignored," says Sridhar. He points out that primary health care centres don't exist in villages and are used as animal barns.

There is, too, a second symptom which is proof of poor programme performance. It is called Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis (MDRTB) which refers to strains of the bacterium which are proven to be resistant to the two most active anti-TB drugs, isoniazid and rifampicin and occurs when prescribed courses for TB have not been completed.

to a rise in the number of TB patients in advanced stages."

India has its unenviable share of the global incidence of malaria as well. Almost 2.5 million cases are reported every year out of which the fatal falciparum or cerebral malaria claims over 1000 lives with India alone contributing about 40 per cent of all malaria cases outside Africa. But these figures, claims a report in VHAI, do not reveal the entire picture since the collapse of the health surveillance and information systems in India has led to manipulation and under-reporting of data by concerned authorities.

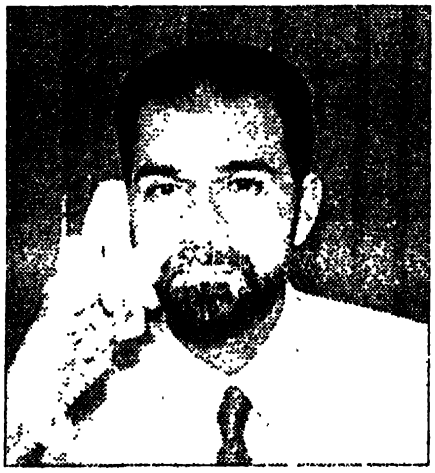
Instances of Hepatitis B cases are equally disturbing. An immunisation programme against it has been stressed on by WHO in all countries. India is still at the stage of examining the pilot programme in Delhi but as per figures stated earlier it may be too

functioning surveillance system. Which means, says Shiva. "There should be a centrally-linked policy. Family planning and AIDS programmes are vertical. Since both address certain common issues of hygiene, they should come under one roof."

There is also a need to move primary health care to the grassroots at the *panchayat* level. "In a country of one billion people, such decentralisation is a necessity. "For how can the government do everything?" asks Walia.

True, but there is plenty the government can effectively manage. Like learning to prioritise diseases as per the Indian context. If TB had recently been declared a global emergency, it was because people in the West got it through AIDS. "Why should we wait for outside help to





The pathetic plight of our health care centres;and (right) T. Walia, Public Health Administrator, WHO

Treatment of MDRTB is extremely expensive, toxic, and often unsuccessful. Unfortunately, TB control programme rooted in the Primary Health Care concept failed to mitigate the spread of TB due to lack of proper implementation of the primary health care concept.

Says Mira Shiva, "There are not enough diagnostic and therapeutic facilities available. These, added to spiralling costs of TB drugs, inadequacy of budget allocation and training, marginalisation of public health as a discipline, neglect of communicable diseases and lack of rational TB care in government, in private as well as the Non-Governmental Organisations have led

late by the time implementation comes through.

Immunisation, too, would cause the government a fortune. For both the vaccines—the cheaper plasma-derived vaccine and the more expensive recombinant vaccine—India would approximately need 80 million doses per year which would then cost $46 million for the plasma-vaccine and $78 million for the recombinant vaccine to prevent future generations from being affected. But are funds being channelised towards its prevention?

The first step towards the treatment of all infectious diseases, says T.Walia, is to set up a an integrated

decide what our health priorities should be," says Shiva adding, "There are people suffering from Kalazar who may also have TB. But are people concerned that there are not enough laboratory technicians to test sputum for Kalazar?"

AIDS is a linkage in the whole chain of diseases, "But when health issues shift from public health to a commodity that has to be bought, then curative care becomes a substitute for health care," says Shiva. What has to be improved is the quality of health care services in the country; one can't just survive on pills. And what's more, most people are too poor to afford even the basic medication, anyway. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The moon invests you with more power and glory You will turn your attention towards funds loans capital household expenses and share certificates Profits and benefits will come your way not just monetarily but emotionally and spiritually as well Be prepared to undertake an arduous journey

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Publicity, good results, competing with others —will be what you deal with this week You will realise the value of working in tandem with others There may have been differences at work, but you will be able to sort them out very amicably indeed Co operation and understanding are the key words for you

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



The world of technology and computers will lead you to lay emphasis on communications and contacts Exciting travel possibilities will come your way This will be a great time for those in the media literature and the arts You are going to be a sure fire winner in love So go ahead and woo your beloved

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Once again, money matters will have to be attended to —mutual funds shares and stocks profit sharing, capital sharing and such You will have to work rather hard but you soon find rewards coming your way, in all shapes and sizes You are bound to gain in esteem and respect in the eyes of society

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Your attitude of making fresh adjustments in your values lifestyle and orientation finds you incurring expenditure for worthy cause helping those in need and also on some secret activity On a more mundane scale of activity there will be travel and some useful project coming your way

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



The main trend initiated this week will be familial relationships household matters domestic concord Property matters may concern you even if it only means decorating a part of your house Freedom and creative pursuits are all sources of immense satisfaction Health hazards can not be ruled out

Libra
September 23 — October 22



You will be extending the scope of your relationships reaching out to people and places Fresh acquaintances and contacts may help you in a new business proposal Ties and bonds of a totally different nature are also indicated You may also find yourself losing the affection of someone you cherish

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



You will find yourself extremely busy this week Your hard work will however be adequately compensated for You may find yourself harbouring a grudge against a very close friend based on some wrong notions Try to sort out misunderstandings of any kind This is not the right time for initiating a love affair

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



A phase in your life when you feel that all is fair with the world You have a very good rapport with your children and with young people in general You take up or revive old hobbies and pastimes In short you appreciate and enjoy all the good things in life and Life itself becomes a celebration for you

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Having had a whale of a time last week, you come down to earth with a thud You will deal with matters pertaining to money as in loans funds grants and joint finances You will also be quite busy spending that money on shopping and renovation Free lancing is a possibility for you

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



The name of the game is finance and romance and the two should go together Many of you will be beautifying your house office or shop Those in films broadcasting and trade do a very good job If you are signing a contract, it is better to consult a lawyer It is your duty to tend to the sick and the needy

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Right from house and property to friends and family to the tough world outside you will be covering a wide range of activities now You should deserve credit for your efforts courage and energy as well It will be to your advantage to finish pending work This is the right time to take major decisions

BIRTHDAYS

May 17: Moon square Mercury, conjunction Pluto: At work, you will give off your inspired best. The right year to reach out to people and places.

May 18: Moon conjunction Uranus: By your imagination and sheer inspiration you score heavily in the game of life. The health of elders will cause concern.

May 19: Moon's last quarter: This conjunction could make life a bit too strenuous for you unless, of course you are well organised and mentally ready to face all eventualities.

May 20: Moon's conjunction with Jupiter: Take your time to [illegible] decisions today may not be the right ones There is a chance of an engagement or even matrimony You are likely to strike a lucrative deal in business

May 21: Moon sextile Sun-Mars: The law of averages work in your favour You can, therefore, start a new venture and pursue new hobbies. You are likely to meet old friends

May 22: Venus conjunction Saturn: There is a possibility, if not a certainty, of gloom, melancholy and depression. If this does happen, remember that it is only for a short period

May 23: Sun trine Neptune: Both, name and fame, will be yours. Separations and quarrels are,however, indicated Do your best to avoid these. You are bound to do well at work

Triumph

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TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1300	
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1420	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1720	
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 6
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1410	5
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 72		
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W 512	2150	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0605	daily
9W-902	0845	daily	AI 662	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	*IC-855	0755	2, 6
*IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2015	daily	9W 911	1905	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1130	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 512	1450	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 772	0615	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2150	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	1, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD 212	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201,203	0715	1, 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
IC 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0630	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1910	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0800	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

KUWAIT					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB 106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SINGAPORE					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG 094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
■ DELHI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
■ KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA 214	1525	2 6	RA-213	1425	2 6
■ LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1540	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
■ TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
■ YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19 15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7 35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed. Thurs & Sun. Arr. Tues., Wed & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun., Arr. Tues. & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6 05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr Tues Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep. Tues., Wed. & Sat, Arr. Tues., Fri & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr., Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5 15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11 55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21 25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15 40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat & Sun., Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7 55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Tasta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	8-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Kaifiat Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3139	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	15-25	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19 20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5 40	8033
8030	10 45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19 40	2704
8013	17 30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21 35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5 30	8008
8409	19 00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15 30	8046
8017	16 45	Purulia Express Dep. Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12 05	8018
8079	23 30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep: Sunday Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16 30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03 30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14 10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03 30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (8 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. ***I am a short-tempered person. Due to my tempestuous outbursts, I often get an attack of migraine. I want to get rid of this problem, but how?***



Nisha, Calcutta

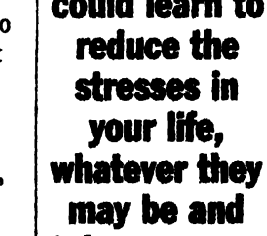
A. You should have a thorough medical check up to rule out any other possible causes for your headaches, such as blood pressure or some other such problem. I have a terrible temper myself so I am probably not the best person to advise you. You could look at meditation. I know a lot of people who have benefited positively from transcendental meditation. You could learn to reduce the stresses in your life, whatever they may be and take a course in home laughter therapy which means quite simply that you do not take yourself or the world around you quite so seriously. Once you do that there is not much to get uptight about anyway. Another thing about temper tantrums: if you use them to get rid of your accumulated negative feelings they can actually be good for you! Next time you lose your temper, lock yourself up in your bedroom, take your rage out on your pillow and emerge smiling. Good luck!

Short-tempered and often suffering from attacks of migraine? You could look at meditation. I know a lot of people who have benefited positively from it. You could learn to reduce the stresses in your life, whatever they may be and take a course in home laughter therapy

Q. ***I am a 19-year-old girl. Strangely, I have fallen in love with another girl of my class. I am very ashamed about my feelings for her. I feel she, too, is fond of me and we are attached to each other. But I cannot speak about it to her. Is this abnormal? Please advise.***

Komal, Calcutta

A. It is quite normal for girls of your age to fall in love with one another, especially when they do not have regular interaction with other young men. You are at an age when your entire biological and social imperatives are pushing you into falling in love. It is no wonder that teenagers often become infatuated by film stars, cricketers, or other such public figures. The schoolgirl crush on a teacher or another student is another aspect of this phenomenon. There is absolutely no reason for you to be ashamed of your feelings but I would suggest that you keep them in perspective and do not rush into a foolish situation which you will regret later. At 19, your life has only just begun and you will meet many more men and women who will influence you. By all means maintain your friendship with this girl, learn from her positive qualities, give to her in terms of personal warmth and friendship. After all, a committed friendship is one of the purest forms of love. But do not at any cost confuse this relationship with that of sexuality as I do not think that is the case in your situation. Remain open to life and what it has to give, and have fun in the process of growing up!



Q. ***I am in love with my mother's maternal sister for the last couple of years. She, too, loves me very much and we both want to marry. My parents are totally unaware of the actual nature of our relationship. Would it be possible to legitimise our relationship? Should we approach our respective families for approval?***

A.M., Calcutta

A. This is a relationship doomed for disaster. Not only could it create chaos in your life and that of your aunt but it could also cause a deep grief to your mother and the rest of your family. I do not think this is a relationship which can or should be legitimised. Retain your affection and positive feelings but censor the intimacy and sexuality between you and your aunt. If necessary you could move to another town or city for some time to strengthen your resolve in this matter.

Q. ***My friend and I are facing a peculiar problem. We are 15 and very good friends. We***

have both fallen in love with a 22-year-old man. We are aware of each other's feelings for the same man which has prevented us from expressing our feelings for him. We do not want our friendship to end. On occasions, it seems that he cares for me and sometimes, it appears he cares for my friend. Soon, he will be going away for higher studies and we would like to know whom he really cared for. How should we express our thoughts to him?



Rima, Ria, Calcutta

A. You are both lucky to have such a deep and trusting friendship with each other and I sincerely hope that all your life no man will appear who will be important enough for you to fight over. I think that deep down inside you already know that both of you are entertaining yourself' to a sort of light-hearted entertainment infatuation. There is nothing wrong with this, after all the best things in life are the unserious ones and I think you should both flirt with him outrageously until he goes away for his higher studies after which you should both forget about him and get on with your lives. As for the future, well, Que Sera, Sera... give it time.

Q. *I have a strange problem. My name is Amitabh Bachchan and I am from Allahabad. Yes, that's my problem; I am tall and have a deep voice, though I don't look like my famous namesake. I was named by my uncle who is a great fan of him. Whenever, I introduce myself to people, they think I am joking and want to know my real name. I have contemplated affidavit but that would mean displeasing or hurting my uncle. Is there any other way out?*

Amitabh Bachchan, Allahabad

A. The first thing is to walk tall like the real Amitabh Bachchan. Look at it positively, you have a name which no Indian could ever forget! As I see it, changing your name is not really the best way out as there is nothing really wrong with your name, it is just that you are infatuated with it. Tell yourself (with a degree of conviction) that you are every bit as charismatic and talented as the other Bachchan and much younger as well! Take it as a challenge to live up to your name and you may find you are even enjoying it! The other way out is to add your family surname to your existing one and introduce yourself as Amitabh B. Singh or Chandra or whatever and forget your short brush with vicarious fame.



Two friends in love with the same man? I think that deep down inside you already know that both of you are 'entertaining yourself' to a sort of light-hearted entertainment infatuation. There is nothing wrong with this, after all the best things in life are the unserious ones

Q. *I am terribly frustrated and lonely at home. I am 16 years old and we are a strange family. I don't remember when was the last time we had dinner together or went out together or had a friendly chat without quarrelling. My mother is the suspicious sort, always questioning me or others about my activities or friends. I cannot discuss her with my father who is locked in a frustrating marriage with a woman who never understood him. No one remembers my birthday and I pretend to forget their anniversaries. I try to make friends and interact with their families. But after observing such close, warm ties with their family members, I feel like killing myself. If this continues, I think I will soon go mad.*



S.H. Durgapur

A. Growing up in a dysfunctional family can be a frustrating even heart-breaking process. First of all, you get all the signals wrong and the initial lessons learnt from your immediate environment are about mistrust and not trust.

I suggest you follow a few tested tips about surviving in the midst of the chaos.

Believe in yourself always and absolutely. Believe in others even if they act contrary to your expectations. Realise that everybody has their own burden to bear. Speak your mind, do not harbour resentment, instead, tell the people who are not responding in a fair way to your fair dealing where to get off.

The lovely thing about being 16 is that you will soon grow up and be in a position to walk out of your house into your own life where you are free to do your own thing and make your own mistakes. Concentrate on your studies and a suitable career and do not get dragged into an early arranged marriage. Build up an adoptive family of friends and relatives and do not carry the baggage of your discordant and undemonstrative family with you. Life is full of surprises, and you may well find that you begin to love and understand them in time.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

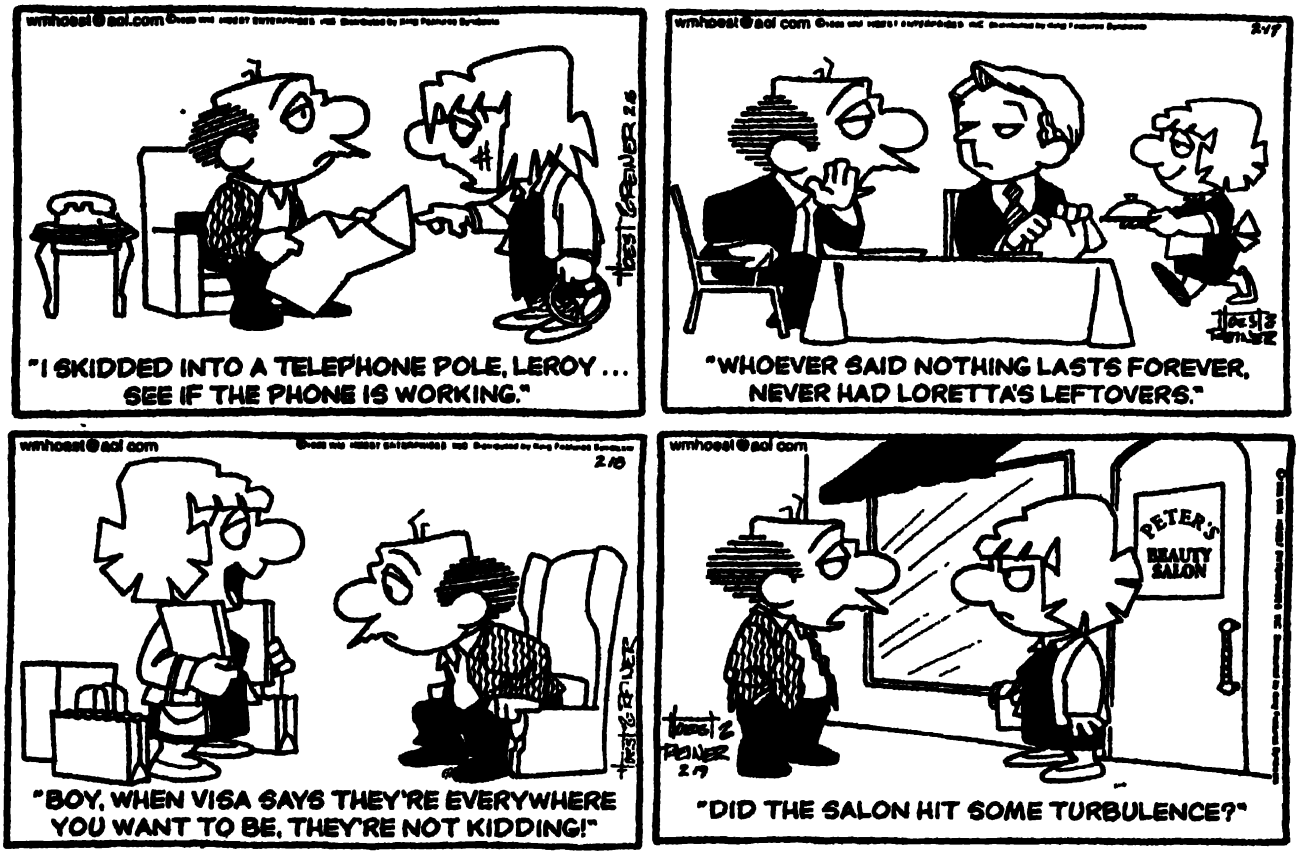
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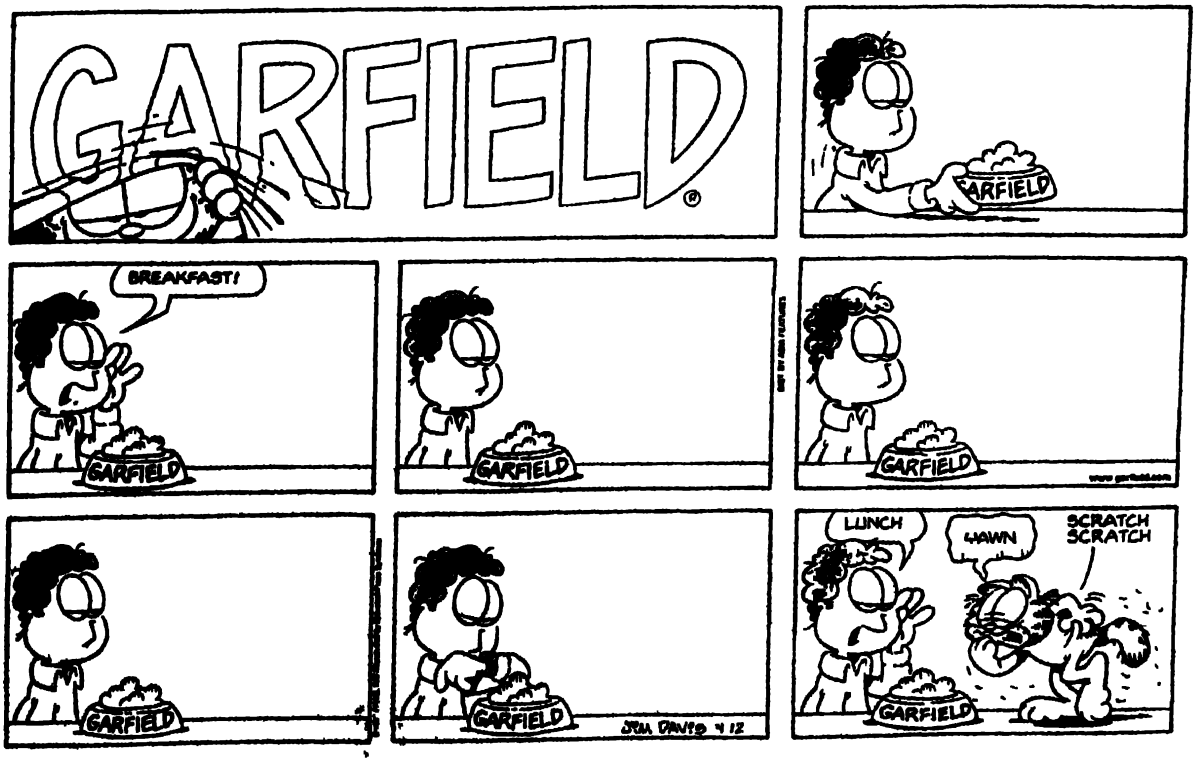
CALVIN AND HOBBES WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



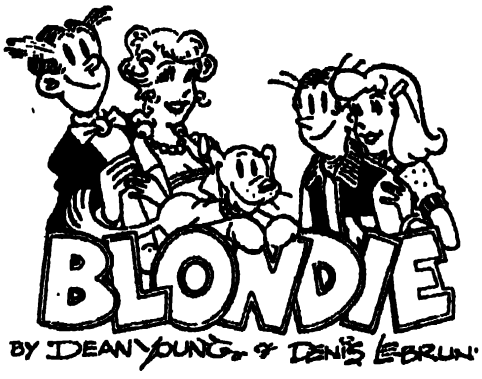
GARFIELD WATTERSON



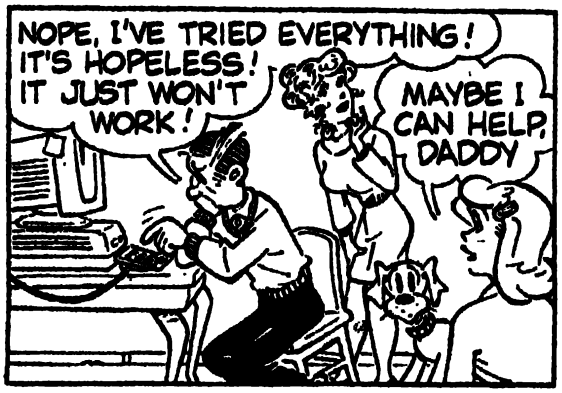
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE

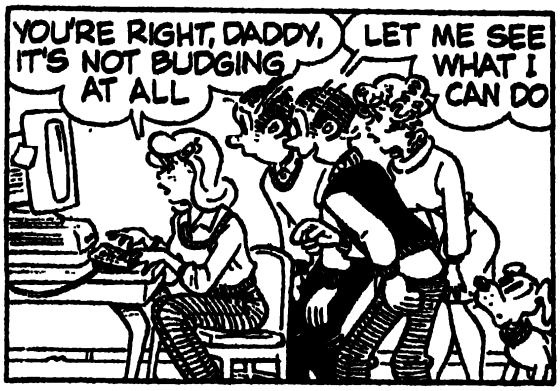


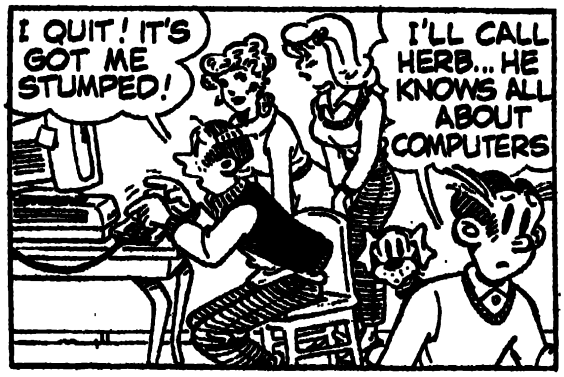
BLONDIE ※ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE



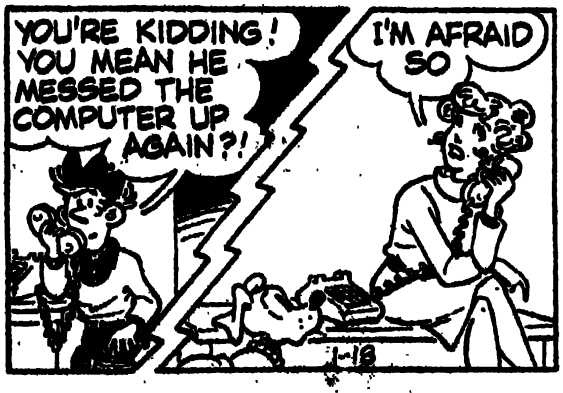














BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I have pimples on my shoulder and back. For this reason, I cannot wear sleeveless tops or low back necklines. Please advise as to what should I do?*
Mamta Sahay, Orissa

A Check to see whether you have dandruff first. If you do, it is important to treat the dandruff. Keep the shoulder and back area clean at all times and wipe with either cold rose water or an astringent that is neem -based. You can, in fact, bathe with a neem based soap. Apply the following pack on the affected areas—fuller's earth, neem juice, lemon juice and sandalwood powder. Leave on till dry and then wash off with cold water. Pat dry. You can also apply lacto calamine daily. This will help to soothe the pimples and can also heal them. Drink atleast 10 glasses of water daily and avoid heavy, fried food, gravies, sweets and colas. Include lots of fresh friuts and green leafy vegetables in your diet. Remember to make this a habit forever. Beautiful skin is something that one has to work towards. You cannot afford to take it for granted.



Q *My elbows are dark and painful. I use a sponge on them daily but to no avail. Please advise. I am 12 years old and find it especially painful when I am writing.*
Vaishali Chanda, Agartala.

A Sometimes, a sponge is not sufficient and has to be substituted with other ingredients. In vest in a natural loofah or jute mittens. Massage the area with warm coconut oil and apply the following face pack—oatmeal, milk, gramflour,honey and grated potato. Leave on for about 20 minutes and then scrub off again with *loofah* or mitten. If you do this thrice a week for a month, you will have neither painful elbows nor dark ones. Infact, they are bound to be silky smooth and petal soft.

For dark and painful elbows:

■ Use natural *loofah* and massage with warm coconut oil

Q *I am a 19-year-old man with an acute problem of constipation. I do not eat fish or meat. please suggest a daily balanced diet which will help me get rid of the prob lem.*
Ranjan Dubey, Orissa.

A Constipation can occur due to various reasons such as late eating, wrong eating habits, lack of exercise,etc. Try and have a glass of warm lemon juice first thing in the morning. Include atleast two-three pieces of fruit in your daily diet and these should be consumed before you have your main meals. Try to put more emphasis o green vegetables. Papaya, melon, bananas an chikoos are very good for curing constipation. It would also be very helpful to have a *katori* of raw spinach every time you have your major meals. Make a salad which should include the juice of one lemon and some salt and pepper. Try to take either boiled spinach or spinach soup. This will help your bowel movement. Avoid late eating and try to finish your dinner by 9 p.m. You are still quite youn and you could also try to do some vigorous exercises.



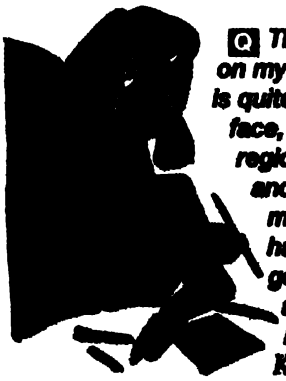


Q *I am a 27-year-old working woman. I suffer a great deal from corns. I only seem to get them during summers and they are quite painful. Please help me.*
Sucharita Sinha, Calcutta.

A Corn problems can be quite troublesome as well as painful. I would advise you to never cut the corns but to always get them treated by a chiropodist. Massage the corn area with Vitamin E oil daily at night. Soak several ivy leaves in apple cider and press to cover. Sprinkle with sea salt. Leave overnight. Take out a leaf and apply to the corn and bind it near that place. The ivy leaves will gradually soften the corn. Regular pedicure will also benefit you. Corn caps are also of great help. You may avail of their service

Q *I have a very dry skin and a lot of whiteheads on my face. These cause tiny swellings and leave spots on my face. Can you suggest a herbal remedy to remove them?*
Shivani Batra, Calcutta

A You need to start a daily cleansing programme for your problem. Take some powdered green peas. Add some milk to it as well as the juice of a lemon. Apply this to the areas that are affected by whiteheads. Once it is dry, dab with lemon juice or milk and scrub off in a circular motion, very slowly but firmly. If you do this regularly for a period of two weeks, you will find a difference in your skin. In fact, it would be a good idea to visit a professional the first time to get rid of the whiteheads so that you can start your regular skin care programme with a clean face which will also prevent the occurence of skin eruptions.



Q *The growth of hair on my daughter's body is quite abnormal. Her face, especially, the region under her nose and around the mouth have a lot of hair. Can you suggest an effective and safe way fo hair removal?*
Kamala Jain, Howrah.

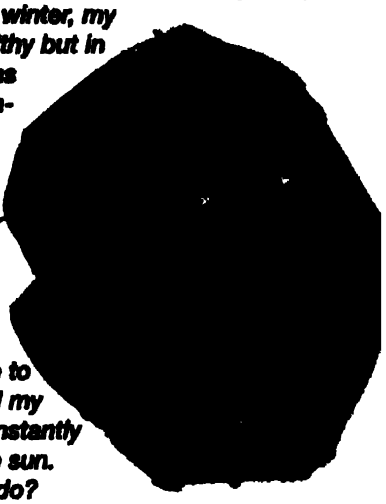
A You have not mentioned how old your daughter is and therefore, it would be very difficult for me to suggest a remedy. Most women have hair on their upper lip and chin. If your daughter is old enough, then I would suggest that you get the area threaded which is both safe and effective. Many women also resort to waxing which is also basically permissible but is more painful than threading. I have also known of people's skin sagging as a result of waxing. My first advise would be, thus to thread the area. If, however, your daughter is far too young, it is best to let nature take its own course at the moment and act later.

To treat abnormal growth of body hair:

■

A safe and effective method would be waxing

Q *My skin is rough. The most surprising thing is that in winter, my skin looks healthy but in summer, it turns rough. My complexion also turns very dark. I have used a number of sunscreen lotions available in the market, but to no avail. I have to travel a lot and my skin is thus constantly exposed to the sun. What should I do?*
Priya Sen, Calcutta.

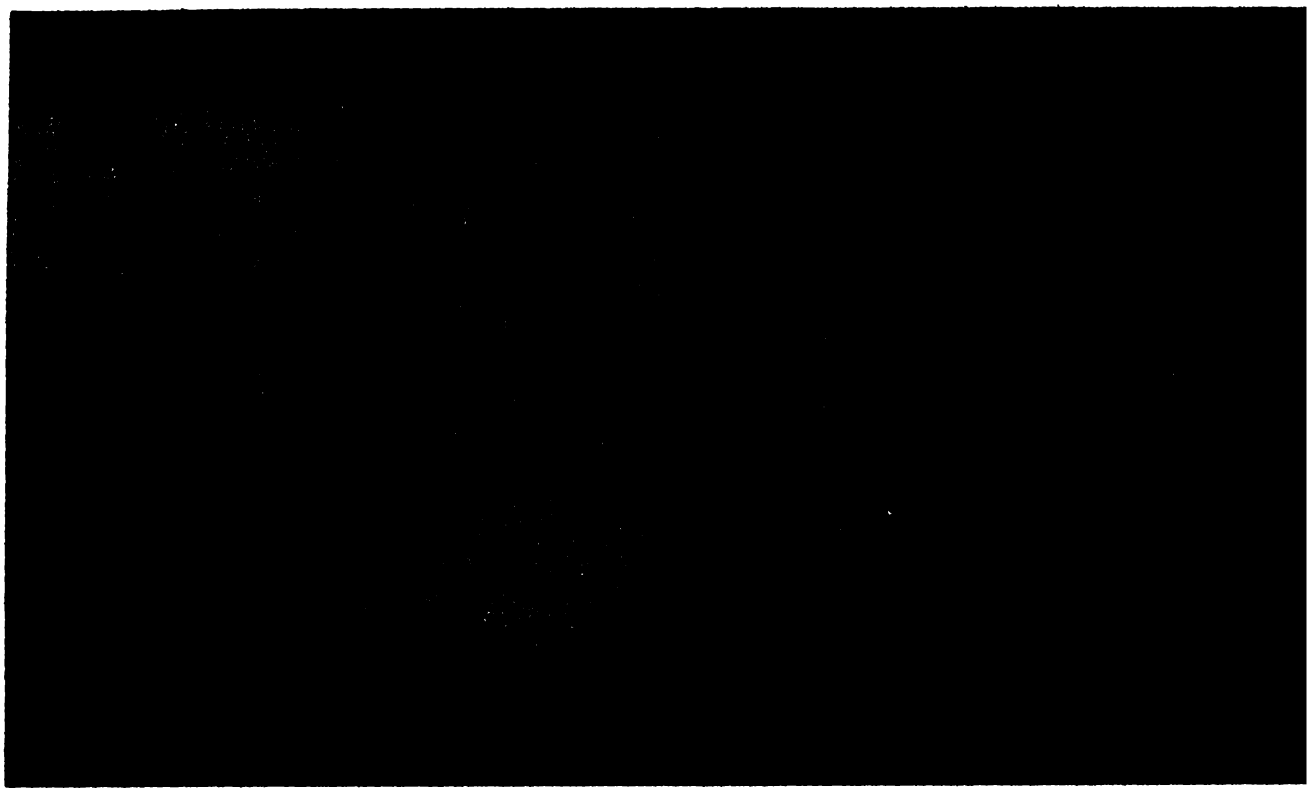


A It is obvious that the strong UV rays of the sun are drying your skin during summer, giving it a dark look. Cracked dry skin can occur both in winter as well as summer and you must realise that the sun can have an extremely drying effect on your skin, if not properly moisturised. I would suggest that you make a daily skin care routine of moisturising your face with a good nourishing cream.
There are many good brands of sun-screen lotions available in the market and these will also safeguard your skin from the scorching summer sun.
You can also rub half a squeezed lemon dipped in olive oil and massage it all over your face and neck for about half an hour and then wash off. Another remedy would be to make a pack of pure honey and apply all over your face and neck before washing off with some fresh cream that has been mixed with 1 tsp of chokker. Try to avoid the sun as much as possible and always use an umbrella.

Q *Is there any age limit for electrolysis? Can it be done in case of a 22-year-old? Is this bad for the skin?*
Arpita Choudhuri, Calcutta.

A Electrolysis can be done at any age preferably after sixteen. if one is going in for electrolysis,one must be extremely careful about the needle that is being used as this could lead to infection. Electrolysis is safe enough, but it can leave scars and is quite painful. I personally prefer threading to either waxing or electrolysis.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



Cry Freedom · Most Tibetans living in different parts of India are second generation refugees

FOCUS

The Nowhere People

India may have given refuge to Tibetan, Afghan and African asylum seekers; but is it their promised land? **Ghazala Wahab** finds out

At age 38, when most housewives look forward to a smooth drive through life with fewer speedbreakers, Jameela found herself against a dead end. The choice she had was simple change the course of her life or perish.

So Jameela packed her bags and crossed the international border to Pakistan in 1994 with her five children. The fact that she was in the advanced stage of pregnancy was of no consequence. Left behind in Afghanistan were memories, a husband, and their house.

Jameela's husband was a police officer in General Najibullah's government When the government fell he was arrested by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's forces. That did not immediately threaten the family. But when the Taliban swept through southern and central Afghanistan nothing but preserving life mattered.

Jameela stayed in Pakistan till the delivery of her sixth child and then came to India. "I did not want to stay in Pakistan. The Pakistani government is like the Taliban," says Jameela referring to the Taliban's injunctions against women.

India, which was like a promised land, did not betray her trust, though it was like starting life all over again. And that meant living with the fact that she was head of a family comprising only children. It also meant learning a new language plus some kind of professional skill so she could feed herself and her children. It also meant praying for the safety of her husband and not believing any news emanating from Afghanistan regarding him.

"Some people say that he was killed immediately after being arrested. Some say he was killed later. Recently somebody told me that they have seen him in Pakistan," says Jameela, in a voice which quivers just a little. But there are no tears in her eyes. "I don't want to believe any of this. I just hope that he is well wherever he is."

In India, she got herself registered as a refugee with the United Nations Humanitarian Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and started learning English at their centre run in association with the YMCA. After learning the language she did a course in beauty culture and now runs her own parlour in the Okhla area of New Delhi.

Is she happy? Jameela smiles at



Tibetan children : Well integrated in Indian society and (inset) Burmese refugees: conscious of their identity

the question before answering softly, "We are still hopeful. Maybe, one day we will be able to return to Afghanistan."

That's all that matters for most refugees living in India — or, for that matter, in any other part of the world. Most of them live with hope and also in a state of suspension of belief. A lot of displaced people come from middle and upper middle class families. The first task before them in any host country is adjusting to the fact that henceforth they will no longer be addressed in the singular but always in the collective. They will be known by the certificates they carry and the group they belong to.

Interestingly, men suffer more psychological trauma than women. In most cases of displaced families it is the women who have taken charge. Most men, who worked as lawyers, army officers and engineers in their country, suddenly find themselves at a loss. UNHCR, in association with YMCA, runs a distress cell also which provide psychological counselling to displaced people.

Resettlement of refugees in a third country is one of the main concerns of UNHCR as repatriation is not always possible. UNHCR does not try to resettle refugees in the host country as its role ends at providing them with legal protection. A lot of Afghan refugees have migrated to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries while a few have gone to western countries like Canada.

Most families are disjointed ones, having lost a couple of members either to war or in the process of escaping to safety. So in the absence of complete families, refugees seek comfort and support from each other and this sense of community is very evident.

Says Abdul Qadir, a marine engineer from Somalia who came to India 10 years ago, "I can't tell my people in Delhi if they visit my house that we have little food so we can't share it with you. I know they are as badly off as we are and here, in a foreign country, only we can help each other."

Qadir has been trying to get a job ever since he arrived in India, but hasn't succeeded yet. "I just want a job, I don't care if I have to start at the bottom. Give me anything, just send me to the sea," he says.

But for refugees, getting a job in India is not possible as law does not allow that. Neither can they run a business. In most cases, even highly-trained professionals end up working as wage labourers or do odd jobs in the unorganised sector.

But then it depends on how well one adjusts to the host country. Henry Val Thang was a lecturer in Burma before he came to India in 1992. He worked for about six months in a primary school in Gurgaon but could not adjust to the change. "People use to mistake me for a Nepali," he says. "It was difficult getting used to being called a Nepali."

India is not a signatory to the Refugee Convention, which has been ratified by 134 countries. It considers

Sikhs or Afghans?

Well, actually, they're both Sikh and Afghan

Sewa Singh is a pious Sardar. His wife is a pious Sardarni, and so are his children. They speak the language of their Gurus, Gurumukhi. But they speak another language too: Pushtoo, the language most people in Afghanistan speak. And like most Afghans they came to India when the Taliban swept through their *watan* in 1993.

Sewa Singh is careful to emphasise the fact that he has 'come' to India and not 'returned' as this correspondent carelessly assumed. And with good reason. This is not the same country his forefathers left for Afghanistan. He does not remember which part of the sub-continent they originated from.

They have been living in Kabul for at least three generations, that is, as far as Sewa Singh's failing memory goes. Sewa Singh used to work in a cloth shop in Kabul. Most of the Sikhs in Afghanistan were involved in the cloth or money-lending business. According to Sewa Singh, many of them were doing very well. Of all the refugees who came from Afghanistan almost 40 per cent are Sikhs or Hindus, who call themselves Afghans.

Sewa Singh is too old to do anything now. His wife, Kirpal, has learnt Hindi at the YMCA centre and is currently doing a stitching course. In broken Hindi she says that she plans to stitch clothes on commercial basis. Will they return to Afghanistan if the war gets over? Sewa Singh nods in affirmation. His wife smiles and says coyly, "No, we like it here. Delhi is a nice place."

Many refugees who come from Afghanistan are Sikhs or Hindus



Afghan refugees influenced by Indian culture and lifestyle

the refugee problem as a bilateral one and tries to resolve it in that context. That's why India does not have any domestic laws pertaining to refugees.

India has a refugee population of around 2,60,000 comprising 98,000 Tibetans, 65,000 Sri Lankans, 37,847 Chakmas from Bangladesh, 18,244 Afghans, 467 Burmese, 234 Somalis, 205 Iranians, 91 Sudanese and 86 people from various other nationalities.

Of all the various nationalities, the government of India takes responsibility for Tibetan, Sri Lankan and Chakma refugees and the UNHCR has no role to play. A lot of Sri Lankans and Chakmas have been repatriated but there is still a large number living in various parts of India. Tibetans were initially called guests of the country but gradually have become refugees despite the fact that no monetary support is given to them by the government. They do, however, get political support, as also asylum.

Most of the Tibetans came to India during the 1960s and since then about 1000 Tibetans cross over the Indian border via Nepal every year. Despite the hospitable nature of the country, India, of late, has not taken very kindly to the influx of illegal migrants from Tibet. Most of the Tibetans living in different parts of India now are second generation refugees who were born in India and speak the native language apart from their own.

For most Tibetans, India is not merely the host country; it is actually their only country. According to Dorje Shugden, a monk, most of the present generation is well-settled here. "You see, the sense of struggle diminishes when you are comfortable in life," he says. "Freedom is the ideal goal but youngsters now have more immediate goals, that is, making life as comfortable as possible."

And this is something which is evident when one visits their living quarters. Majnu Ka Tila, in Delhi, is like a small township. The front is marred by shanty houses without even proper roofs. But rising behind them are multi-storeyed concrete houses, many with the outside finish of Dholpur stone. Every second house doubles as a bar-cum-restaurant. Even the shanty houses brew and sell Chhang, a cheap Tibetan liquor.

Commenting on the general prosperity of the community one UNHCR official said in a politically-correct tone that they are well-integrated in the Indian society. The Indian influence is evident, not just among the Tibetans but also among the Afghans. Though they stick to their language and eating habits Indian culture has made inroads as far as dress and lifestyle are concerned.

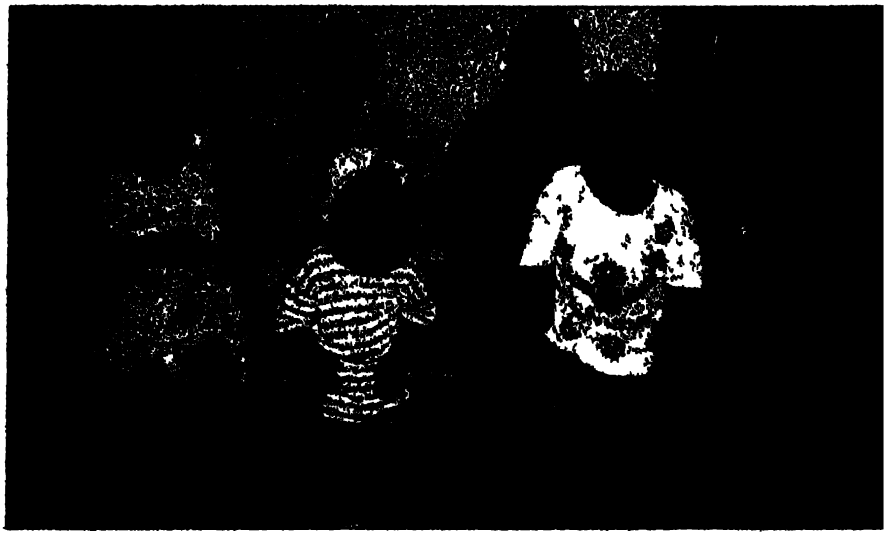
But Africans and Burmese hold on to their identity even in their way of dressing. Though living in India for almost a decade, Somali women still wear their costumes with their typical headwear. But unlike most Afghans and Tibetans, they don't learn the English language after coming to India, they know it already. Something to do with their colonial past.

One thing that one hears constantly from refugees after meeting a couple of them is gratitude for the host country. Tibetans, Afghans, Burmese can't stop praising India for its hospitality and kindness. But for the Somalis and the Sudanese, the time for gratitude is long past. Instead, bitterness has crept in. That may be because for people of African origin it is difficult to integrate in India.

"Indians are unkind people," says Mahmoor Sheikh Hasan making no attempt to hide her anger. "I used to work as a manager in a trading company in Somalia and here I am reduced to beggary. Forget jobs, nobody is willing to help me either."

Mahmoor came to India in 1990 with four of her eight children as she could not get a visa for any other country. She hasn't seen her husband or her other children since then. "I don't even know whether he is alive or not," she says as angry tears well up in her eyes. She gets a monthly Subsistence Allowance (SA) of Rs 3,500 from UNHCR. She plans to move to Pune as the cost of living is comparatively low there and she can manage better.

Similar bitterness is evident in Paul Pot who came from Sudan in 1990 as a student. By 1994 he applied for and got refugee status. Separated from his parents since 1983 when the war broke out in southern Sudan which has a Christian majority, Paul Pot is resigned to his fate. His cynicism is so deep-rooted that he doesn't show any emotion, pleasure or anger. He has completed BA (Pass) course from Delhi University and does not hope to get a job.



Somalian refugees: Bitter lot

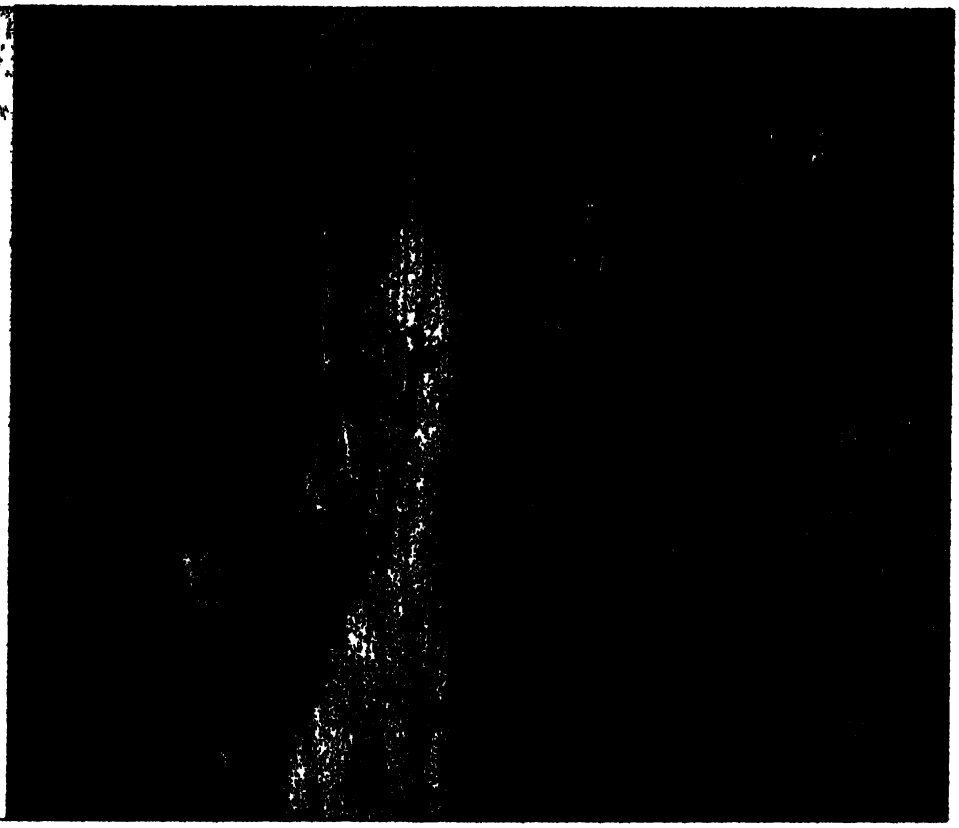
"I used to try to get a job but now I have given up. When there are no jobs for Indians who will give a job to an African," he says with a shrug. "Wherever I go I hear people call me '*kaalu*,' (black) or '*habshi*,' (negro), so how can I expect them to give me work," he laughs.

The bitterness is natural, but a problem like this has no simple solution. UNHCR has been wrangling to find a long-term solution to the predicament of these people but with no results. The host country, caught in its own problems can only help to a certain extent. Even if the refugees forget their past glory and reconcile to their fate what happens to their children who will grow up to be the Nowhere Generation. People nobody wants. Citizens with no country. ■

Photographs by Kalyan Chakravarty

My Personal Style

Photographer Raghu Rai loves spending a lot of time tending to his garden



Garden of Eden



POTS OF PLEASURE :

I like the earth colours which capture the hues of nature But sometimes, I like a dash of bright colour here and there My house is full of pots that I have collected over the years—brass, copper, terracotta, big pots, small pots in various shapes and colours. These provide a perfect blend of sobriety and vibrancy My house is thus cluttered with pots.

I like the stylish look of the old. I have picked up a lot of old furniture over the period of time and my house has that old world feel to it. I prefer the antique Indian furniture, which have both, the classic, regal look and the *nakhras*.

For upholstery, I like the earth colours—pastels and at times subdued ones, capturing the hues of nature. But sometimes, I like a dash of bright colour here and there. My house is full of pots that I have collected over the years— brass, copper, terracotta, big pots, small pots, in various shapes and colours. These provide a perfect blend of sobriety and vibrancy. My house is thus cluttered with pots.

But for my bedroom, I prefer the simple, clean, uncluttered look. Not too many things around so that at night the room and the bed are clean. The walls are not too full with various stuff. So one doesn't have to communicate with undesirable forces around, which one might have to do if the walls are too cluttered. Basically, my house has to be open, airy and full of plants. I am a nature lover.

I have a small garden too where I spend a lot of time. Unfortunately, these days, it wears a neglected look as I spend most of my time at my farmhouse which is about 25 kms from my house in Khan Market.

But despite that, it is a very interesting garden. I don't like the clean, manicured lawns with disciplined flowerbeds. I believe in the wild, magical jungle look of the forests of India where I have spent so much of my time. So my garden is quite beautiful. I usually have seasonal flowers but I don't interfere with them too much. You know last year, at my farm I had grown a lot of seasonal flowers. Gradually, they withered away. But with the breeze, the seeds got all over the lawn.

So next year, they bloomed again all over the garden. I did not pluck them out. I just left them wherever they came about. My friends were amazed. They asked me how I have managed to do this and I told them that I did not do anything. It was just nature's magic.

You know, I always say this, no matter how creative human mind is, it has its limitations. So after a point one just has to give up and let nature take its course.Because nature is unlimited, boundless and beautiful.

As told to Sunita Vivek

5, Russel Street, Calcutta - 700 071,
Phones : 226 9618 / 7034

Skipper

**Sparkle
Of
The
Sunflower**

Sunflower, Yellow, Gold,
Ochres, Primrose, Saffron, Sulphur -
A Fascinating Array of
The Yellow Family,
And Gradations Of
Many Other Colours,
Shades And Tints
In Textures
Rich And Elegant,
In Designs
That 'll Infuse
Life Into Any
Interior.



Homescapes Come Alive

A breathtaking range of furnishings.

COVER STORY

Blood Ties

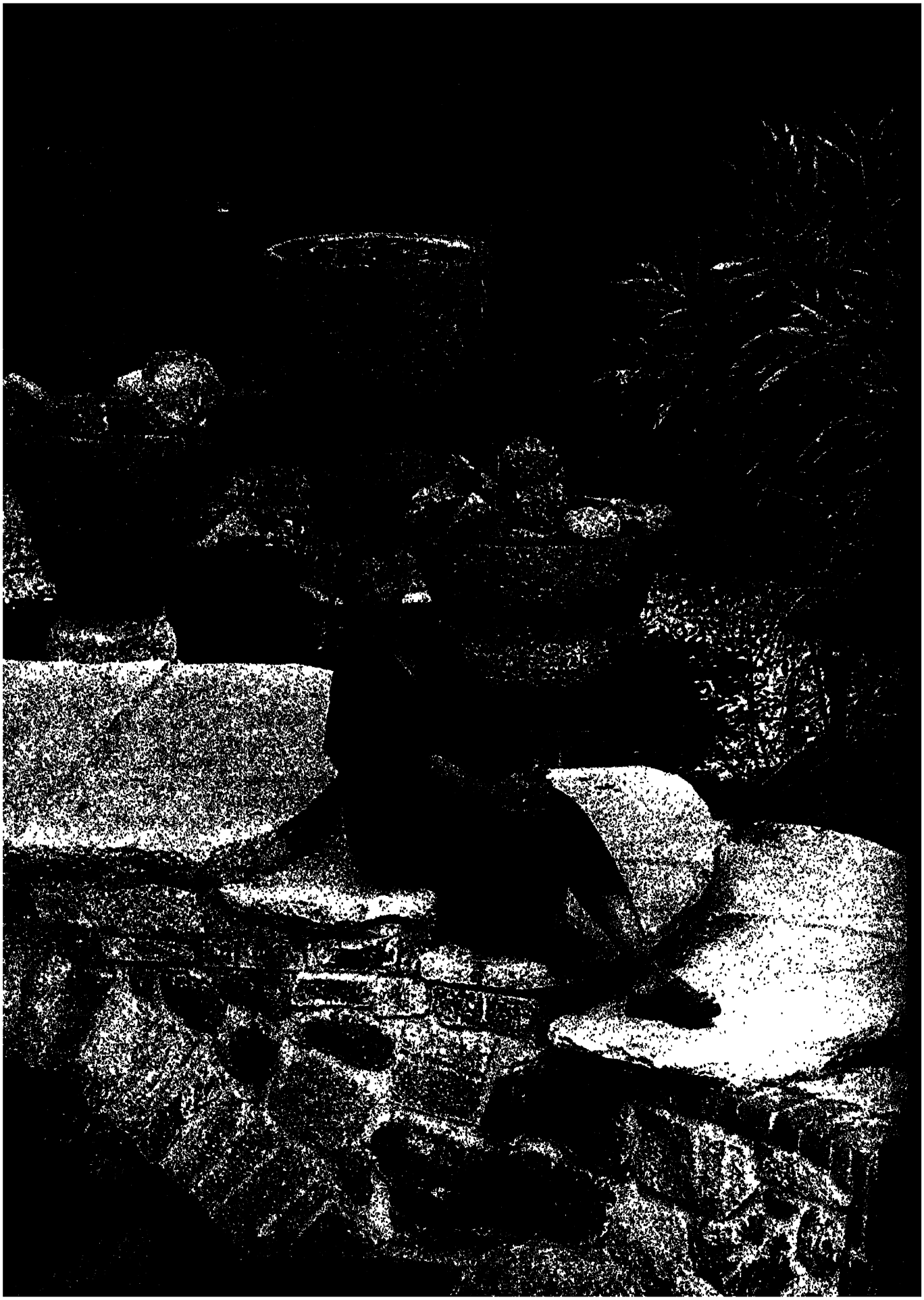




Protima Gauri talks about her life, her dance and her family. Dipti Dave meets the woman who has always lived by her own rules

Constipation! That's Odissi danseuse Protima Gauri nee Bedi's philosophy of life in a word. Mahatma Gandhi, with his fondness for enemas, may have set the country's Independence struggle into motion, but Protima's constipation theory is more a metaphor for life. "Imagine, one day you gorge on the world's finest cuisine. Keep it stacked in your intestines for three or four days and the same thing which gave you so

Photographs by Aravind . Teki



much pleasure would have become toxic," she says, illustrating her point like she would a *'mudra.'*

Her philosophy: whatever you take from life\earth you must return — especially the good. So when she decided to set up Nrityagram, a dance village 35 kms from Bangalore (see box), 10 years ago, it was not fulfilling an ambition but like "an urge to shit!"

And now, when she wore her dancing bells again (on March 28), seven years since she first performed solo, Protima has responded to that same call of nature.



Protima with Aalia

At 56, a broken marriage, her weak heart (she has had two mild attacks), and her young son's suicide notwithstanding, the digestive juices are yet to dry up. She is ready to face the arc lights again only so that when Aalia, her three-and-a-half-month-old granddaughter, grows up she can tell the world she saw her "nani" dance.

But like bowel movements are wont to behave, Protima, too, has had her share of excess motion in life — literally and figuratively. First, she gave up her well-known surname, Bedi, from her famous husband Kabir Bedi. Reason: Bedi in Kannada means loose motions. "Imagine being called diarrhoea amma," she laughs. Gauri was more apt considering it is the most common name for women in Karnataka.

Now she is embroiled in yet another controversy over Nrityagram. "The media has confused everybody and I want to set all records straight," she blurts out. "Nrityagram is not up for sale." The local media had reported that Protima was interested in selling off her dance village which was set up on a 10-acre plot donated by the state government. It is not Nrityagram but Kuteeram, a resort next to the dance village, which she wants to dispose off and head for the Himalayas.

'I had to set up Kuteeram because I was tired of going around

Dancing Queen

That's the position that Protima Gauri occupies in Nrityagram

She calls it the village of women. Even the imposing sculpture by Bangalore's celebrated sculptor, John Devraj, at the entrance of Nrityagram depicts three women holding the earth, as it were.

It was originally titled 'Women hold up the sky.' "But considering that most of the sponsors were men, it was decided to have the inscription: Women hold up half the sky," says Protima Gauri nonchalantly.

Nrityagarm was set up exclusively for the preservation of India's seven classical dance styles and two martial art forms. It is based on the *guru-shishya parampara* where the student lives and learns with the teacher, participating in the day-to-day running of the *ashram* from cleaning to cooking.

The inner courtyard at Nrityagram : Preserving India's classical dance forms



Which is why the eight students, most of the time clad in comfortable T-shirts and bright salwars, are seen cooking wholesome meals or cleaning the refrigerators in the kitchen when they are not doing *'abhyas.'*

"These girls run the place as if it were their own," says Protima with maternal pride. For a mother who has nurtured the place from its inception, Protima, too, has her favourite children from among the pupils. Surupa Sen and Bijayani Satlipathy, she says, are her most promising students.

The dance village was set up in 1988 when the then chief minister, Ramakrishna Hegde, leased out 10 acres of land for the project. Revenues, [illegible]

"I had to set up Kuteeram because I was tired of going around with a begging bowl to the same people all the time," she confesses. Nrityagram — incurring Rs 2 crore as its yearly expenditure — runs on charity and corporate sponsorships and setting up a resort was a means of self help. "Whatever money we made from Kuteeram went towards Nrityagarm and its upkeep," she adds.

A meal for two at Kuteeram can cost nearly Rs 1,000 while a standard room is



Protima with two of her favourite Odissi students — Surupa Sen (seated) and Bijayani Sathpathy

with a begging bowl to the people all the time,' says Protima

foundation and others funded the construction of various *gurukuls* like Odissi, Mohiniattam and Kathak, and a yoga centre. The Centre supports Nrityagram by sanctioning small grants for teachers' salaries, construction and student scholarships.

The dance village offers free lodging, boarding and training to its students for six to seven years in which time they are trained to become professional dancers and teachers for the next generation.

Besides taking care of the place, the students have a gruelling practice schedule of almost eight hours a day. Leading teachers and performing artistes like Kalanidhi Narayanan and Guru Trinath Maharana conduct regular workshops. The students are also familiarised with Indian literature, mythology, poetry, Sanskrit, music, study of aesthetics, history of dance philosophy, spiritual thought and theory.

Nrityagram's most awaited event — the spring festival or Vasantahabba is held in the first weekend of February every year attracting an audience of nearly 30,000 people per night.

The village also attracts people — rural and the elite — for its traditional architectural style. Featured on the covers of reputed architectural journals in India, France, Italy and the US, Nrityagram was designed by Gerard da Cunha, who received the award for best rural architecture in 1991.

Locally available material like granite, stone, mud and thatch have been used extensively. And each gurukul has been designed according to the traditional style of the state from which the dance originated.

priced at Rs 4,000, inclusive of food and taxes, per day This nine-acre landscaped garden with chic cottages designed by architect Gerard da Cunha, is as well-known for its nouvelle cuisine as it is for its rustic ambience

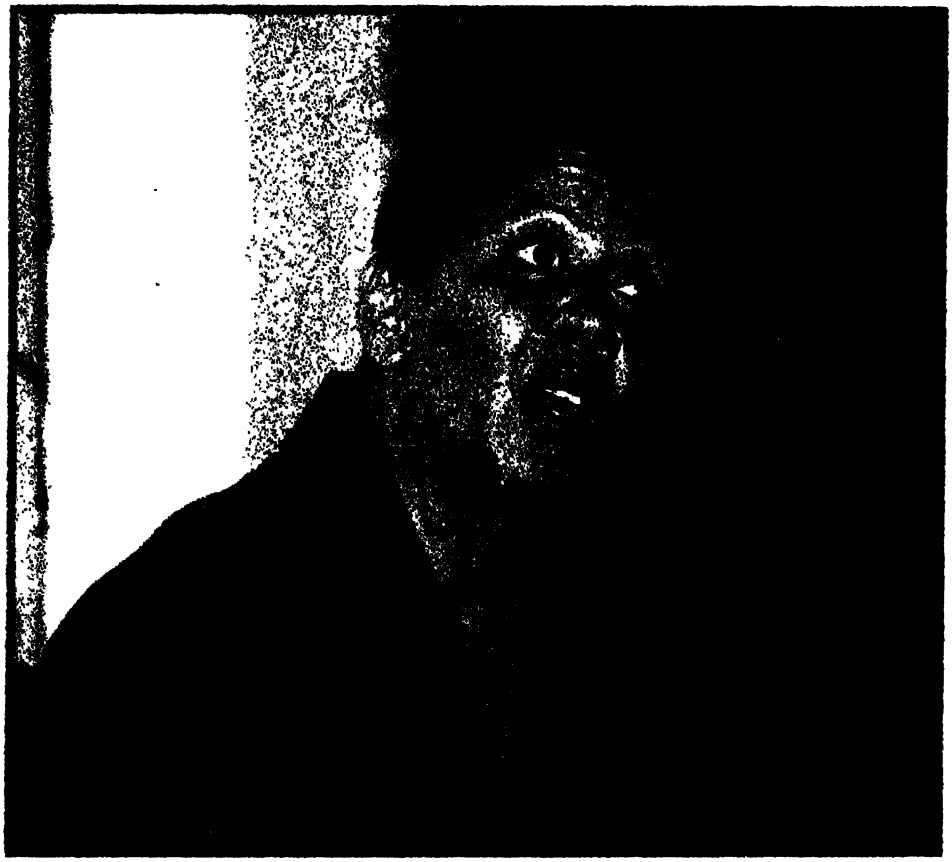
But running a resort, as her good friend, Arundhati Nag (the late Shankar Nag's wife), must have told her is not an easy job "I just do not have the managerial skills and moreover I do not want to burden myself with its day-to-day administration," Protima responds, throwing up her hands helplessly

But helpless she is not. A number of business houses and hotel chains have shown interest in taking over Kuteeram. In fact, an MOU (memorandum of understanding) had also been signed with the Taj Group of Hotels, which later fizzled out due to a



change of guard at the Taj, though the offer is still open. The Mahindras, Orange County, and a number of coffee estate owners have evinced interest in the project and from the way things look the deal could come through any time.

That should be soon enough, considering that Protima has made up her mind to head for the Himalayas in a month's time. Like the four seasons she experienced and enjoyed while setting up Nrityagram out in the countryside, the "seasons of my heart," as she calls it, are as distinct.



It's spring time now. She has finished shedding her autumn load — Nrityagram is being 'ably' managed by Lynne Fernandez — her daughter is happily settled with her baby, and Protima's head remains shaved.

"I can feel there's something exciting waiting for me up there," she exclaims, her face throwing up interesting expressions. "It's like I tell myself, I need to wear sunglasses when I think about my future. It's dazzling."

'I miss his physical form, otherwise he is always with me,' Protim



Protima with Lynne Fernandez, managing trustee, Nrityagram

She still occupies her favourite cottage in Nrityagram, which is strewn with old and new photographs and her dance jewellery, along with her Swiss hounds Maithili and Doljo.

But the last one year has been fraught with misfortune. She suffered a heart attack in May and while she was still recuperating ex-husband Kabir Bedi called from America to break the news that their 25-year-old son Siddharth had committed suicide.

"I miss his physical form otherwise he is always with me," she says about her son. "My loss is knowing I will not hold him anymore."

When Siddharth was born, Protima claims she was told by Buddhist monks that he was a



In happier times : Protima with husband Kabir Bedi and daughter Pooja

Protima today has many to call her friends and she ended up marrying one of the "handsomest men" (her words) in the country. Her aunts would point out her "ugliness" to her beautiful Bengali mother and 12-year-old Protima would then lock herself up in the bathroom with the likes of Tolstoy, Ayn Rand and Dostoevsky.

It was around then that she ran away from home — "to grow" — and met Kabir. If her marriage had been a successful one, she would never have worn the dancing bells. "In a way I am glad that my marriage broke," she says, matter-of-factly. She grew again.

Pooja Ebrahim, who plans to bring out a book on how to get back into shape after pregnancy on her daughter's first birthday in November this year, says of her own

says about her son. 'My loss is I will not hold him anymore'



reincarnation of a celebrated lama. "Who knows maybe he is destined to be a monk and thus terminated this life," she reasons. Incidentally, Protima's mother-in-law was a Buddhist.

After Siddharth's death she went to all those places where she and her son had been together to relive happy memories. "He wrote in his last letter he was going happy, and I believe him," she confesses. "If I hadn't lost him I would have been a slave to his disease (schizophrenia)," she reveals. "I choose to remember him with joy." And that has probably given her the strength to move on.

For a girl, who grew up lonely among three sisters and two brothers believing no one would marry her,



Satish Ghosh

mother, "She gave me choices in life and the eye to pick up the right one." Pooja had flown down to Bangalore with Aalia, her daughter, for her mother's dance performance where Aalia was the chief guest.

Looking as radiant and in-shape as ever despite the recent birth of her baby, Pooja reminisces how Protima would kidnap her and brother Siddharth from school for a picnic or camping at Powai. "I remember once I had only 12 days attendance out of 90 days," she laughs. "It's not as if we enjoyed it because we would invariably get punished in school. The other thing which we would regret was her lecture session on life," admits Pooja laughing. Thus, while Protima was holding forth yet again on life and its ways, Pooja had made herself scarce. Old habits die hard. The opposite spectrum of Protima's philosophy are perhaps her two projects — Kuteeram and Nrityagram. While she has Nrityagram out of her system, for Kuteeram, maybe an enema would just do the trick. ■

For God's Sake

Is religion just the opium of the masses? Or does it provide an anchor in this ever-changing world? **Ghazala Wahab** finds out

They are old rivals. The body and the soul. What is good for the body is invariably bad for the soul. And what is necessary for the soul inconveniences the body.

So what do ordinary people trapped in the material world do? Look after the body temple hoping that it will take care of the soul, all the while praying that God will understand. But that is not enough. Insecure mortals don't trust God to understand. They need to occasionally appease the Almighty, resulting in the burst of fervent religious activities once a month or once a year depending upon the level of insecurity.





Kalyan Chakravorty

Keep the faith: Feisal Alkazi and (right) Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Then there is another type. The enlightened ones, who treat religion as means of self-discovery and not an end in itself. Having rejected dogmatic and ritualistic religion, they evolve a faith of their own which, to a great extent, is an amalgam of religion, blind faith, superstition, spiritualism, astrology and so on.

Like danseuse Shovana Narayan, for instance, who calls herself religious despite not adhering to rituals. "I believe in the fact that I am a very ordinary person and that there is a power," she says. "I follow the middle path. For me religion means that one has to be a good human being, should not harm others, be sincere and so on. Though I pray every day at home, I am an irregular temple-goer."

For her, the early morning *riyaz* is like meditation— "my way of connecting with God," she says. Though she went through this phase of following rituals, like fasting once a week and visiting the Nizamuddin Auliya Dargah on Thursdays during her college days, she has grown out of them now. "I think everyone goes through these phases of doing different things at different stages of their life," she explains.

However Madhvi Parekh, an artist, feels that even rituals are important to the extent that they become a source of relaxation.But she points out that because of the contemporary lifestyle one doesn't really have time to follow everything diligently. "After all," she says, "even *dharma* teaches *karma* first."

Ultimately, it is all a matter of belief, says Parekh. If you want to believe in something, you do so. As all religions are similar, the destination is the same, only the paths are different.

Then there are people who don't have such a simplistic attitude to religion. They consider religion to be too personal an experience to accept it as an inheritance. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, theologian, author and president of the Islamic Centre says, "My education at the *madrassa* (religious school) turned me into an atheist. I refused to accept Islam as a faith just because I was born in a particular family. *Madrassa* taught a very traditional Islam without reason and logic. Most people's faith is not reason-based, it is just dogmatic, something they accept without questioning."

For Maulana, author of more than 200 books, it was not possible to accept something as the truth which was rejected by his intellect. So he taught himself at home, studying the *Quran*, the *Hadith*, Western philosophy and so on. "After rejecting the dogmatic version of Islam, I discovered Islam which was based on reason. I haven't denounced orthodoxy, all I have done is free it from the clutches of the *ulemas*," he says.

He has written several books on Islam and brings out a magazine *Al Risala*. At the Islamic Centre, he is trying to make Islam a living religion, which can withstand any argument.

Theatre personality Feisal Alkazi, on the other hand, finds no role for religion in his life. He calls himself an agnostic. "During my college days I went through this phase of atheism, you know, when you are into Camus and Sartre. But now we, I and my wife

Radhika, believe that there is some kind of power which we cannot define."

Though they believe in some kind of force, they don't adhere to any rituals except celebrating festivals which are more of a tradition than religion. "I grew up in Bombay and studied in a catholic school and so Christmas was always celebrated. We celebrated Diwali also, which meant lighting *diyas* and bursting crackers. After we came to Delhi we started celebrating Eid and then Holi too," says Alkazi.

Even the way Alkazi and his wife got married was an evolved one. "We could only have had a civil ceremony but then they asked ridiculous questions absolutely unrelated to marriage, so we decided to have our own ceremony alongwith the civil one. We chose a couplet from the *Upanishads* and one from the *Quran*. They both were read in the original first and then were translated. I thought the entire experience was beautiful and secular," says Alkazi.

But why should they need to fall back on the *Upanishads* and the *Quran* when religion plays no role in their lives? Alkazi uses cultural identity as a reason. For him the couplets had no religious connotations.

Cultural or religious, ritualistic or modern, public or personal, the need to believe in something has become as necessary as breathing. Even as science rules supreme over the minds of the people, religion rules over the hearts.The more people feel the fragility of their existence, the more willing they are to believe in something which has no explanation.

This alone can perhaps explain why after denouncing religion for more than 80 years, Russia swung back to it almost fanatically. Particularly when an entire generation had grown up without any kind of formal religion. People who prided themselves on being atheist throughout their youth become agnostic by their middle age and mildly religious by the time they edged towards retirement.

Fear of God or fear of death? Shovana Narayan, classical danseuse says, "Even the most ardent non-believers at some point of time realise that they are helpless mortals and that there is an unseen power. This belief in the super-natural or in some kind of force is necessary, it is some kind of a pillar for mental support."

But Alkazi dispels this argument of fear of death. "You know, the idea of rebirth makes death very natural to understand. You die and are born again." he says.

When inexplicable things happen to people, when medicine or science disillusions, or when something as innocuous as insecurity grips them, people turn to something over which they have no control. Then this unseen, unheard, unproven force makes itself dependable. Even if the desires are left unfulfilled, the very act of depending lends some kind of peace, and of course, hope.

Even though logic defies the very



Shovana Narayan: The middle path

act of praying, people still draw strength from it. Out of two contestants, one wins. Presuming that both had prayed before the contest, does it mean that God plays favourites? Then again, why do bad things happen to good people. Yet, people, good and bad both, turn to prayer in some way or the other. Even the most enlightened and evolved minds feel the need to pray.

A research conducted among terminally ill people in United States showed that out of all patients those who prayed regularly were more responsive to treatment than those who prayed only occasionally. Was God listening? Doctors felt that prayer helped in mental stimulation and made people think positively about their ailment which has a positive effect on their physical health as well.

Maulana Wahiduddin says, "Anthropology has proven that faith is interwoven in human nature. You cannot take it away." As an example he cites an instance of the Soviet air crash in Assam. He says, "When the black box was recovered and replayed they found that the last words of the Soviet pilot who probably never knew faith were, 'Peter save us.' In the hour of crisis there is this need to turn to something."

But hope is always there. Theatre personality Feisal Alkazi seconds this. "I feel when someone goes through some personal crisis they turn to something which acts as an anchor, it could be either religion, or faith healing or even superstition." He gives an example of his friend who first turned to a palmist when her son was in coma and now she doesn't even venture out without consulting astrologers and palmists. Alkazi says that he is surprised by her total *volte face*.

Maulana feels that religion also gives people a sense of identity. Giving the example of Muslims he says, "Muslims the world over are facing the identity crisis. For almost a 1000 years Muslims identified themselves as a political power. But now in the changing world scenario they live like islands, particularly in the West. So they seek identity in small groups and religion."

The same argument goes for other communities also, which explains why Indians who live outside India are more Indian and also more religious then those living here. So far, so good. The problem arises when they get trapped in the cycle of consumerism, says the Maulana.

It is when desire for the best material things clashes with the austerity of religion, that people strike a compromise. "What you call religion of convenience, in my opinion, is a refuge for people who cannot cope with their needs ," says the Maulana. And as a poet once said —they keep an account of even their prayers. ■

Say it with Flowers



Kalyan Chakravarty

You can gift them away, or use them to brighten up your home. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports on the booming floriculture business

Ever heard of Escada, Vivaldi, Sunny Prophyta, Tineke and Toplesse? Before you start puzzling over them, here is a hint. They are a joy to behold and a pleasure to possess, or so the catalogue says.

Any ideas? No. Give up? Okay, these are the names given to exotic roses that can brighten up even the dullest day.



Kalyan Chakravarty

Come Christmas, Valentine's Day, a birthday or an anniversary, there is no denying the fact that more and more people are saying it with flowers. Call it a fall-out of the yuppie's newfound status, or the post-liberalisation lifestyle boom, but flowers have become a passion. And they lend colour and fragrance to every occasion worth celebrating.

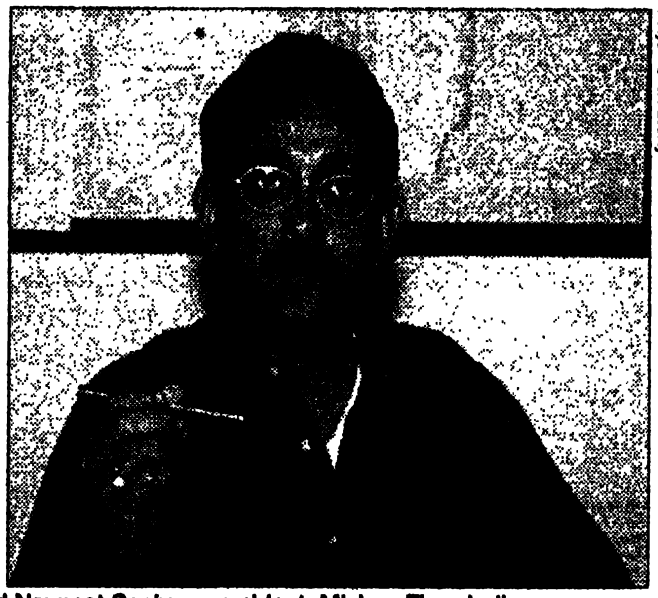
What's more, your choice is no longer restricted to the customary red roses and marigolds which you can buy cheap from the pavement. Go knocking at any florist's shop and you will be amazed at the sheer range of lilies, gerberas, anthuriums, tulips and gladiolis creating a riot of colours in their individual bunches.

Try buying a bouquet of 30 pink roses and it can cost a neat Rs 300, satin ribbons and wicker basket included. But then, good things come at a good price. Or you could have orange and pink gerberas at Rs 15 a piece and purple irises costing Rs 10 per stem, depending on how varied you want the bouquet to be. When picked at random, the flowers will be arranged and wrapped for you in cellophane, so that you can arrange them as you please in the privacy of your home.

Yearning for peach lillies, purple orchids and pink carnations? They are there for the take at prices ranging from Rs 15 a piece for carnations to orchids at Rs 35-50 per blossom. An anthurium and pink lillies basket can, in the heat of summer, command a whopping Rs 625 and still not cause eyelids to flutter. A huge bulk of the flowers in the market are booked by corporate houses and five-star hotels while the rest are lapped up by regulars who either gift them to friends or arrange them in vases in their own houses.

"There are three high-tech production centres in the country," says Rajiv Joshi, of Kuber Floritech which has 4 hectares of land at Binola, in Gurgaon, to cater to both the domestic and export market. "Delhi is the flower hub of the North, Pune regulates flower sales from the West and Bangalore is the flower capital of the South."





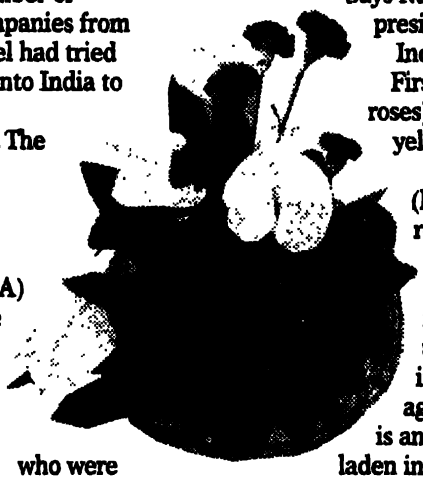
Kalyan Chakravorty

S. N. Bansal, chairman of Karishma Floritechture Limited and Navneet Saniyar, president, Mishan Flora India

If one were to look at the advantages in the floriculture trade, India has a suitable agro-climatic region in one area or the other to grow almost all kinds of floricultural products with minimum costs of climate control. As it is a tropical country, there is plenty of winter, sunshine and adequate manpower to absorb the technology and implement it at a lower cost. Says S.N. Bansal, chairman of Karishma Floritechture Limited. "In Europe, the cost of production facility including climate control is around Rs 350 per square feet whereas in India with its natural advantages, the same could cost Rs 75 per square feet."

The genealogy of the floriculture trade in India goes back to the post-Independence era when the Botany division of Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, had a small section of floriculture which had undertaken the first scientific Research and Development effort. By 1960, they had co-ordinated a floricultural scheme at Simla, Mussoorie and Ooty. In the early Nineties with a liberalising economy and introduction of the World Trade Organisation, there was a great hue and cry to improve the export of floriculture in India.

In 1993, a number of international companies from Holland and Israel had tried to make inroads into India to begin their own floriculture units. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) tried to act as the facilitator between the Indian entrepreneurs—who were mainly from other businesses and have learnt floriculture the hard way—and their more experienced foreign counterparts. APEDA provided financial assistance for product literature in the form of catalogues; inserted advertisements in the foreign media, allotted Rs 50,000 per year for test marketing and air freight charges for export to other countries, besides permitting floritech companies to import plant and machinery.



Says Navanit Samaiyar, president of Mishan Flora India which exports the First Red (long-stemmed roses), Konfetti (bi-colour yellow with orange tipped roses) and Cappuccino (light coffee-coloured roses) to France, Germany and the Netherlands, "The new government is trying to increase industrialisation of agriculture considering it is an extremely potential-laden industry. But what is most required, is infusion of adequate funds." Samaiyar feels, "There is a need to establish a model farm funded by a nodal agency to optimise production or the floriculture industry might go the aqua-culture way."

The picture, as it now stands, at least from the point of view of exports, is far from rosy. Unless there are post harvest handling units and a cool chain system (for cooling and flower storage) in Bangalore (where such a unit is still under construction), Hyderabad, Chennai and Trivandrum, the prospects look grim.

Most international airports are far away from natural production centres with suitable climates, which makes handling of these delicate flowers an almost impossible task. There is also a

The language of flowers

What they signify

Red carnation—Secret love
Yellow carnation—Hope
Striped carnation—Refusal
Peach carnation—Truce
Red chrysanthemum—Love
Forget-me-not—True love
Purple Lilac—First love
Lavender—Silence
Michaelmas daisy—Farewell
Red or pink rose—Love
Saffron rose—Forget me not
Zinnia—Thoughts of absent friends



Kalyan Chakravarty

discrepancy in the kind and quality of flowers grown in India and the demand abroad. Usually, an A-plus grade for flowers can fetch suitable prices. Making it to even the A grade is not enough, for the grower would then realise only part of his production costs; and flowers belonging to the C grade are returned as rejects

More often than not, the rapidly-expanding domestic market absorbs the non-exportable grade of cut flowers comprising roses, chrysanthemums, carnations, lilies, freesia and gerberas where prices have to be slashed down. The losers are, of course, the commercial growers

The international market—where a perfect rose with large budheads and exact number of petals could be sold for Rs 25 per stem—is not only price sensitive, but highly competitive. Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania have raced way ahead of India and are privileged not to pay import duties ever since they were classified in the under-developed nations category "India entered the market at a much later stage to pay 12.5 per cent import charges in winter and 17.5 per cent import duty in summer which have proved major deterrants in terms of profits," says Joshi.

The Netherlands which is the gateway to the European Community plays a leading role in the world of floriculture trade. It is not just a producer of 20 per cent of the total world production of cut flowers and pot plants but accounts for a large concentration of the international demand and supply via the Dutch auctions which provide an open market system for distribution to all European markets. In India, the flower market is still an unorganised sector though plans are underway to set up a wholesale market-cum-auction centre in Delhi to provide proper infrastructure and pricing.

Till then, the footpath retailer, whose investment is nil, will continue to sell his flowers with complete ignorance. "Since he does not have the storage facilities, the flowers are bought by the consumer only as gifts, and seldom for the home with the notion they would perish in a matter of days," says Joshi.

Though Delhi is yet to have its own auction house, there are two flower *mandis*—one at Baba Kharak Singh Marg and the other on Mehrauli road——where growers sell their produce to middlemen at throwaway prices. "There is a boom at all levels, except the growers'," laments Samaiyar. "Access to the consumers come to us through these middlemen who might buy 120 roses for as little as Rs 20 or three bunches of 60 carnations for Rs 10 and pay in their own sweet time." But they would sell the same flowers to customers at exorbitant rates. The Floritech companies, to combat this price differential, would have to set up their own flower shops to do away with the coterie of middlemen.

Samaiyar further adds, "We also have to have a culture where people regularly keep flowers in their vases." In Europe the usage pattern is such that they put out a fresh vase every evening and buy a fresh stock of roses every 10 days. The Dutch flowers can last a fortnight, he says. But even if the exotic flowers in India perish quicker, people have been buying more flowers than usual—to satisfy their eye for beauty or giving bouquets to loved ones and friends. And there's no better way to chill out on a hot summer's day, than to have a vase-ful of white blossoms in your drawing room. ■

Prices of flowers during March-April

Varieties	Wholesale Market (per stem)	Retail Market (per stem)
1 Roses		
First Red	Rs 1-2	Rs 5-10
Tineke	Rs 1-1.50	Rs 5-15
Vivaldi	Rs 0.75-1	Rs 5-15
Escada	Rs 0.50-1	Rs 5-10
2 Lilium		
Oriental	Rs 10-20	Rs 25-40
Asiatic	Rs 5-20	Rs 20-40
3 Gladioli	Rs 1-3	Rs 5-10
4 Gerbera	Rs 2-6	Rs 6-15
5 Orchid	Rs 10-20	Rs 15-30

Courtesy: *Floriculture Today*

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Ganesha says that concentration and commitment are the key words for the week. At work and in social relationships, you have to keep the pace and momentum going, even if there is nobody to motivate you. Thanks to Mars, you will have the requisite energy to achieve all your ambitions .

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



According to Western astrology, Mercury is in your sign, which means that you will find everything in your life moving at a break neck speed. Journey, change, move---all come together now.Given persistence and dexterity, problems can be ironed out. You will have to face social responsibilities.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Success will be your's, especially, if you can be at your charming best. Your attitude should be one of sympathy and concern. Friendships will blossom. It is best to work now in absolute privacy and secrecy as certain co-workers try to take advantage of you. Health hazards cannot be totally ruled out.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



Love and work now really come together or clash, depending on your attitude. You will have to socialise, work hard, wade through a little opposition and resistance in order to get what you want. You will have to share the cake in order to satisfy one and all. Try to inculcate patience.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



You will be flooded with alluring job offers. Those in information, media, import-export, and management do wonderfully well. It is certain that you will work yourself to the bone .Do learn to relax. Do not invest too great an amount in stocks and shares.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



The luck of the draw will be with you. It is a challenging week. You must be upbeat and put in lots of hard work. Fortunately, you will be at your creative best. Loans and funds, buying and selling will take your time and talent. Health safeguards towards the end of this week is essential. It will save you a lot of bother.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



You do get caught midsteam between tradition and modernity. Relationships could go askew/amiss, causing pain and disruption. Time to change tracks completely, is the loud and clear message of Jupiter-Saturn.That done, you should be on the high road to success. Be firm of purpose.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Ganesha says that a trip could be tied in with work, study or love. You can and will take up cudgels against injustice and dirty politics. Jobwise, there could be a few changes. A little extra care of your health is advisable. There is a great likelihood of an addition to the family. Expect some good news towards the end of this week.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



This is going to be a risk taking week. You will have to work with all your intuition. Children, grandchildren, education, new enterprise, developing a new hobby could all excite you. Expect some amount of tension in your marriage. This can be, however, sorted out through frank discussions.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Attention to details, a sense of perfection, a growing annoyance with things as they are, will grip you. You will have to move quickly and efficiently without ruffling too many feathers and that could be difficult. Sparks are going to fly. The home front may not be all that supportive of your actions.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



You will have to communicate real fast and with exceptional clarity to get your message across—and you will do it! While you do get assistance from others, you will have to do some follow-ups. There is plenty of movement this week, not in mere terms of a journey, but in terms of mental stimulation.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Those with a tainted or disrupted past can now hope to build bridges for the future. This is the stage for healing but it will take time. Do have your eyes set on the goal. Money transactions can be made more simple and creative. Group efforts and backups will be needed. The trick is to contact those who matter.

BIRTHDAYS

May 24 : Moon conjunction Mercury: Ganesha says your dexterity, mental gymnastics and manipulative abilities will do the trick for you. Health of parents will cause concern.
May 25 : New Moon: An excellently placed moon assures enthusiasm, energy, good luck in love and reasonably good health. Enjoy and share your good fortune with others.
May 26 : Moon trine Uranus: Sudden gains and gaiety mark the year for you. Outsiders and friends will pitch in. A good year for collaborations and trips.
May 27 : Moon sextile Venus-Saturn: This sextile assures money and stability, art and pragmatism, which to say the least, is rare.Your outstanding qualities almost guarantee success. Follow your intuitions.
May 28 : Venus conjunction Saturn: The year is bound to turn out well, especially after July.Opposition to plans are not ruled out. Don't count your chickens before they are hatched.
May 29 : Moon trine Jupiter: Better pay packet, happiness from children and good health are guaranteed. You will be popular, well-loved and respected.
May 30 : Moon sextile Sun-Mars: Those in defence, multinationals and medicine do exceptionally well. Matters of the heart lead to happiness. Children bring joy.

holiday in Rome take the Diamond home
wish for the stars
MAKE A WISH
festival 15 May - 14 August
P.C.CHANDRA
A Jewel of Jewels
Genesis 1084
...p in at one of our showrooms for more details. ◆ Bowbazar Phone 227 7272/21◆ Chowringhee Phone 223 8062/7974 ◆ Gariahat Phone 475 6734/6684

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

As these pages go to press one week in advance readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
[illegible]	2[illegible]1	[illegible]	IC 742	110[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	742	[illegible]	
[illegible]	1[illegible]0	2 5 [illegible]	14		1
[illegible]	0[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]714	[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	4 7	744	1[illegible]	1
AHMEDABAD					
[illegible]	[illegible]h 0	[illegible]	[illegible]208	[illegible]	[illegible]
71	1[illegible]0	3 5 7	IC [illegible]6	[illegible]	
AIZAWL					
[illegible]	[illegible]715	2 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1[illegible]	[illegible] 1 5
			[illegible]202	1[illegible]	1
			202	14	
BAGDOGRA					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 722	1[illegible]	1 [illegible]
BANGALORE					
[illegible]	06 5	daily	7[illegible]	1 [illegible]	daily
A[illegible] 1	1 40	daily	W[illegible]	[illegible]	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
[illegible]	1 [illegible]	4 6	I[illegible]365	[illegible]9[illegible]5	[illegible] 1 [illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	IC [illegible]78	[illegible]0[illegible]	1 [illegible]
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
[illegible]	1315	2 4 6	C 765	[illegible]925	[illegible] 1 6
[illegible]	[illegible]0	daily	[illegible]	[illegible]05	daily
DELHI					
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
W[illegible]	[illegible]	daily	JW 901	0[illegible]5	daily
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	AI 682	[illegible]42[illegible]	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Daily	[illegible]IC 85[illegible]	[illegible]745	[illegible] 6
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible] 6	C 401	08[illegible]	daily
J[illegible]	[illegible]0	daily	9W 9[illegible]	9[illegible]0	daily
			IC [illegible]64	[illegible]J4	daily
		1 3 5 6	D 41	[illegible]2[illegible]	3 [illegible] 7
DIBRUGARH					
[illegible]	[illegible] 0	[illegible] 7	IC 702	440	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
[illegible]21	11[illegible]0	[illegible] 5	CD 215	1455	[illegible] 5
[illegible]			CD [illegible]57	1455	1
GUWAHATI					
IC [illegible]3	[illegible]0	[illegible]	IC [illegible]4	1640	3 5 7
			IC [illegible]30	1310	daily
[illegible]	[illegible]	1 2 3 4 5 6	9W 612	125[illegible]	1 [illegible] 4 6 7
IC [illegible]	[illegible]	daily	[illegible]02	1405	6
			[illegible]12	16[illegible]5	2 4 5
			[illegible] 02	16[illegible]5	1 3
9W [illegible]		7	[illegible]714	1430	4 7
HYDERABAD					
W F11	1 40	daily	[illegible]7	0310	[illegible] 4 6
[illegible]777	1[illegible]1[illegible]		[illegible]7 [illegible]	041	1 3 5
[illegible]769	1[illegible]1[illegible]	[illegible]	W[illegible]4	[illegible]1[illegible]5	daily
[illegible]5	1[illegible]45	[illegible] 3 7	[illegible]	655	1 3 5
IMPHAL					
[illegible]D 255	530	1	[illegible] 6	1[illegible]00	1 [illegible] 5
[illegible]C [illegible]3	0900	2 6	[illegible]u [illegible]7	[illegible]11	[illegible] 6
[illegible]C 7[illegible]9	1000	4 7	[illegible] 1	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
[illegible]	[illegible]6 0		[illegible]1	[illegible]155	1 5 7
JORHAT					
[illegible]2 3	0[illegible]00	[illegible] [illegible]	[illegible]D 14	130	[illegible] 6
[illegible]4	95[illegible]	[illegible] 5	[illegible] [illegible]2	[illegible]3[illegible]5	1 5
[illegible]	11[illegible]0	1	C [illegible]57	14[illegible]	1 4
LILABARI					
[illegible]11 [illegible]1	[illegible]715	1 3	[illegible] [illegible]4 20[illegible]	6[illegible]0	1 3
LUCKNOW					
[illegible]4 2	17[illegible]	1 [illegible] [illegible]	[illegible]1	[illegible]20	1 [illegible] [illegible]
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
JW 90	054	Daily	I [illegible]75	[illegible]83[illegible]	daily
[illegible]79	[illegible]5	Daily	W [illegible]1	[illegible]1	daily
I [illegible]F	1[illegible]	[illegible] 7	C [illegible]6	[illegible]	[illegible] 5 7
A [illegible]		[illegible]	A [illegible]C	183	5
[illegible]w 21	[illegible]	1[illegible]y	IC 2[illegible]	[illegible]44	daily
C [illegible]73	94	daily	W 211	[illegible]J5	daily
A [illegible]73	0[illegible]0	2	AI 681	211[illegible]	
NAGPUR					
C [illegible]9	[illegible]15	[illegible] 7	[illegible] 770	0910	4 [illegible]
PATNA					
IC 7[illegible]	1[illegible]47	[illegible] 6	C 725	1635	2 6
CD 41[illegible]	7 5	1 [illegible] 6	D 411	2120	3 [illegible]
PORT BLAIR					
D 65	[illegible]530	2 4 C 7	CD [illegible]86	1010	[illegible] 4 6 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0550	2 4 6	CD 254	0820	2 4 6
CD 255	0950	1 3 5	CD 256	1020	1 3 5
TEZPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1 3 5

FOREIGN

AMMAN					
[illegible] 8[illegible]	1455	4	RJ 184	0545	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 47[illegible]	0325	7	KI 475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
K9 J[illegible]	[illegible]3	2 [illegible]	KB 106	0915	2 3 7
KB [illegible]	[illegible]	4			

IC 731	1015	4 7	TG 313	1235	1 3 6
IC 855	0855	2 6	IC 732	1610	4, 7
TG 314	1350	1 3 6	IC 856	1500	2 6
AI 306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
BG-698	1250	2 5	BG 697	1210	2 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG 094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1 2, 3, 5, 6	IC 748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA 143	1550	2
RA-142	2100	6	BA 143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU 537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed, Thurs. & Sun. Arr Tues Wed & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs, Fri. & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon. Tues, Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr Mon Wed., Thurs, Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13 45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed & Sun; Arr: Tues. & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Dep & Arr Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri. & Sat; Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep. Tues, Wed & Sat; Arr: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon, Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep Mon., Tue & Thurs..: Arr Mon, Thurs & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed, Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun, Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr Tues.	7-55	1182

Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	8-25	Kanchanjunga (New Jalpaiguri) Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-00	Gour Express	5-15	3154
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20 30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	6-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13 45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival. Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1391 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3509535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems



Q. ***I am a 38-year-old woman. I have two children, a daughter who is 17 and a son who is 14. After six years of marriage, my husband got involved with my sister and married her. Initially, he used to give me some money but he has stopped that altogether now. I am in a very miserable condition, financially. I cannot even appeal to the law courts owing to my monetary situation. Please advise me.***

S.A, Orissa

A. The most important thing in your case is to keep your dignity and courage. In such a situation, where you have been so cruelly betrayed by both your husband and your sister, you have to stand up for your rights and claim what is rightfully due to you. What about your respective families? What is their stand? If they are sympathetic to the way you have been treated, I suggest you try to identify some family members you can't trust, as any support is bound to be valuable to you. But, on the other hand, if you feel you cannot trust them, meet with the legal aid cell of the Orissa High Court, and also try to enlist the support of some women's organisations in your area. Be pragmatic and take your life from here, from all the pain and fear and frustration. Invest in yourself and your children. Remember that dawn breaks after the darkest hour.

Q. ***I am a 16-year-old boy who is brilliant in sports and studies. My aim is to become a fighter pilot. This is because I have dreamt of becoming an armyman since my childhood. The problem is that seeing my Pre-Boards marks (95%) my parents tell me to prepare for the Joint Entrance examinations and become an engineer. However, I am mentally prepared to join the Army. I also know that a clash of ideas is inevitable but my parents are so loving and caring that I do not wish to hurt them in any way. What should I do?***



Rajeshwar, Calcutta

A. Though my aim is not to deflect you from your chosen path, or to convince you that engineering is a better profession than the one you have chosen, I suggest you keep your mind open, as you are still young, and at an enviable stage in your life when numerous avenues are open to you. At the same time it is important not to be pressured into a career which you may not enjoy or have little interest in. Your parents are not necessarily right when they tell you to pursue a career which they feel will do you good, as you are the best judge of your happiness. Explore options available with the Army or Air Force for these careers have tremendous potential for one's total development as a human being, especially if you possess strategic talents and leadership qualities. Explain your reasons to your parents as an adult, and I am sure they will come around to your way of thinking. After all, it is not as though you are planning to become a smuggler or a terrorist!

Husband married to your sister and not taking care of you financially? Meet the legal aid cell of the Orissa High Court, and also try to enlist the support of some women's organisations in your area



Q. ***I am a newly married 26-year-old woman. My husband is very loving and considerate. But recently, I have come to know that prior to our marriage, my husband used to date a girl and is still seeing her. I have rebuked and used sarcastic barbs against him to show my disgust but it appears to be in vain as it has had no effect on him. I am in a dilemma as to how to manipulate this situation so that I do not lose my husband's affection. How do I go about this?***

Name withheld, Calcutta

A. It is quite possible that your husband has a sincere and above board relationship with this girl. Doubt and jealousy can transform the most trusting relationship into an excruciating private hell. As you have a loving and considerate relationship, I would suggest that

you try your very best to keep it that way and not foul it up by extreme behaviour. Instead of sarcastic barbs and innuendoes it would be better if you could have a heart-to-heart talk with him where you lay bear your fears and insecurities. Living in this world involves a complex multiple web of relationships and neither husbands nor wives belong to each other in the sense of being in total control. We all need a little autonomy. I really do not think your marriage is under threat or that you are about to lose your husband's affections.



Q. ***I am a student of Class IX. I wish to know that in case my parents quarrel, whose side should I take? Do I act as a pacifier and try to take stock of the situation?***

T.A. Saisudha, Budge Budge

A. The best advice I can give you is this: stay neutral. Your parents' quarrels are their business and they are better off trying to sort out their differences without outside interference. Sometimes, intervention can only aggravate the situation and make it worse. It would be better if you adopt a detached stance when it comes to your parents' arguments. After all, you must give them time to grow up!

Q. ***I am a 24-year-old man and have just passed my diploma examinations in Electrical Engineering. Previously, I had passed my B.Sc Exams. Presently, I am studying several management courses through correspondence like Rail Transport Management, Travel and Tourism Management and several other courses. Now, I also want to get admitted to the LLB degree class. My parents and other relatives have doubts about my mental fitness. All I am doing is to plan for a good future. Do you think I am wrong?***

Asim Kundu, Purulia

A. Perhaps your parents and family members feel that you are not focussing your energies in one direction, and instead deflecting them into too many channels. Do try to concentrate on visible, practical and coordinated career goals when you plan for a good future.



Whose side to take when parents quarrel? The best advice is : stay neutral. Sometimes, intervention can only aggravate the situation and make it worse. It would be better if you adopt a detached stance

Otherwise, you might just land up as a jack of all trades and master of none!

Q. ***I am a 25-year-old girl and I think I am tall, slim, fair and good looking. My problem is that no man finds me appealing, though my girlfriends seem to think that I am very beautiful. I feel even more depressed when I see that almost everyone I know is in love. What do you think I lack?***

Amrita Pandey, Calcutta

A. You are tall, slim, fair, good looking and insecure! I am sure many men find you appealing but perhaps your extreme good looks make them hesitant to expose their feelings because they are as insecure as you are! In life, love does not stem only from a perfect exterior but from human warmth and the ability to communicate. Forget about your looks and concentrate instead on talking, smiling, and actually reaching out to other people be they men or women. You will find to your surprise that it actually works!



Q. ***I am a smart, qualified and employed 35-year-old bachelor. Recently, I met a girl from a good family. She is only 20 years old and studying in B.Sc, Ist year. We have fallen in love with each other deeply and both our parents are agreeable to our marriage. However, I am in a state of deep anxiety because of our age difference. Could this be a source of tension and conflict in our marital life? How do we overcome any such problems that may arise?***

Prasenjit, Dhanbad

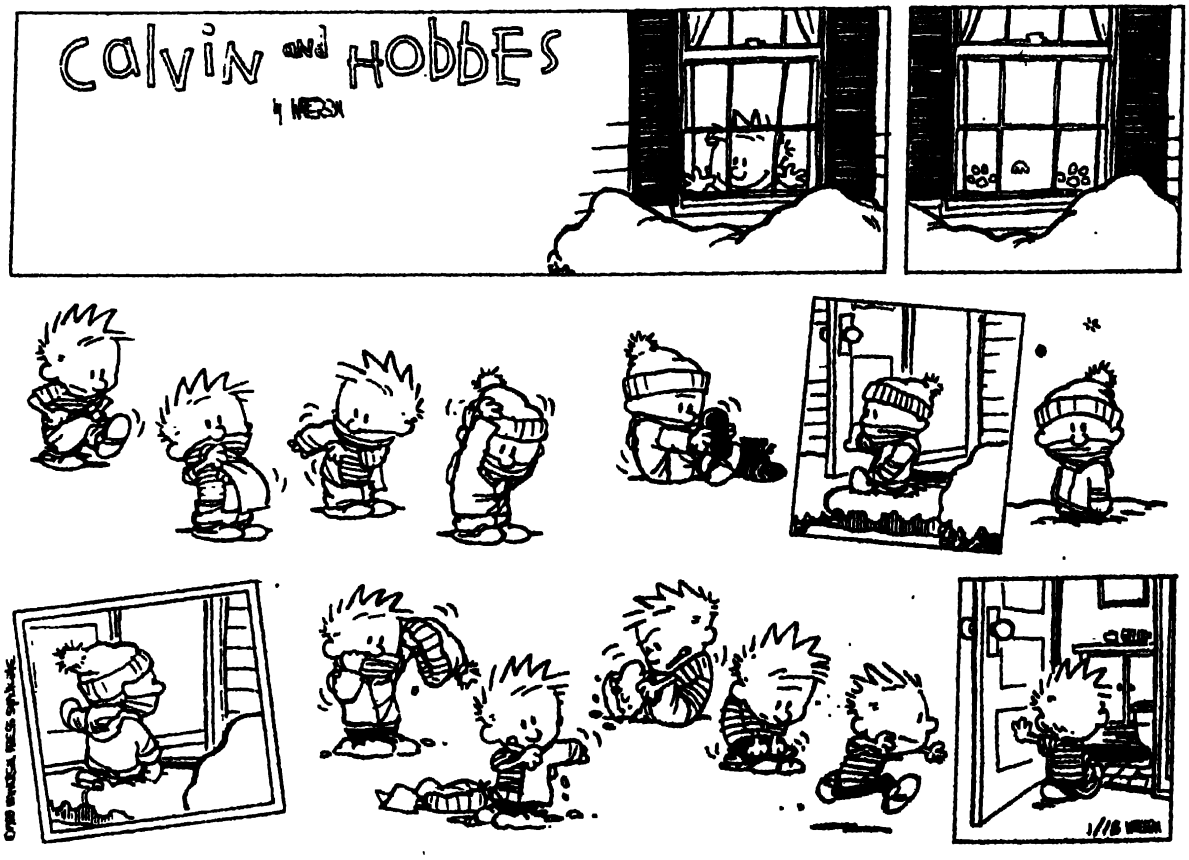
A. Put your worries to rest. Instead of worrying about whether your age difference will affect your marriage, you should realise that your bride-to-be is still very young. The problem, you see, is not your age difference, but the fact that your girlfriend is still very young. You, being older, are probably aware that a miscommunication could arise due to the difference in the levels of maturity between you two. So, be practical, why don't you wait a while? That way, not only will you both be sure, she will get that much needed time to completely grow up, and be ready for marriage.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

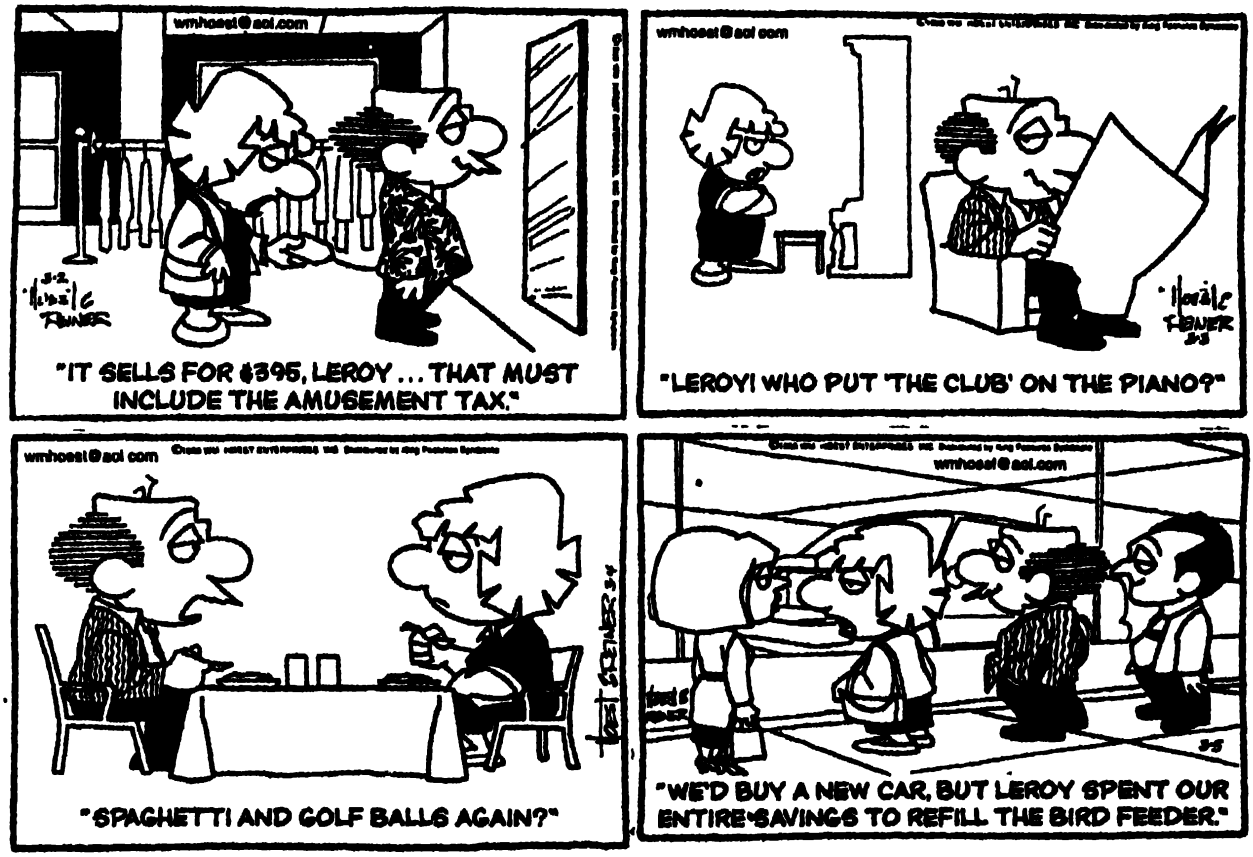
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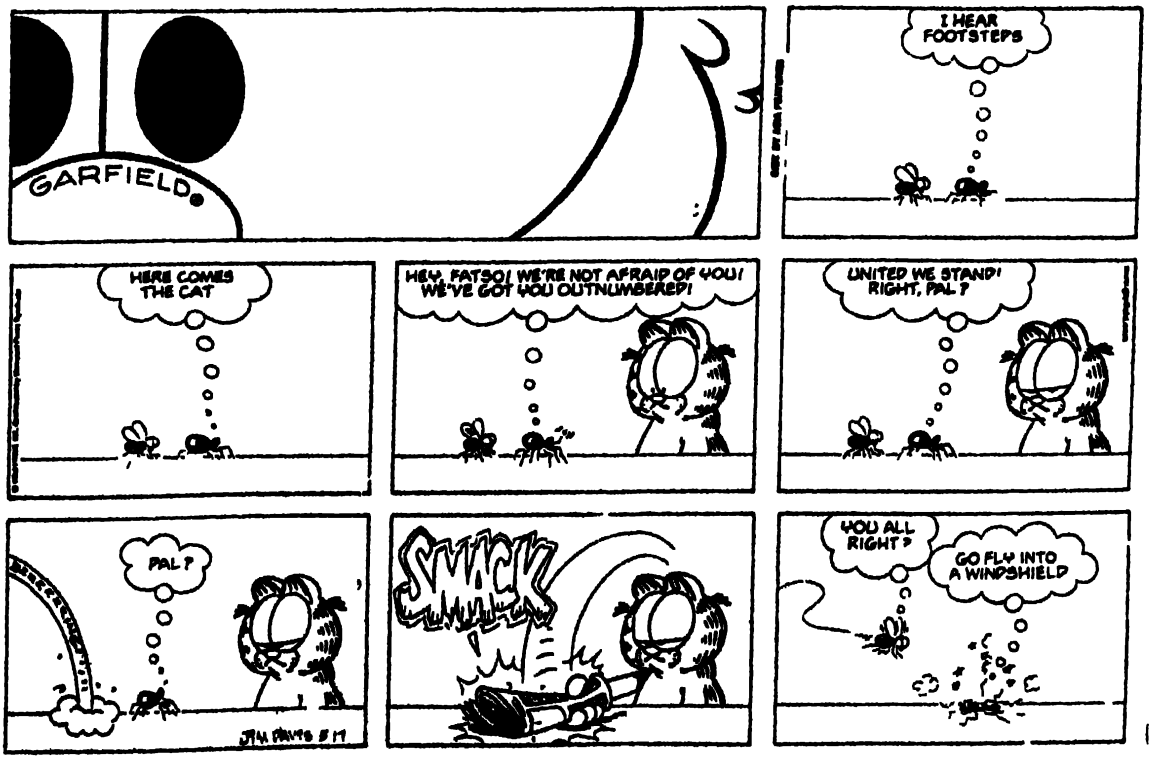
CALVIN AND HOBBES ❀ WATTERSON



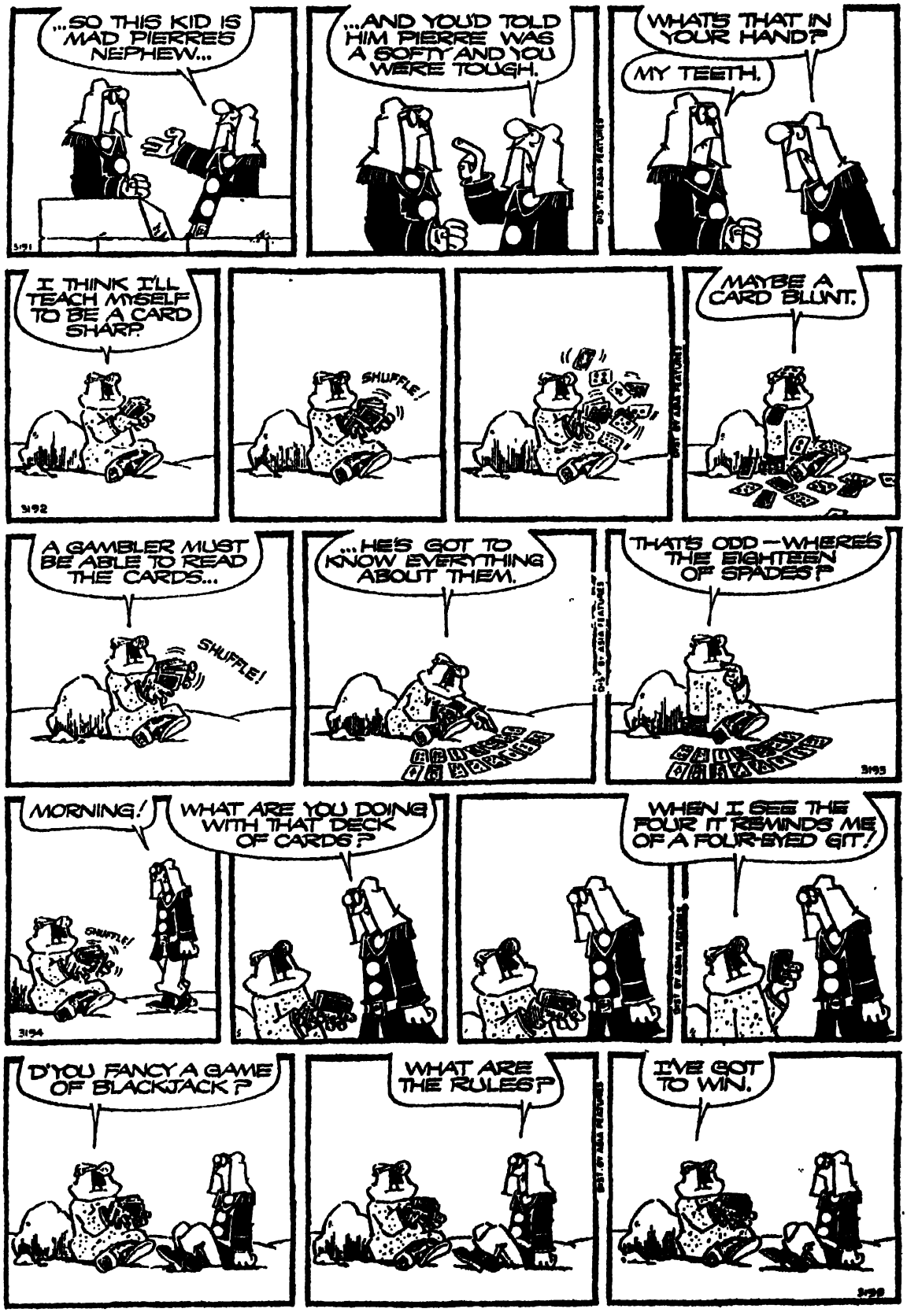
THE LOCKHORNS



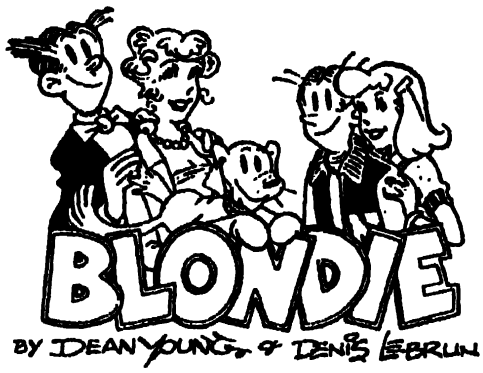
GARFIELD by WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ▩ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE













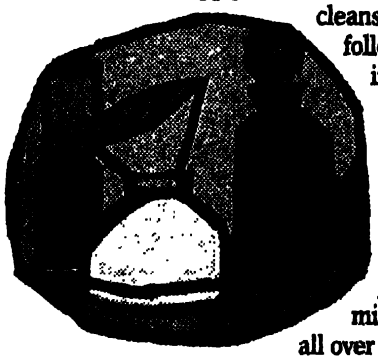


BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q *I have a combination type of skin. What is the best way to clean my face naturally? I do not want to use any expensive products. Please suggest a skin care routine that suits me.*
Shruti, Darjeeling

A Good skin does not depend on how expensive a skin care product you are using. It depends much more on how regular and careful you are with your skin care routine. Eat a healthy and well-balanced diet with a lot of emphasis on raw foods like friuts, salads, juices and dairy products. Treat your skin like two different skin types. Wipe the oily areas with rose water. Apply a face mask cum cleanser with the following ingredients —orange peel powder, powdered rice, lemon juice and milk. Apply all over face and neck and leave on for about fifteen minutes. Scrub off in a rotating manner and splash face with ice cold rose water. If you feel the need to massage the dry areas, you can do so with two drops of either almond or sesame seed oil.



Q *I have been wearing spectacles for the past four years. Without really thinking about the repercussions, I bought glasses which were very heavy. This has left dark marks on my nose. What do you think I should do to get rid of this? I also want to improve my complexion. Kindly advise.*
Fathima, Calcutta

A I am surprised why you did not change your glasses earlier and let the dark marks increase. It is very difficult to get rid of these. I would advise you to invest in a better pair of spectacles immediately. Massage the area with a face pack of fuller's earth, potato juice, oatmeal and lemon juice. Apply all over neck and face . Wash off when completely dry. Do this daiy for a month for best results.



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

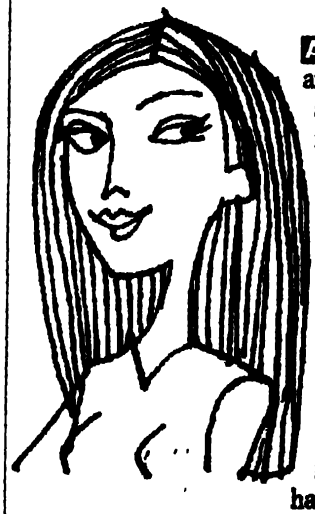
The best way to look after balding hair:

■ Apply bhringraj oil to your hair as it is the safest remedy

Q *I am 23 years old and am quite slim. My problem is that my waist line is quite thick I,e it is disproportionate to the rest of my body. How do I get a slimmer waist?*
Sunita Sharma, Calcutta

A It is important that you start to do waist exercises. Stand with both your hands on your hips and swing slowly from side to side. With arms stretched above head, bend from left to right as far as possible. Do the reverse as well. Tennis and badminton are excellent exercises for the waist and will help you tone up muscles and have a slimmer waistline. Any success in losing weight is basically due to regularity and discipline. There is no point in exerting yourself for one week and then forgetting about exercising the following week. Be regular and keep a check on your diet and avoid any kind of tempting food which you know you shouldn't be indulging in. Lots of water and natural juices will also benefit you.

Q *I am a 35 year old man and at present suffer from premature balding. I wuold like to know more about transplanting and hair weaving. Are they the same? Where can I get it done?*
Lokendra Rana, Calcutta.



A Hair weaving and transplanting are two different methods, albeit for the same problem—loss of hair. Hair weaving is much faster than transplanting and less painful. One can have one's hair weaved in about three hours. In this mathod, you can have artificial hair weaved into your own hair of the same colour and can thus hide your baldness. This can be removed while bathing or you can leave it on. It also has it's disadvantages for if you are caught in the rain or are swimming, the artificial hair can be distinguished from your nor

mal hair and this can be quite disastrous. However, it seems to have become quite popular these days and there are many different companies who are doing hair-weaving. You will have to find out where it is available in your city. I personally feel that you ought to look after whatever you may have. Oil your hair with *bhringraj* oil regularly and be content.

Q *I am an unmarried woman of 24 . I have stretch marks all over my thighs and at the back of my legs. How do I get rid of these?*
S.K, Calcutta.

A Stretch marks are tough to get rid of and it is a long and tedious process. I would suggest that you get together one of the most vital ingredients—patience and then start to treat yourself. Mix together equal quantities of almond oil, coconut oil and Vitamin E oil. Massage this on the affected area daily at night. It is absolutely important that you do this daily for two months for results. I would also advise you to keep a check on your diet and avoid any sudden loss or gain of weight. Eat a nutritious balanced diet and take plenty of water. But all along remember that regularity is the secret of this recipe and you have to be serious about it.



To treat stretch marks:

■

Apply a mixture of coconut oil, almond oil and Vitamin E oil to the affected areas

Q *I am 41 years old and recently dark lines and folds have started appearing on my neck. Is there any massage to prevent these lines from becoming too conspicuous?*
Romola Sen, Calcutta.

A You should have been looking after yourself and your skin by now. Take coconut oil and almond oil and massage the area gently daily for two weeks. You can reduce it to about twice a week, later. After massaging the area, apply the following mask—fuller's earth, potato juice, lemon juice and a paste



on till dry and then wash off with cold milk and water. I would also advise you to go in for a regular facial at least two-three times a month for this is an age where the skin requires more care and nourishment. So start now and you will see the results very soon. Be careful about your diet also and take high protein food with plenty of fluid intake.



Q *I have been married for about five years now and have a small baby. My skin used to be quite clear but now I have dark patches on my cheeks which look horrible. Is there any remedy?*
Mala Ghosh, Howrah.

A The dark patches that you are referring to are a result of hormonal changes in the body and are called pigmentation marks. Patience and a regular skin care routine is essential for taking care of this. Massage a good nourishing cream, preferably citrus based. Apply the following face pack for a month for a month—almonds ground finely, oatmeal, lemon juice, milk and fuller's earth and a pinch of turmeric. Mix well and apply all over face and neck and leave on to dry. Dab with milk and start to scrub off in a rotating manner once it is dry. Pat dry. It is important to remember that anything natural requires time and patience and there will not be any overnight miracles. So be patient and regular and you will soon see the results.

Q *I have dandruff. Please suggest how I can get rid of it and have healthy looking hair ? My hair and skin are both very oily.*
Manisha Singh, Calcutta.

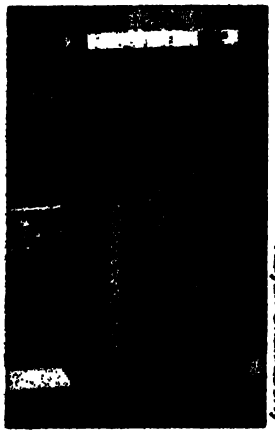
A Dandruff is dangerous. Never borrow combs or brushes from someone else and also keep your brushes clean all the time. Although dandruff is visible on the hair, it is an internal problem. It is also important that you eat a healthy well-balanced diet and drink at least 10—12 glasses of water everyday. Exercise to improve your blood circulation and give yourself a warm coconut oil massage once a week. Follow this by applying the juice of one lemon. Leave on for about half an hour and then shampoo your hair. The use of henna will also decrease the dandruff in your hair.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

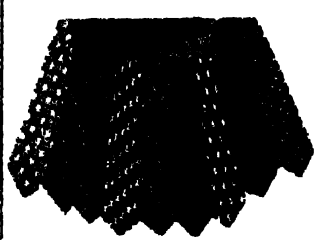
RAJAT SHARMA
TV Personality:

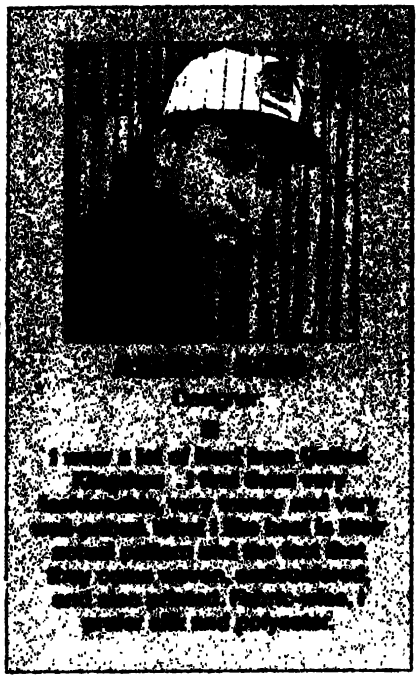


My favourite brand for ties is Emilio Cecconi from Italy. I like everything about them: the design, the colours, the fabric. I think for people who face the camera ties are very important. And they have to be something to really catch attention. Apart from Cecconi, I also liked the ones I picked from New Zealand. I think they are called Rixon Groove.



Kalyan Chakraborty



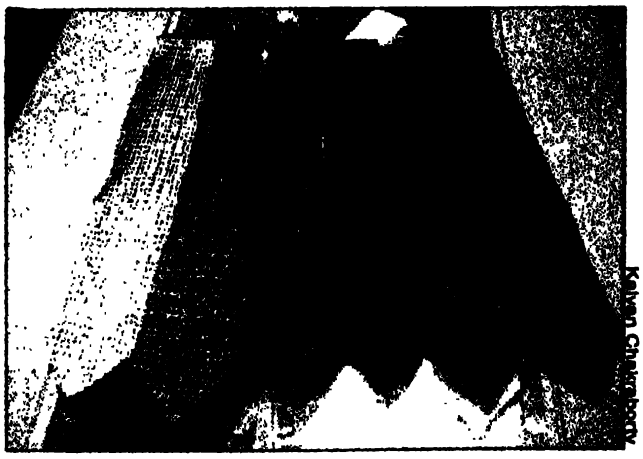


Knotty Business

The tie market in India offers a great variety at affordable prices, says **Ghazala Wahab**

Even the British surrendered to the might of the Indian summer. They relaxed the suit-and-tie order and the sahibs were allowed to wear the safari suit to work in the hot season.

But those good old days are a thing of past. Now if there is something that makes a statement of one's station in life it is the tie. Irrespective of the weather the necktie has arrived in India and is here to stay. The only concession one makes to the heat is loosening of the knot a bit during the day.



Kalyan Chakraborty

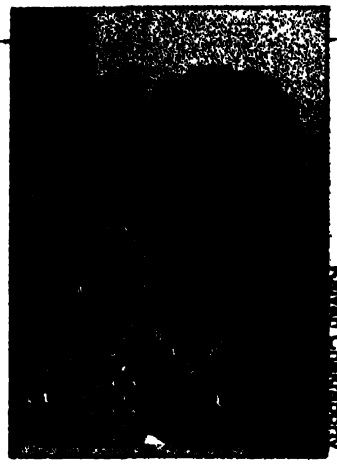
Says Gaurav Bhargav, owner of a Raymonds retail outlet in New Delhi, "Summer is no longer the slump period for ties. The sales go down only a little, but by and large there is no difference."

Another reason could be the new ranges that are launched in summer, for instance Zodiac launched the Gold and European collections which have been received quite well. Besides, ties sell because of the marriage season also. They also make good gift items irrespective of the weather.

Though no formal research has been done on the tie market so far it is expected to be growing at the rate of 10 to 15 per cent a year. According to Manoj Mohan of Mohanlal Sons in New Delhi, "In the last four-five years ties have grown into a huge market. Even the categories have expanded so much," he says. "One gets formal, casual and even theme ties like cocktail, Christmas, jazz, sports and so on with special designs and emblems on them."

One reason attributed to this boom is the advent of the MNCs. The unsaid official dress code in the corporate office includes a tie. As Mohan says, "Earlier, people use to have one tie to two suits, now they have about 12 ties to one suit. A tie changes the entire appearance of the person. Even if one is wearing an executive suit, a tie can transform it

into a party one in the evening. So one only needs to change one's tie to change the look."



Till a few years ago Indians had access only to a few brands of which Zodiac was the foremost. Interestingly, Zodiac stumbled into tie manufacturing quite by chance. Those days it was called the Metropolitan Trading Company which used to export necktie fabrics to France. In 1954, the buyer backed out at the last minute and they were left with bulk material for ties. To cut down on their losses and to salvage their reputation they decided to manufacture ties for the domestic market.

"The result was staggering. What started out as a problem became a blessing in disguise," say Ramya Rajagopalan who handles public relations for Zodiac.

In those days, only people who use to travel abroad had access to a wide range of ties. But things are different now. Indians have a lot to choose from. The major players are Zodiac, Park Avenue, Satya Paul, Bentley and Novella Garments. Among the foreign brands which have made inroads are YSL, Dorneul, Ferre, Dupont, Daks Simpson, Louis Phillipe and Allen Solly.



Then there are other small individual brands which sell only from their particular retail outlets. For instance, Snowhite retails their own ties also apart from other brands. Though less accessible, there are exclusive designer ties also.

The tie market can be divided into three broad segments like Premium, Medium and Low. The medium and the low segment form the unorganised sector with the price ranging from Rs 60 to Rs 300. Ties in the premium segment are priced between Rs 300 to Rs 3,000.

Faced with so much choice Indian buyers are learning to be discerning about the ties they wear. As Ramya Rajagopalan says, "Indians today have become extremely fashion savvy. They want quality products and are willing to pay a price for that." The price part is evident because Satya Paul's and Park Avenue's designer silk ties priced at around Rs 3,000 do not lack for customers.

Agreeing with that Mohan says, "Price is no longer the issue. Even young people in the age group of 28 to 35 earn well and they are willing to spend well."

But this purchasing power doesn't immediately translate into brand-consciousness. Most people buy ties because of the design. Says B. Nageshwar Rao, manager with a Snowhite showroom in New Delhi, "Very few people ask for a brand. And in cases they do, they ask for either Bentley or Zodiac. It is obvious that most people are not aware of all brands."

Even when it comes to choice most people are reserved or rather conservative. As Rao says, "People prefer executive type ties with small or medium-size prints." The mickey mouse prints that Allen Solly has launched in shocking colours are not doing well. "Only foreigners buy such ties," says Rao.



NIKHIL NANDA
CEO, Escorts, Yamaha Motor Ltd

I go by the design and the look of the tie. For me, the tie and the style is important, not the tag it carries. I pick up my ties from all over, wherever I am, without any brand specifications.

The popular fabric for ties is silk, both local and imported. Raw silk ties are not as popular now as they used to be because they are difficult to maintain. To a lesser degree, one also gets ties made of poly-silk. As far as design is concerned, prints remain the all time favourite. Like raw silk, even embroidered ties have made an exit. But knitted ties in polyester from the house of Marks and Spencers have made an entrance. Mohanlal Sons in New Delhi keeps a host of foreign brands like Marks and Spencers priced at Rs 695, Valentino, pure silk, priced between Rs 995 to Rs 1,295, Pierre Balmain, again pure silk priced between Rs 1,440 to Rs 1,840.

According to Mohan a lot of foreigner buy ties from India as they get the same quality for a cheaper price. Besides, since a lot of foreign brands are available here the choice is vast. Apart from them even Indians travelling abroad buy ties from here to give away as gifts to friends and business acquaintances.

It is time that Indians who travel frequently kept more ties than shirts in their briefcases. After all, it takes just a knot to change your look. ■

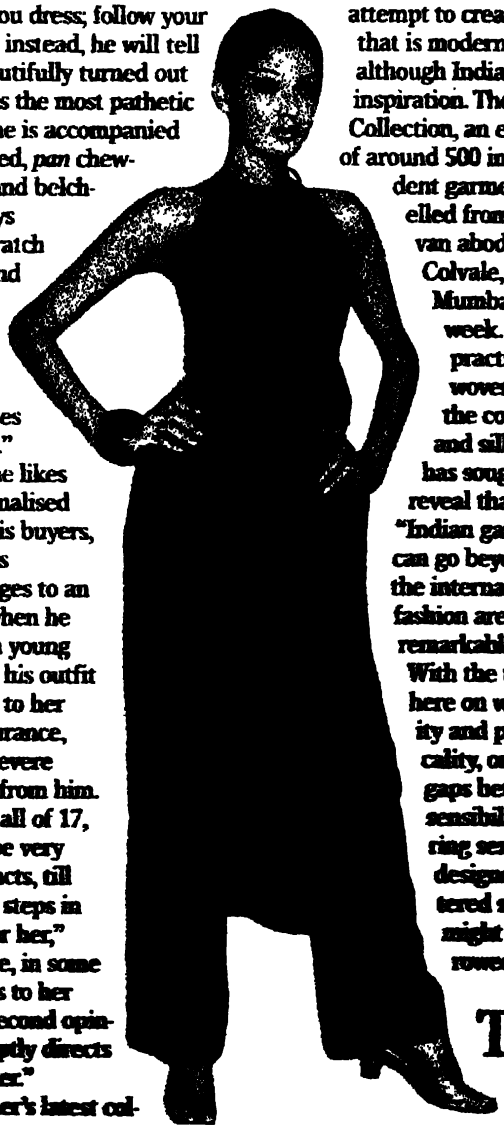
FASHION

To Flatter not Conceal

Fashion designer Wendell Rodricks follows his natural instincts to shape his creations, says **Sudipta Basu**

Women saddled with an insignificant other will bond well with Wendell Rodricks: Don't listen to them when you dress; follow your own instincts instead, he will tell them. "A beautifully turned out woman makes the most pathetic sight when she is accompanied by a pot-bellied, *pan* chewing, balding and belching male," says Wendell. "Scratch the surface and you encounter the ultimate horror — she actually dresses to please him."

Much as he likes to offer personalised attention to his buyers, the level of his patience plunges to an all time low when he has to watch a young girl trying out his outfit and then turn to her father for assurance, only to get a severe thumbs down from him. "There she is, all of 17, beginning to be very aware of instincts, till the older man steps in to ruin it all for her," says he. "Worse, in some cases she turns to her mother for a second opinion, who promptly directs her to the father."



The designer's latest collection, titled, The Twelve Tunics, travels away from the well-trodden *salwar kameez* path and also explores options to the traditional Indian tunic, in an attempt to create a look that is modern although Indian in inspiration. The Trunk Collection, an ensemble of around 500 independent garments travelled from his sylvan abode in Colvale, Goa, to Mumbai last week. With practicality woven into the cottons and silks, he has sought to reveal that "Indian garments can go beyond into the international fashion arena with remarkable ease". With the thrust here on wearability and practicality, one hopes that the gaps between artistic sensibilities of the warring sexes that the designer has encountered so frequently might also have narrowed somewhat.

The most striking aspect of the 38-year-old designer, however, is the fact that after having grown up and found his vocation in Mumbai, he voluntarily chose to migrate to Goa. He has been living there for the last five years, retailing out of Wendell Rodricks Couture Salon, in Panjim; only travelling to Mumbai thrice a year to display his creations. And thus severely cutting himself off competition. "I have tutored myself not to battle with ambition, for then it sticks to you, and leaves you with little space to enjoy other things in life," says he.

"I cannot see myself working out of Mumbai," he continues. "There are too many influences here, most predominant of all being that of money. I needed to rid myself of that, and live in my own creative sphere." He insists though, that he found his style in Mumbai and went away to relocate on his ancestral property to perfect the same. Competition and the absence of



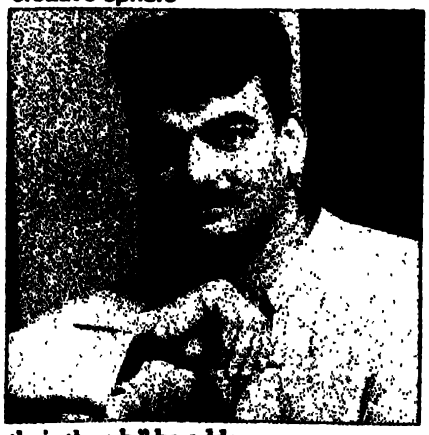
an opportunity to hob-nob with fellow designers of his fraternity does not bother him. He is not aiming to be slotted with leading designers anyway. "I do not read fashion magazines or watch programmes relating to the same," says he. "So I am not aware of dominating fashion trends of a particular season. I simply do what appeals to me the most at a particular time."

In his latest collection, thus, he has simply sought to deliver for the Indian summer; comfort being the predomi-

nant aim. Priced from Rs 550 onwards, his creations included signature kurta shirts, wrap skirts, asymmetric blouses and tunics. These were also accessorised with footwear and cocoshell accessories. The silhouettes of the outfits were clear, linear and sheer, and the styling draped, geometric and layered to suit Indian proportions — "the aim being to flatter and not conceal". The designer's innovations include tossing in a *lungi* and a *dhoti* to go with a tunic, the tunic would sometimes be a crossover backless to archway to simply one with a diagonal *dupatta* collar. The colours of this creation are clear white, antique ivory and volcanic black. "These colours don't go wrong, and white and ivory feel spiritually clean," says Wendell.

"It is ironical, the *lungi* is a traditional garment, designed for maximum comfort, and yet rates low on popularity levels of Indian fashion," he states. "If only women would let their hair down, they could easily team it with a tunic. I feel very sorry for women who are not strong enough to support their own convictions. Worse, they do not realise that it is the men who are intimidated by their self assurance, and thus desperately keep them under

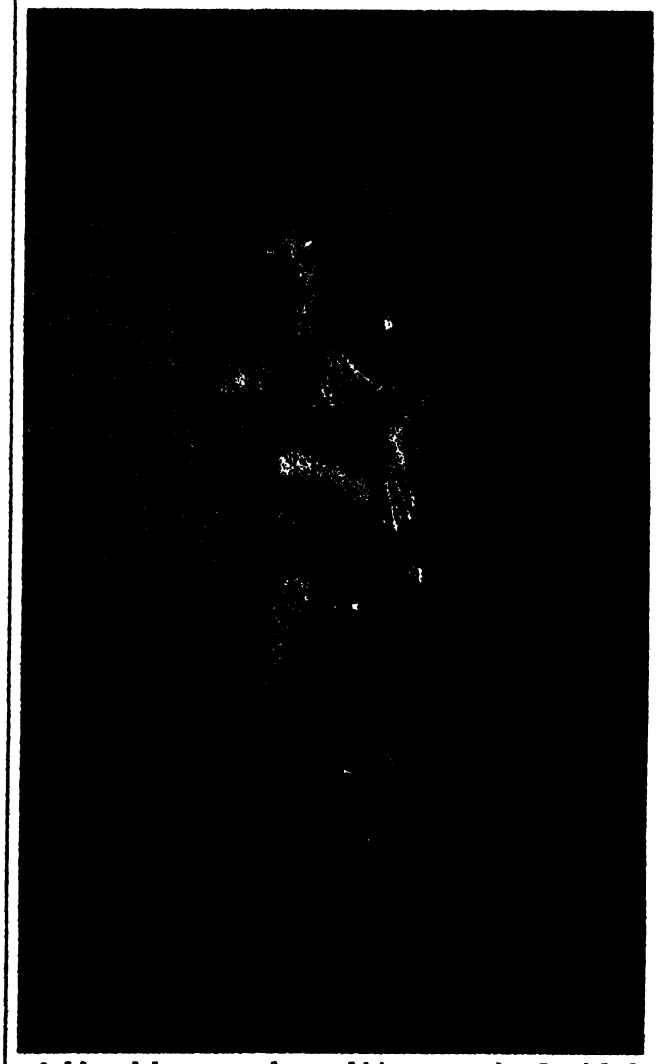
Wendell Rodricks: Living in his own creative sphere



their thumb," he adds.

"Yet, for now, one must be satisfied with the fact that people have at least come to believe in the existence of designers, and have become discerning enough to sift the grain from chaff," says he. The Trunk Show offers an opportunity for the designer to meet his buyers personally and offer them his advice in clothing. "I do not encourage them to buy too much at one go. I'd much rather have them come back to me again and again to buy more in bits," he adds.

After having launched his latest collection, he is already on to his next line. "I can seldom recall my last creation. What remains with me is the beauty of the process of creation." Can he recall then the first garment he created? "That was ages ago and in school. I don't remember clearly, but it was a dress," he says screwing his eyes. "All I can recall is that it was in black and ivory, to make the waistline look smaller."



Although he nurtured an ambition in the textiles industry since his childhood, Wendell actually worked his way around a bit before he could start a formal training in this field. After acquiring a diploma in hotel management, and working in the Sultanate of Oman for a couple of years, he rustled up enough finances to pay his way to the American College of the Applied Arts, in Los Angeles, to be followed by a specialised course in stylisme at the Paris American Academy, in Paris. He returned to work in Mumbai about eight years ago.

It takes a little prodding to get this designer to discuss his past work, or even his future plans for that matter, — "the past is gone and the future is not for me to see," he says, but what fires him is an opportunity to experiment with colours and motifs. Hence, in the past he has sourced from Tibetan monasteries, to the Rajasthani landscape, Turkish harems, astrology to temple and tribal symbols of Shiva and Vishnu. Sand coloured tussar, midnight crepe and dazzling whites formed the desert landscape to enhance the hand-painted motifs in gold, just as sheer organza and flowing crepes treated with line embroidery and mosaic hand-painted skylines in experimental pastel combinations in pink, apricot, lime, aquamarine and lavender was inspired by the Ottoman harem in Islanbul. Then, spiritual smearing in vermilion, red, orange and deep pink on tussar kurtas were used to enhance tribal symbols of Vishnu and Shiva.

"Fortunately, in the last few years I have not had to travel far for inspiration. Its right here, next door in my village," says Wendell. "Simplicity is essentially the most profound effect that nature can have on you." It has also taught him to live life at his own pace, "including reverting to raw fruits and vegetables as a regular diet".

Also, at his private abode in Goa he has nurtured a loyal clientele out of tourists who visit this destination regularly. And most of them do not turn to their male partners for reassurance, rather for compliment only. ■

My Personal Style

That's what Naina Balsaver likes to do when she is entertaining



Letting her Hair Down



Sunita Kunwar

AS YOU LIKE IT :

When it comes to drinks, it all depends on who I am entertaining. For teetotallers, I serve fresh fruit juices like peaches, apricots, fresh plums or *nimboo* brought from our farm at Ramgarh. For the rest, we serve scotch. If my friends want champagne, we uncork a bottle.

We are a Muslim family, so people come here to have *Biryanis, kebabs, tandooris* and *kormas*. We have even got a *tandoor* made in our garden to cater to the guests. Both my husband, Akbar and I usually manage to have a good time at these gatherings. I try not to look too tense, for then the party is bound to flop. All our parties end up with lots of laughter and singing.

When we were footloose we used to throw parties quite often. But their numbers went down ever since the birth of our children. Recently, we have resumed them again. We still go out every night which can get to be a bit tiring.

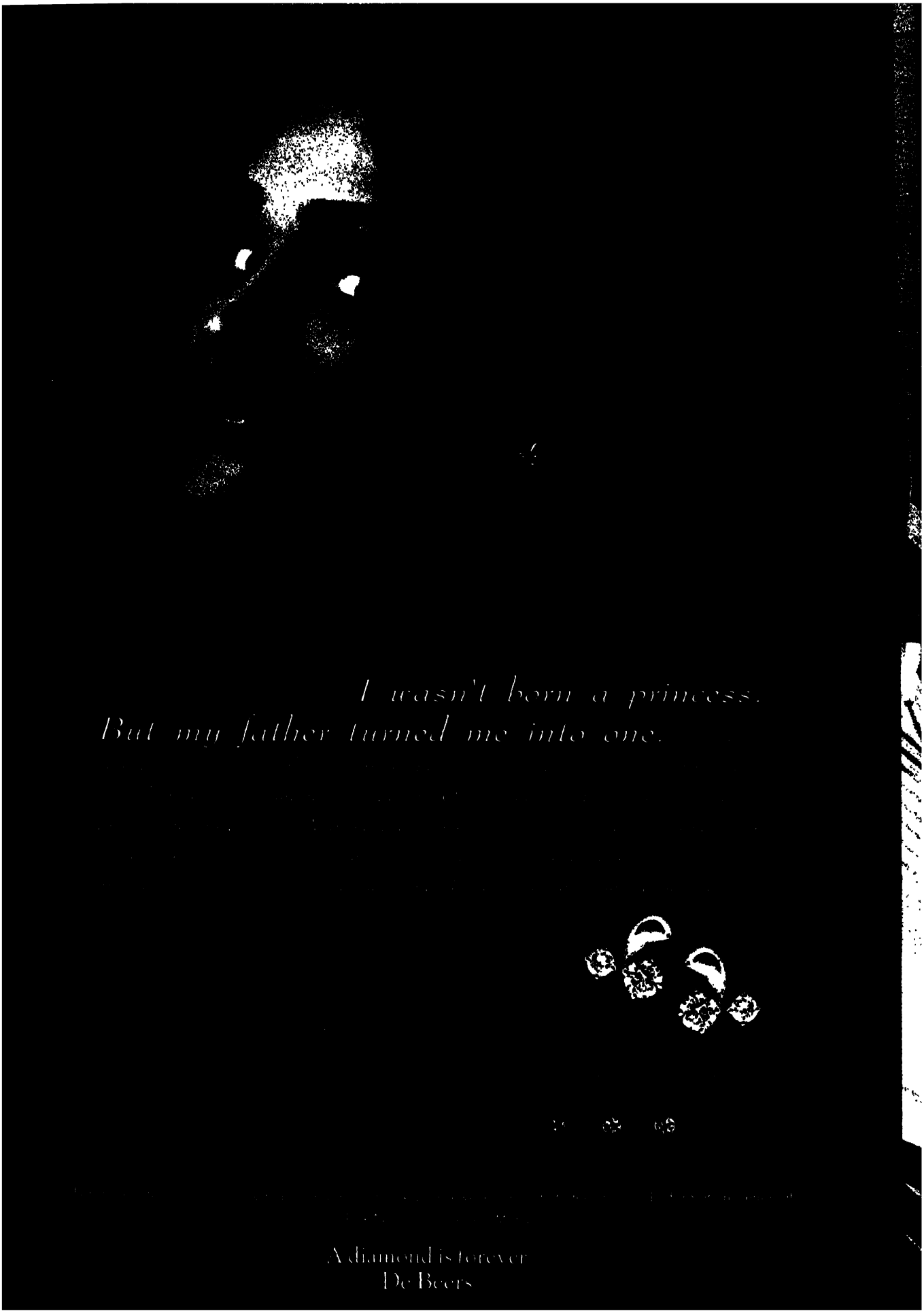
Indian food is usually cooked at home but I love eating out and prefer Chinese food. Spanish comes a close second, followed by Mexican, Italian and continental food. I have turned vegetarian for religious reasons. My favourite haunts are the House of Ming, Blue Elephant, The Machan, Chung Wah and China Fare. Most people enjoy our hospitality. They are a diverse lot : politicians, industrialists, television personalities and film stars. I generally have cooks to serve Mughlai food but where the guest list runs to more than two hundred, we have to get the catering done from outside.

I use some of my grandmother's old English cutlery and a lovely crockery set which belonged to my husband's grandfather to serve our guests. I like my enamelled crockeries from Palam Potteries for large parties. We generally have a buffet where there is no fixed etiquette involved. I plan to get a 12-seater dining table made for our sit-down dinners.

I love fun settings with different kinds of plates and forks. In New York, a place called Serendipity probably started the trend. Delhi's Chor Bazaar also specialises in the same kind of mixed milieu. When it comes to drinks, it all depends on who I am entertaining. For teetotallers, I serve fresh fruit juices like peaches, apricots, fresh plums or *nimboo* brought from our farm at Ramgarh. For the rest, we serve scotch. There is nothing wrong in serving Indian whisky. I am one of those "be Indian buy Indian" types. If my friends want champagne, we uncork a bottle.

My style of entertaining would be casual evenings loaded with fun. I love to let my hair down.

■ As told to Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya


I wasn't born a princess.
But my father turned me into one.
A diamond is forever
De Beers

Go gay the milky way



With Extra Milk

BHAGWATI (TM)

MILK Marie

BISCUITS

POST MORTEM

Inside Edge

The essence of Narasimha Rao has been truly depicted in the cover photograph ('The Insider', April 19). Rao, clad in white appears like an erudite suave intellectual who, in the arena of politics is strongly committed to the ethical values of the good old days. The fly that finds Rao's right hand as its natural seat, however, seems to be unfazed by his get-up. After all, it is the hand that was accused of doing a number of dubious deeds during Narasimha Rao's tenure as the Prime Minister of India.

Debashis Pathak, Calcutta



Being a politician, Rao is bound to be criticised. It is heartening to see that this much-castigated man has dared to break free from the dirty world of politics and give an opportunity to the Indian readers to behold the sophistication of his mind.

Partha Mazumdar, Calcutta

Narasimha Rao's indecisiveness is reflected in his novel *The Insider* as well. He not only avoids the media but answers in the negative when confronted by them. He even refuses to acknowledge the book as his autobiography. It is sheer luck that his government lasted a full term, considering his evasiveness and inability to provide quality leadership at a time when it was so urgently required.

Vinay Asawa, Howrah

Narasimha Rao's *The Insider* is the sort of refuge that an erudite man like him would have taken after his involuntary retirement from politics. Through its pages, an imaginative, albeit misunderstood, man like him will have been able to satiate his creative instincts and justify his deeds (although one has not been able to read the book in depth).

It is interesting how creativity and (alleged) corruption have merged to create an enigmatic personality like him. One wonders which is the real Rao.

Govinda Bakshi, Budge Budge

Fashion Conscious

Thanks a lot for regularly publishing information regarding the latest and the trendiest fashion products as available in the market in 'The Best' column. It is bound to be popular among young urbanites. However, I would like you to get a bit more bold and feature the best in female lingerie like St Michael's and B&B. It would be extremely appropriate as young Indian women are now shedding their inhibitions and are going all out to look and feel good. This influx of fashion items is the outcome of the policy of liberalisation.

Shallini Paul, Calcutta

I wish you would try and stop publishing mundane articles on designer wear and fashion, the budget being out of bounds for most people. The general impression you give nowadays is of being absolutely glamour (or should I say fashion?) struck. Please try to publish more meaningful stories.

Rahul Jain, Calcutta

The Telegraph

31 MAY 1998



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Travels with the President

A first-hand account of President K.R. Narayanan's recent visit to South America. An insight into the art of international diplomacy as practised by India; and the advantages and disadvantages of travelling with the President.

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Beauty: The Natural Way

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The French Connection

A day-by-day account of celebrity chef Richard Neat's cuisine course held at the Taj Man Singh Hotel in Delhi that's bound to tantalise your taste buds. And some exciting recipes.

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My Personal Style

Cricketer Javagal Srinath loves to soothe his frayed nerves when he manages to get a breather from cricket.

COVER STORY

TRAVELS WITH THE PRESIDENT

Seema Goswami gives a first-hand account of President K.R. Narayanan's state visit to South America

The President, K.R. Narayanan, with his wife Usha and daughters Amrita and Chitra cruising down the Amazon

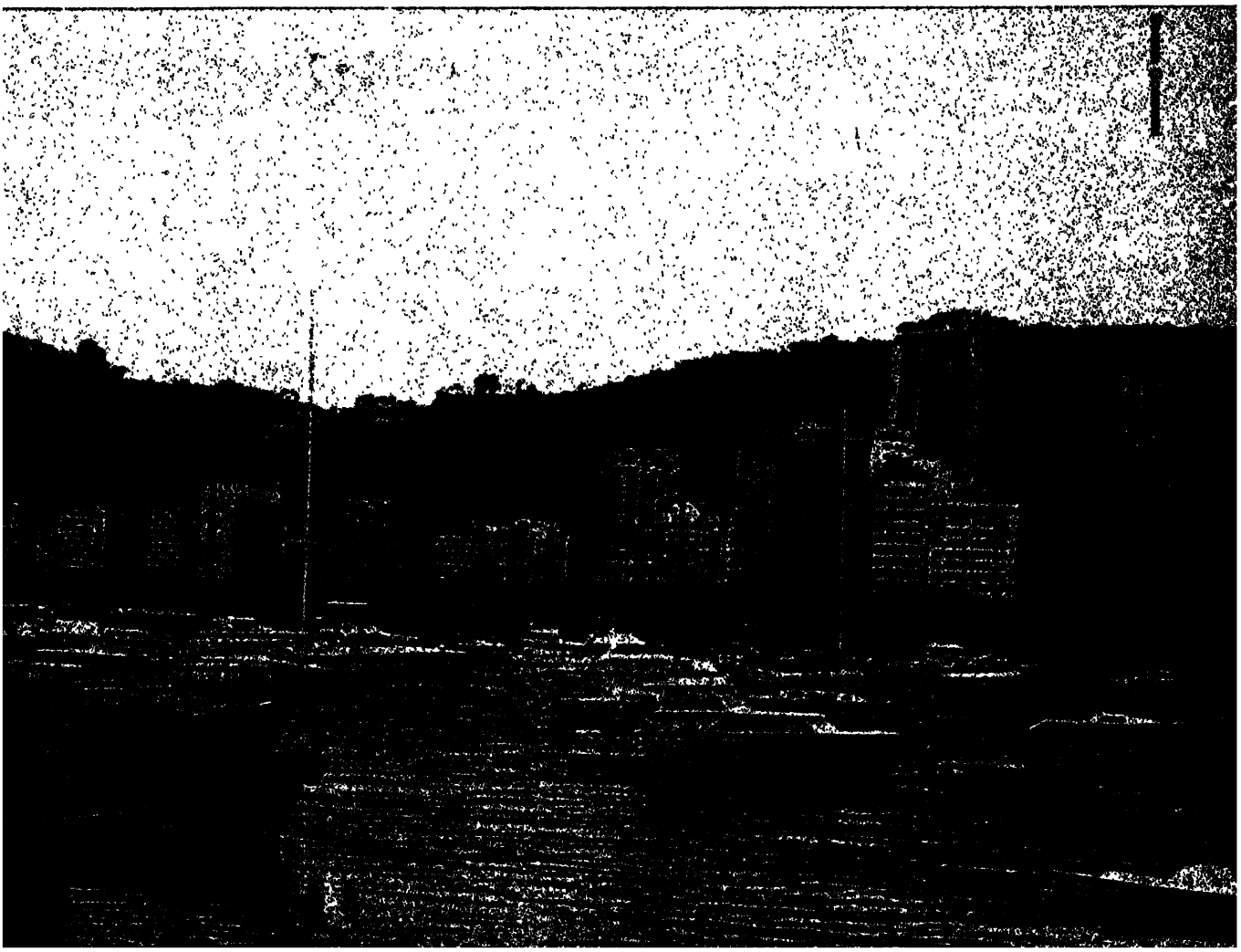






The President poses in Machhu Pichhu, Peru, and (below) a panoramic view of Rio de Janeiro

The President at the cattle fair in Uberaba, Peru



Narayanan was born to a Harijan family, but managed to overcome



President Fujimori and President Narayanan at a banquet hosted at the Presidential Palace, Lima



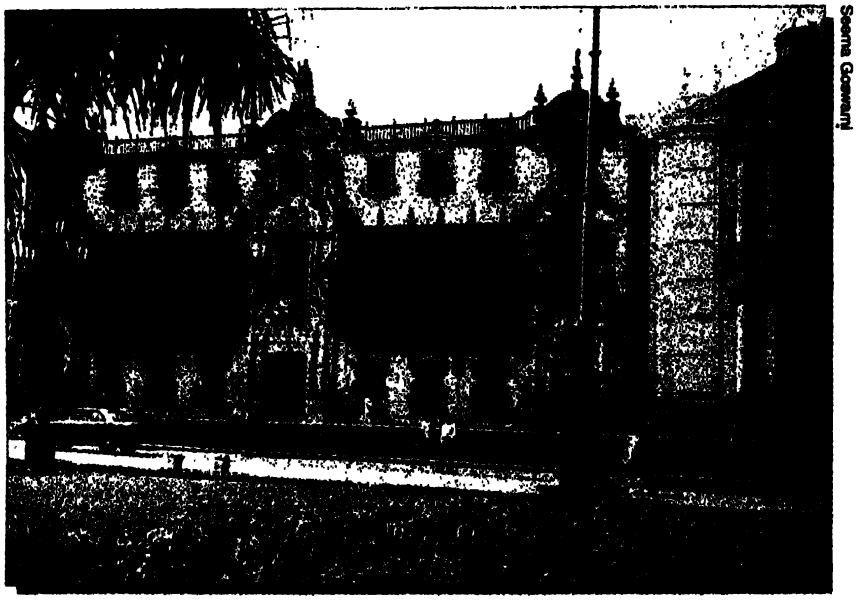
Seema Goswami

Local Red Indians gather to welcome the President at Machhu Pichhu, Peru

There is a certain glamour attached to travelling with the President of India. Never mind if you have to wrestle your luggage past sniffer dogs and open it for inspection as several men with metal detectors go through your most intimate belongings. Never mind if the queues at check-in are longer than those you have to negotiate for normal international flights. And never mind the fact that all the hacks have to travel Economy while the government delegation lives it up in Business and First. (The only saving grace is that even those huddled in Cattle Class at the back of the aircraft can drown their discomfort in champagne, whiskey, or any other poison of their choice.)

President K.R. Narayanan, however, is different from others of his ilk. While most VVIPs spend their entire time in the special sets of cabins (comprising a bedroom, a sitting room, and a small office) made for them in the middle of the Air India jet, Narayanan makes it a point to come back to mingle with his 'media delegation' on

A view of the balconies of Lima



Seema Goswami

all the disadvantages of his birth through sheer hard work and merit

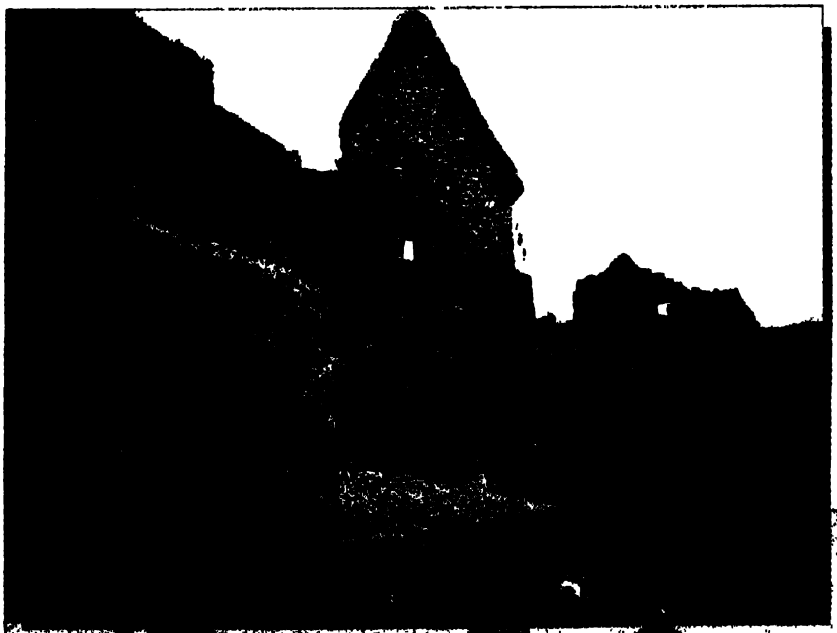
every sector, make small talk, give the odd briefing (off-the-record, though), pose for pictures, and generally make sure that everyone is doing well.

There is no better way of getting to know a man than to spend a couple of weeks with him. And in a journey that started in New Delhi, proceeded to New York (via Frankfurt), and then ended up in the South American countries of Peru and Brazil, that's exactly what I — along with 27 other media-persons — did. And discovered, in the process, that in K.R. Narayanan, India has a President that she can be very proud of.

Some of the reasons are rather obvious. Here is a man who was born to a Harijan family in a remote Kerala village. But he managed to overcome all the disadvantages inherent in his birth through sheer hard work and



Seema Goswami



Seema Goswami

The hut where Incas sacrificed their animals in Machhu Pichhu and (below) a view of the Incan ruins at Machhu Pichhu

academic merit, ending up at the London School of Economics, and later, in the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He served as ambassador of India in such crucial countries as China and the United States of America, before leaving the foreign office to join the Congress.

His stint in electoral politics was as successful. He won three general elections and served in the Union Cabinet, before being elected to the

President Narayanan arrives at Uberaba, Brazil, to visit the cattle fair



Seema Goswami

Travelling with the President helps you get an insight

post of Vice-President of India. And in a polity that is more fractured than ever, he managed to become President of India as the unanimous choice of all political parties.

That much we all know. What doesn't come through on television — which is how most people know him — is his charm, modesty, and earthy sense of humour. Which other President, for instance, would have the guts to crack a joke that referred to 'the amatory, libidinous parts' of man — and raise a laugh in the process. Or even



The President on board the Air India flight answering questions from the Press

Seema Goswami



The Sundial at Machhu Pichhu (left) and President Narayanan at Machhu Pichhu



Seema Goswami

take it upon himself to seek out members of the Press at official banquets to make sure that they are enjoying themselves.

Small wonder then that Kocheril Raman Narayanan — to give him full name, as both President Fujimori of Peru and President Cardoso of Brazil did — was a huge hit with all those who came in touch with him.

Travelling with the President has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are easy to perceive: you get to see the President up close; you visit countries you may otherwise never have seen; and you get an insight into the art of international diplomacy as practised by India.

The disadvantages are as obvious when you've been travelling a fish bowl-like environment with about 70 other people for a fortnight: you end up knowing some of these people rather better than you would have liked.

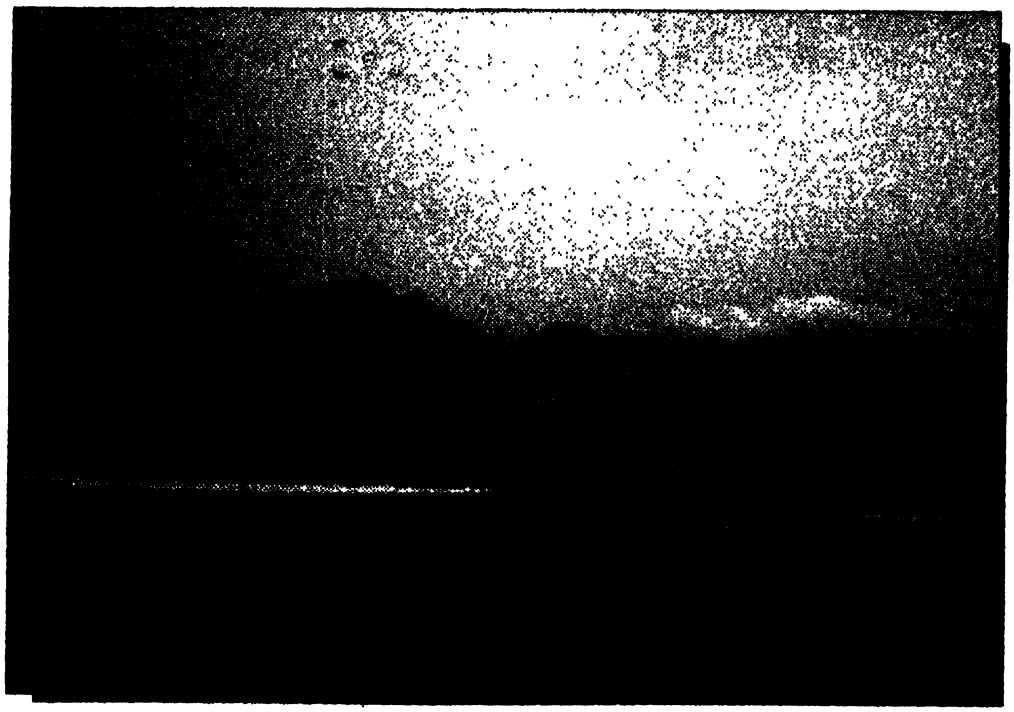
There are those who give themselves away inadvertently: the passenger, for instance, who takes as many as four packets of 'foreign' cigarettes, when they are passed around by the crew. Or the person who always fears catching a chill on getting off the

plane, and asks to borrow an airline blanket (which is, of course, never returned). Or even the obstreperous soul who insists on only drinking tequila — and threatens to complain to the minister (of civil aviation, Ananth Kumar, who is accompanying the President) when it is not available on board.

Then there are those who have an abiding curiosity in their fellow-travellers, and are not ashamed of showing it. "Where do you live?", "How much rent do you pay?" "Is there a man in your life?", "How much do you get paid?", "Is that 24-carat gold?": the questions flow fast and furious. Never mind if you're reading a newspaper or watching the inflight movie — these people will just not be denied.



The beach at Rio-de-Janeiro and (right) Usha Narayanan being greeted at Machhu Pichhu



Seema Goswami

Yet others are comfortable only when they are talking about themselves: how much whiskey they can put away without getting legless in the process; the way women keep throwing themselves at them; their adventures in a local discotheque the night before — all of this in more graphic detail than you could be comfortable with. But what the hell, anything to while away the hours on a trans-Atlantic flight.

The occasional flash of genuine humour, however, manages to get through. At a reception for the Indian community in New York, for instance, a middle-aged matron induces shock-horrow by accessorising her bright green sari with a bare back. "You can't really blame her," wisecracks an elderly hack. "The dress code said black bandhgala/sari. Nobody said anything about a blouse."

When it comes to receptions hosted by the Indian embassies in the different capitals of the world, I have just two questions. One: why do Indian diplomats believe that their countrymen have travelled several thousand miles to eat indifferent dal and tandoori chicken which is a suspicious shade of red. And two: why do all the Indian women you meet abroad have such terrible taste in saris? No matter what the occasion, they *will* turn up wearing ghastly brocade affairs that wouldn't look out of place in a wedding in Bhatinda.

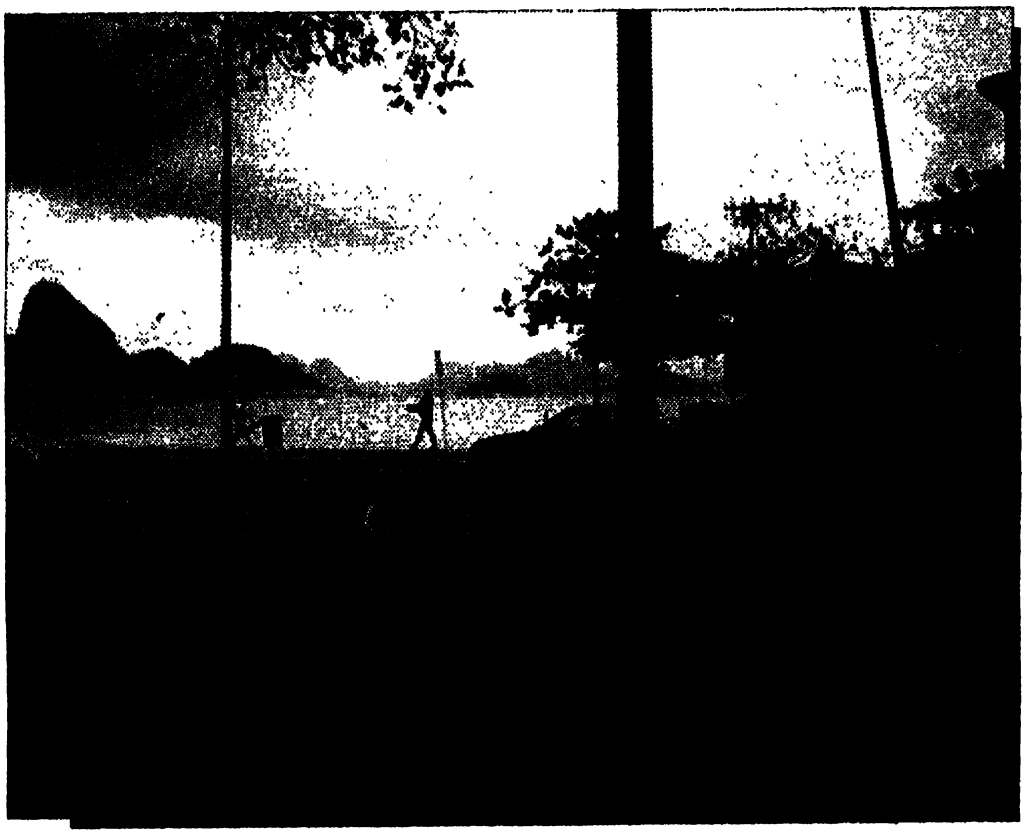
The drive into Lima — the capital of Peru which is the first stop on the official leg of the President's trip — is a rather disappointing one. The houses look shabby, the roads are narrow and bumpy, and the traffic is not the disciplined affair typical of most Western cities. In fact, if it wasn't for the grafitti on the walls, it would be easy to imagine that you were in a small town in the south of India.

But the Indian ambassador, Nirupama Rao's residence seems more in tune with Beverly Hills. The high wooden gates open on to a marble driveway that is flanked by overgrown foliage. The small porch leads to a large reception area, with parquet

floors and brightly-coloured rugs. Walk right through the ground-level rooms and you come to the backyard which is dominated with a marble-lined swimming pool, with a fountain at its head.

The occasion is a reception hosted for the media delegation, and Rao has pulled out all the stops. The waiters are going around with several glasses of pisco, the local cocktail, which includes egg white among its host of ingredients, and is deceptively mild to taste. But a couple of these under your belt, and you could well be spending the rest of the evening under the table rather than at it.

The snacks are plentiful, delicious and — most important of all — local, and everyone tucks in as a Peruvian couple performs the local dances of the region. Dinner is laid out on a buffet table, with potato and corn dominating the dishes on offer. But despite the foreign flavour — or perhaps because of it — everyone is soon lining up for seconds.



Seema Goswami

Street scene at Rio-de-Janeiro

The easy informality of this occasion is in sharp contrast to the state banquet hosted by President Fujimori the following night. All the guests line up to file past President and Mrs Narayanan and President Fujimori and the attractive First Lady of Peru — whose dress wouldn't be out of place on a Milan runway. But no, the luscious young lady standing beside Fujimori isn't his wife; it is his daughter Keiko Sophia, who is the Official First Lady of Peru, ever since her parents divorced in 1994.

Banquets are fairly impressive events, with much pomp and ceremony. Champagne toasts are drunk, much red and white wine flows, and waiters are ever at the ready to clear away your plate for the next course. But in a country where few people speak English, conversation can be fairly tough going.

And quite maddening, too, when you have the head of the Peruvian election commission on your right — as I did — and yet can't ask him any pertinent questions because his English doesn't extend beyond 'Hello' and 'Thank you'. Especially when all of Peru appears to be heatedly debating whether Fujimori should stand for election the next time around — the Constitution expressly forbids him from seeking a consecutive third term, so he can only stand if he amends the constitutional provisions in this regard.

Once the dancers are brought on, however, conversation becomes incidental. Everyone wheels around to watch several young men and women perform the folk dances of the various regions of Peru. But the hit of the show is the last but one dance, which features two Black couples, dressed in white but with little red cloth tails attached to their bottoms. They are holding candles in their hand, and take turns to try and set fire to the little red tail of their partner with them.

None of them succeeds, however, much to the disappointment of the audience. Instead, one of the women in question manages to put out the candle of her partner by swishing her short, frilly skirt around, striking yet another blow for woman power.

The highlight of the Peruvian leg of the journey was — without a doubt — the trip to Machhu Pichhu, the lost city of the Incas, which was 'discovered' by a British architect. Located high on a mountain (Pichhu means mountain in the local language), the site draws millions of visitors every year, some of whom spend days trekking through the forest and up the mountain before they come upon it.

When you're travelling with a head of state, however, such options are not open to you. So, the Indian party was bundled into a plane (provided by the Peruvian Air Force) and flown to the city of Cusco.

looks like a very, very up-market version of Chandigarh

Here, three helicopters were at the ready to fly President K.R. Narayanan, his family and his delegation to Machhu Pichhu.

A short bus ride finally brings you up to the mountain top, where the Incas had built their city in the 12th century, which they abandoned in the face of attacks from the Spanish. The site has been painstakingly reconstructed since, but the freshly-thatched roofs and well-mown grass only detract from the sense of an ancient civilisation, and create the effect of a historical Disneyland, instead.

The President is on a tight schedule, so we can only take in some of the sights. These include a long-range view of the mountain-top hut in which the Incas used to sacrifice animals to their gods (apparently, human sacrifice never took place at Machhu Pichhu); a look at the 'sundial', which got the direct rays of the sun during the summer solstice; a tour of the Incan temple; and an inspection of the house of a priest — a small, cubby-hole, with just about enough space for him to sleep in.

But even before we have got a feel of the place, it is time to drive back. As our bus starts downhill, a small boy clad in traditional costume starts running down the Incan trail down the mountain. And much to our amazement, at every turn he is there ahead of us, shouting 'Alvida' as our bus moves out of sight. This continues till we are at our destination, at which point, the little fellow clambers on board to ask for tips. He gets off with a respectable haul of 50 US dollars.



Seema Goswami

President Narayanan arrives in Machhu Pichhu

Our first stop in Brazil is in the port city of Manaus. We're only here for a day, but it's a day well-spent as we'll be cruising down the Amazon. It's, therefore, a happy band of journalists who clamber on to the boat — the President will be travelling in a different barge — and settle down to enjoy cold cans of beer, potato crisps, and the scenic delights on both sides of the River Negro, which leads to the mighty Amazon.

The confluence of the two rivers presents an amazing sight. The black water of the aptly-named River Negro mingle with the muddy waters of the Amazon for the length of several kilometres. Cameras are duly pulled out, and the sight recorded for the benefit of our readers and grandchildren (not necessarily in that order).

Then comes the disappointing bit. We may be all geared up to travel down the Amazon and into the depths of the rain forest. But it seems that our boat is too big for that journey. So, we sail back, attempting to find consolation in the huge lunch laid out in the dining room of the boat.

Everyone is even more downcast when they board the Air India plane to make the short-haul flight to Brasilia, the capital of Brazil. The Air India crew is full of stories about their trip down their Amazon, and their adventures in the rain forest. It has to be conceded that they had a much better time of it. Brasilia, the capital that was constructed out of nowhere, looks like a very, very up-market version of Chandigarh. And that's not surprising when you consider that the architect who made it was a disciple of Le Corbusier. But even though the city has some amazing structures and is very well laid-out, there's not much by way of tourist attractions.

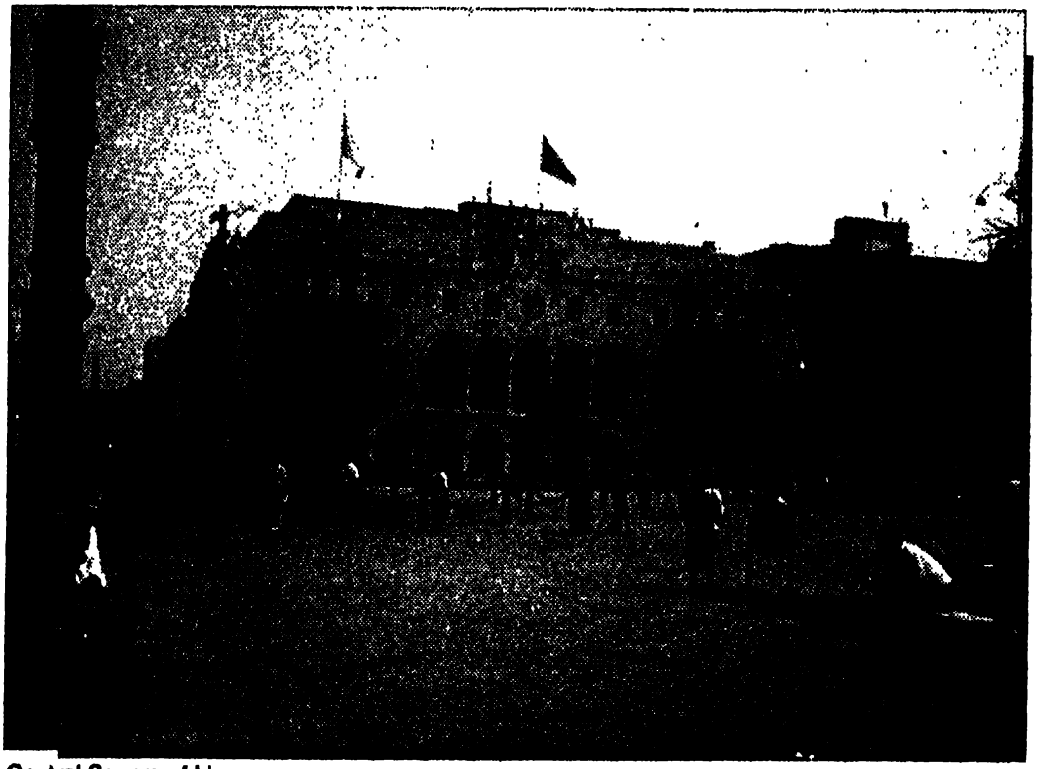
Perhaps that's why the President and his party are flown out to Uberaba, a neighbouring town which is hosting a cattle fair. All the cattle in Brazil — called Zebu — are of Indian origin, and it seems only appropriate that the Indian President gets a look at them.

Once you do, however, it is hard to imagine that any of these animals could have had anything to do with the miserable, ill-fed creatures we call cows back home. These cattle are huge, nearly six foot high, milky white,

ince Rio proved to be a wash-out, we had high hopes for Sao Paulo

and look as if they have been fed on a steady diet of steroid-laden grass. Of course, the truth is more mundane: these cows have the best of food, the best of medical care, and the benefit of the best climate in the world — and they have made the most of it.

They also made a huge impression on President Narayanan. At the banquet he hosted for President Cardoso of Brazil, Narayanan said, only half-jokingly, "I wish that our people had been as adventurous as our cattle, who travelled all this way to settle down in Brazil."



Seema Goswami

Central Square of Lima

Next stop: Rio de Janeiro. As Mahendra Varman — the Air India plane that is doing special duty for the President — lands at the airport, a wave of disappointment sweeps through the aircraft. It is raining in Rio, and according to the forecast, the weather is not likely to clear tomorrow either.

Sure enough, when we wake up in our hotel — ideally situated on the Copacabana beach front — it is cold, foggy and wet, and our plans to drive up to Sugarloaf mountain and take a cable car to the next mountain (thus getting an aerial view of the city) are hastily abandoned. Instead, we drive around the city, looking at the wet, deserted beaches from afar, and rueing what might have been.

Some light relief is provided by those members of the party who went to a nightclub the evening before to watch a re-creation of the Brazilian carnival. But more than the wonderfully-rigged out dancers, they are full of the performance of the two Indians, who actually had the guts to go up on stage and join the dancers when they called upon India to do its bit.

While the journalist restricted himself to shaking a leg on the periphery, the Air India man grabbed the mike to belt out a Konkani song, which had all the Brazilian young women joining in as well.

Perhaps they would have thought twice about it if they had known what the lyrics meant: "I don't care if my bride is short or fat, thin or tall, as long as she has big breasts."

Since Rio has proved to be a big wash-out, we have high hopes for Sao Paulo. But the schedule doesn't provide for much sight-seeing. In fact, it doesn't even have any provision for us to check in at our hotels before proceeding for the banquet hosted by the Governor of Sao Paulo. So, while the men struggle into their bandhgallas in the bus, the women are directed to the loo in the lobby of the President's hotel, and asked to change into their saris and be out in ten minutes. Needless to say, tempers are not improved by this.

The Governor of Sao Paulo seems to have hit the nail right on the head when he refers to the absence of the President's granddaughter, Chandrika, at the banquet: "She must have heard that there are many long speeches at banquets. And since like Brazilian children, she doesn't like speeches, she decided to stay away."

At that moment, all of us would have happily given an arm and a leg to be able to join the sensible young lady, who was probably relaxing in the comfort of her hotel room after a long and tiring day.

But there's hope yet. Tomorrow morning, we fly out to New York, where there is a night halt. And then it's back to Delhi, with a stopover in Paris. By now, everybody is dying to get back.

New York to Paris is a long flight, rendered even longer by the fact that nobody has the either the wit or the energy to make even half-way decent conversation. Miraculously, however, the President seems to be in pretty good nick when he comes back to have his customary chat with the media.

The Paris-Delhi leg of the journey sees everyone sprawled on the floor, in the aisles, wherever they can find a spare inch of space, trying desperately to catch up on their sleep. Mercifully, when we wake up, we're hovering over Delhi, and home is just a short car ride away. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Ganesha says the overall trend for the week will be expenses (not necessarily unforeseen but definitely more than usual), journeys and travel and visits to places of healing—hospitals, welfare centres and the like Finances are the keynote and you should try and invest your money as wisely as possible

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



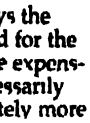
The new moon shifts your attention to more practical matters such as loans and funds projects of various kinds Employment gets strong emphasis whether it deals with change, promotion new avenues or some other possibility Animals, dependents pets and even conservation issues interest you

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



You exhibit a great ability to win friends and influence people a la Dale Carnegie It is your inbuilt generosity of temperament that helps you achieve this There is socialising, many gains (both tangible and otherwise) and interaction at various levels You will both give and receive love

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The June trend will be to focus on the 3F's—finance, family and food This may entail lots of entertaining, house guests, visitors, even business lunches and launches This trend may well continue right throughout the year This is the right time to cultivate hobbies Children send out signals of love

Leo
July 21 — August 21



The moon focuses on your strong involvement, with the two incentives of modern life, money and love An equally important password for the week is buying and selling A makeover in terms of renovation or decoration of home, office even a holiday home is likely

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



This week is likely to be a frenetic one with hectic communications, of faxes flying back and forth, modems and internet being pressed into active service Expenses are high too There are hush-hush discussions, liaisons and plenty of behind the scenes activity It is important that you don t stress yourself

Libra
September 23 — October 22



The key word is connections, people and places, with a capital P The week to come will find you mentally alert Contacts and journeys are interlinked You meet exciting people Take care not to displease your seniors at work The promotion you were hoping for is likely to be yours

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Many of the pursuits initiated at the beginning of this lunar cycle come to fulfilling end There is a promise of plenty in the sense of plenty of research, discoveries and inventions, religious impulses, collaborations of a varied nature Education holds your interest Journey abroad is another strong possibility

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



The main trend will be on the domestic scene—house, redecorating, adding on bits of furniture in the place you live Religion could be your new source of sustenance Try to live life beneath your means and save for a rainy day instead Do not pay attention to any kind of gossip, malicious or otherwise

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



All that you have striven for may seem well within your reach, at least to some extent Promotion and enhanced prestige is in store for you This does not, however, mean that you cease to work hard Do not however, fall prey to any kind of tension or stress, especially, since you are not keeping well

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



The upswings of the last few weeks continue, giving you much joy You have better health, there is a wonderful fallout in the sense of your enhanced ability to do sustained work This makes you exceptionally creative and charismatic Life seems an endless saga of glorious celebrations Enjoy it!

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



The main trend now is on sport, recreation, the pursuit of special pastimes, hobbies and your leisure interests In all this, there is a great rapport with children Your interest in research of some kind is apparent to all and helps you rise in the esteem of many A long journey is also indicated

BIRTHDAYS

May 31 : **Venus Square Neptune: Ganesha says a difficult placing for long term planning and quick results. Do not spend recklessly. A peaceful year in general.**

June 1 : **Moon square Mercury: Health safeguards are a must, because operations and accidents are not ruled out. On the positive side, improvements on the home front is definite.**

June 2 : **Mercury trine Neptune: A good time to ask for favours from near and dear ones. Do not pay heed to any kind of trivialities. Patience will pay.**

June 3 : **Sun trine Uranus: This trine could really turn your life around. Be daring and different because in any case, life is a gamble. Expect the bizarre or the unusual. Expect help from unknown quarters.**

June 4 : **Moon trine Sun-Mars: You could be a millionaire, or realise your wishes, or help others in meaningful ways. Expect success in whatever you do. Be generous.**

June 5 : **Mercury conjunction Mars: This conjunction helps you think straight and act courageously and that is the formula for success. Those in politics fare exceedingly well.**

June 6 : **Moon opposition Venus: Expenses will bore holes in your pocket. In matters of the heart, go very slow as Venus, symbol of the heart, is not auspiciously placed.**

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• And make a wish that's morally and socially acceptable.

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ENVIRONMENT

Greening them Young

Several schools in Delhi are trying hard to sensitise their students to environmental concerns. **Geeta Sharma** reports



For twelve-year-old Saurab, the school trip to a paper re-cycling plant was a learning experience. Having witnessed the simple technique involved in making paper from scrap, he was eager to try it out himself at home.

Saurab managed to lay his hands on a stack of old newspapers. But since he needed to add something else to it, he took his father's — still wearable — pair of jeans. The boy tore them up and buried them, along with the paper pulp, under a pile of bricks to make re-cycled paper. The result was a cardboard-hard paper that he proudly took to his school.

For eight-year-old Garima, it was a birthday celebration with a difference. This year round, not only her parents but even her school gave her a gift: a tree sapling that she planted and pledged to nurture and look after.

Surabhi Suri, a class IX student, already has her career plans chalked out. An active member of her school's environment club, she wants to become an environmental activist, "because our world has been polluted and messed up too much, and unless we join in somewhere to reverse this, it may be too late."

Big words for a such a young mind, but the determination is very clear.

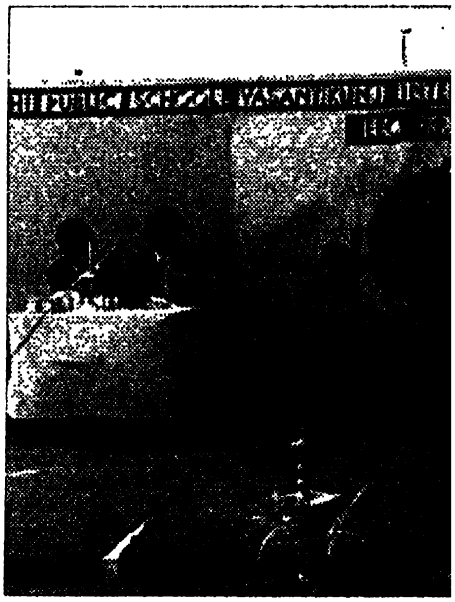
These are children who are studying in a growing tribe of schools where environmental concerns have become an intrinsic part of school education.

With them, environmental concerns are not just issues that are confined to text-book teaching but are integrated and inter-woven into the entire school curricula. And so, concerns such as the depleting ozone layer, pollution, de-forestation, desertification and over-population have become issues that they discuss and tackle in their own little ways.

In fact each of these schools has devised and developed myriad programmes that have been woven into the school curricula to make environment education more meaningful.

"Environment awareness is not a one-time lesson or chapter that can be taught in a classroom situation. It is a continuing learning process that the child learns from day-to-day living experiences," says Vinay Kumar, principal of the Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj. The school has formed environment clubs, comprising children from class VI onwards, that keeps the kids busy with environment-related activities round the year.

Besides debates and exhibitions the member-students are taken for weekly field trips to water and paper re-cycling plants to see and understand the process first hand. The school also has a greenhouse, managed and run by these children. They have also designed jute bags that they are trying to promote as an alternative to non-degradable plastic bags. Besides, they have field assignments where the children go out into the city with their air sampling and water sampling kits to monitor the level of pollutants in these elements.



Children participating in a debate on Save School; and (right) tree plantation at Chira

So enthused have the students been with the exercise that after one child discovered worms in the water in his locality, he brought it to the notice of the municipal authorities.

Some other students, says Aditi Mishra, teacher-in-charge of the environment clubs, "got about doing their bit by going round their colonies, reminding their parents and neighbours to get their vehicles checked for pollution on time."

The school plans to invite former Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his Green Cross mission to the school during his Indian visit in April, when the school plans to organise its annual open-house debate on 'Save our Planet.' Top government officials and environment activists form the panel in these sessions where the children ask them questions.

The school which has about 20,000 odd flower pots that ring its sprawling lush green lawns does not have a single 'Do not pluck flowers' or 'Do not step on the grass' tags in any part of the school. "Our children not only enjoy the flowers and the greenery but also are our partners in looking after it, " says Vinay Kumar. In fact, so well-known is the school's love for environment and greenery that a





(top) planting saplings at Delhi Public ti School

parent recently gifted the school with a truck load of plants!

Environment studies is an approach that begins at the grassroots level in Springdales school at Dhaula Kuan, Delhi. The school's teacher training centre has devised an environment learning kit that has become a model kit for several other schools keen on such a methodology.

Comprising work sheets, web charts and skill charts, it introduces children to various forms and cycles of nature right from the primary level.

"Even mundane daily observations like why clothes dry faster on a sunny day and not a cloudy one, or monitoring the growth of a seedling in a discarded ice-cream cup, goes a long way in familiarising children with the elements of nature. They even bring their pets to school and show them to their friends and in the process, learn to care about the animals," says Deepa Grover, headmistress of Springdales School. The areas of study widen and expand to various forms of pollution, physical regions, world regions and so on, as the classes advance.

Learning to help preserve a healthy, green and pollution-free environment in and around their school is what the children of Chiranjeev Bharati School, in Gurgaon, near Delhi have been doing. Here too, nature-related learning and awareness begins at the kindergarten stage. Children in the nursery are taught what the environment gives them and what they can do for it. Those in kindergarten have sleep-overs in the school where after fun and frolic at night, the children are taken the next morning for nature walks and introduced to concepts of nature, such as flowers, trees, dew drops, rainbow and even animal life.

The school has a green belt adjoining its sprawling lush green complex, where children plant tree saplings on their birthdays and then look after it from day to day. The school has also roped in OISCA (Organisation for Scientific and Cultural Advancement) a Japan-based NGO, in its tree plantation efforts.

"In fact our whole green belt is taken care of by our children. With the children getting so distanced from their natural environment in our age and time, we feel this is the best way to introduce them to nature and help them nurture it," says school principal N.M. Bhatia.

As part of its Socially and Useful Productive Work (SUPW) project, the school has adopted the nearby Chouma village. The children, accompanied by their teachers, visit the village every week and educate its inhabitants about health and hygiene. "But it's not just lip service that we do. The children actually help clean the drains and clear the garbage piles, to show the villagers how they can keep it clean," says Tripti Kochar, a senior teacher at the school.

But it is not just the school authorities that are spear-heading environment awareness among children. Even celebrities — Anjolie Ela Menon, Kiran Bedi, T.N. Seshan — have lent their support to the cause. And the latest to join the bandwagon is Bhangra king Daler Mehndi.



Avesh Verma

Tiny tots celebrate Environment Day at Chiranjeev Bharati School

After belting out *Bolo Ta Ra Ra Ra* and *Balle Balle*, Mehndi has formed a D.M.(Daler Mehndi) Green Brigade Society to make Delhi 'Cleaner, healthier and pollution free.' To start with, besides the six lakh saplings that would be planted in the city, the society will hold audio-visual sessions on environment for school children.

These efforts then, tiny and small as they may be, have shown how an otherwise mundane day in school can come alive with concerns about the environment. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1900	1, 2, 5, 6	IC 744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W-512	2125	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-965	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 956	1315	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2125	daily
CD 572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0935	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 106	1010	4			

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
BHUTAN					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-536	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-536	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
[illegible]					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
[illegible]					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed & Sun., Arr: Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri & Sat Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr: Tues., Fri & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr., Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed & Sat	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga Express	20-35	5658
3153	10-15	Gour Express	5-15	3154
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep. Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	6-45	3148
5663	20-00	Katihar Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr: Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2209545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2209496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry)



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

***Q.** I am a 20-year-old girl. About four months back, I got engaged to a boy whom I started to like very much. We became physically intimate as well. However, as a result of a certain misunderstanding between the boy's parents and mine, our engagement is about to get cancelled. I come from a conservative Marwari family. Please advise me as to how I should convince my parents that irrespective of what happened between the two families, we both are keen to get married to each other. It is not possible to tell them about how intimate we have become.*



M.S, Howrah

A. My advice alone can do nothing to help. You and your fiance have to decide whether you two are consenting adults or puppets in a joint family. If both of you are sure that you want to marry each other, I think you should hold on and try to convince your respective families. After all, it is unfair that you and your beau should suffer because of their differences, however irreconcilable they may seem at the moment. Give them an indication of your mutual feelings and see if the families show any signs of coming around. Giving them a little chance to de-escalate and cool off might help. But if you feel that there are no chances of compromise between the two families, it is up to the two of you together to decide how much sense of individuality you possess and how much resistance you are ready to face for your love. The families will ultimately come around if you decide to marry, but the two of you alone can determine the extent of your commitment to each other.

***Q.** I am an extremely good-looking 18-year-old girl. I have a sister who is going to get married very soon. The problem is that my would-be brother-in-law, although handsome, is a very big flirt. He has tried to get intimate with me and has said that he will continue with this even after he gets married. I am quite scared. I am also deeply committed to my boy-friend and find the whole situation very uncomfortable. What should I do?*

Your to-be brother-in-law making advances at you? A well timed kick on his you-know-what, with a choice of stiletto heels, will solve the problem as he definitely won't go to your sister to complain

N.O, Calcutta

A. The problem with the girl-boy or man-woman scenario is that we tend to inevitably cast men as the initiators of sexual situations, and woman as protectors of their virtue. A well-timed kick on his you-know-what, with a choice of boots or stiletto heels, will solve the problem to a large extent. I do not see him running to your sister to complain! If you were to join judo or karate classes, even for a while, I am certain that he would definitely review his intentions and become more reasonable in his attitude.



***Q.** I am a 17-year-old boy and I have a very embarrassing problem. I am frightfully scared of ghosts, so much so that I keep hearing strange voices at night. I also cannot sleep alone. I realise that this is gradually turning into a phobia. Should I consult a psychiatrist? How can I get rid of the problem otherwise?*

Name withheld, Calcutta

A. Don't worry, your problem is quite a common one. Suppressed and subliminal fears find an outlet in such disguises, and though we realise their irrationality, we are unable to cope with them. I don't think you need a psychiatrist just as yet. Try to balance your attitudes first. Dislodge this phobia from its base. Go back to those ghost stories you read as a kid and see them in the clear light of day. Tell yourself quite firmly that you are not scared of ghosts, because you know they can't hurt you even if they are there. You could also try praying before you go to sleep. Nowadays, few of us really appreciate the therapeutic qualities of prayer. This will help you battle not just this

but many other fears. If you sincerely try this for a while, I am absolutely confident that you will be able to overcome your anxieties.

Q. *I am a 32-year-old college lecturer and a bachelor. Presently, my parents are trying to arrange my marriage. My problem is that I find the institution of marriage to be a very unpleasant one. Marriage to me means merely adjustment and it also invariably leads to sex—the very idea of which is disgusting to me. One may think that it is a challenge one should take up. I don't think so. Am I wrong?*



Name and address withheld

A. It is good that you are honest with yourself about your feelings, and I can understand your apprehension about being trapped in a marriage that you don't want. I think you first need to analyse your feelings towards sex and marriage and the reason for them. If you still are sure that you want nothing to do with them, then it is advisable to be firm with your parents, and thereby avoid causing further unhappiness to either yourself or your future spouse.

Q. *I am a student of Class XII and have recently appeared for my board examinations. I have been a fairly good student, but I fear that I might fail in the exams this time. If this happens, I will not be able to face anybody. I live with my aunt and uncle as my parents do not wish to take the responsibility of my education and always taunt me. Another problem that I face is that my uncle, although otherwise a very caring person, harrases me sexually. He is a kind of godfather to me and will be very upset if I do not pass the exams. All these problems are getting too much for me to handle, especially since I have nobody to confide in. Please advise.*



Name and address withheld

Finding it very tough to come to terms with your wife's death? Try and remember the happy times that you have had and take delight in your children and their families, which are a living legacy of you and your wife's love

A. Your problem is not your exams, but your uncle. If you have been a fairly good student, there is no reason why you should not continue this trend in your board exams. Besides, this tension is prevalent in almost all students expecting their results, so I suggest you try and be rational and wait for your results to be announced before causing yourself unnecessary tension. You have not mentioned your feelings towards your parents. You must also be aware that however caring your uncle is towards you, he does not have any right to harass you sexually. Even if you are not on good terms with your parents, you could perhaps give a hint of your apprehensions to your mother or aunt, whichever of them is closer to you. This oppressive and unwarranted sexual power-play cannot be accepted as the normal cost of charity. Each of us come into this world with our own particular destiny, and as and when you walk out on your own to face the world alone, you will surely find the resources to cope. But at any cost, say a firm no to your uncle. Everything else will fall into place.



Q. *I am a 75-year-old man who has recently lost his wife. As a result of this, I feel very depressed as well as bored and I am unable to lead my daily life. My children and other relatives are good to me, but the vacuum still remains, and however hard I try, refuses to go. What should I do?*

Om Prakash, Calcutta

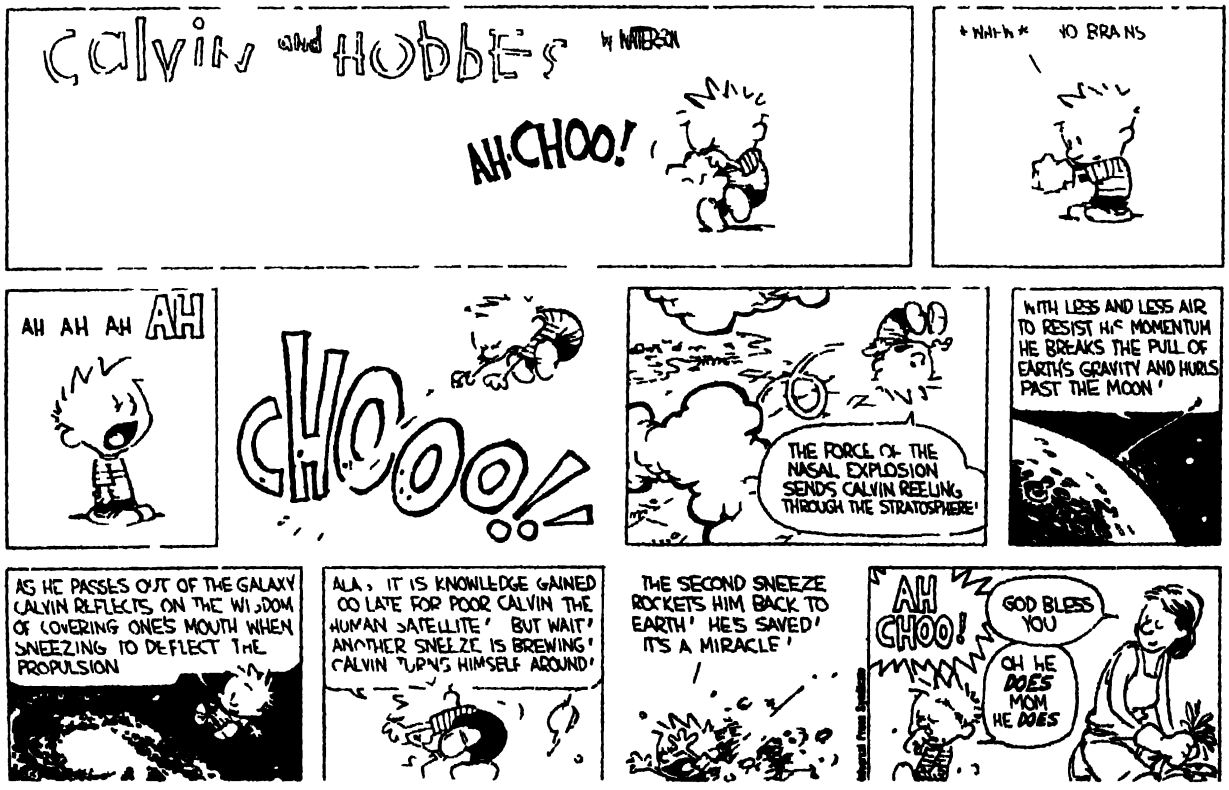
A. Though it is natural to feel depressed for a period after the death of your spouse, we all have to accept the death of a loved one and move on. You are a fortunate man to have had a long and wonderful marriage.
You also have a loving and caring family.
Try and remember the happy times that you had, and keep reminding yourself that your love for your wife remains intact even after her death. Your wife, had she been alive, would surely not have liked to see you brooding and unhappy. Happiness can be derived in the most despicable conditions, if we are armed with the right attitude.Take delight in your children and their families, which are a living legacy of you and your wife's love. That is your duty to her memory.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

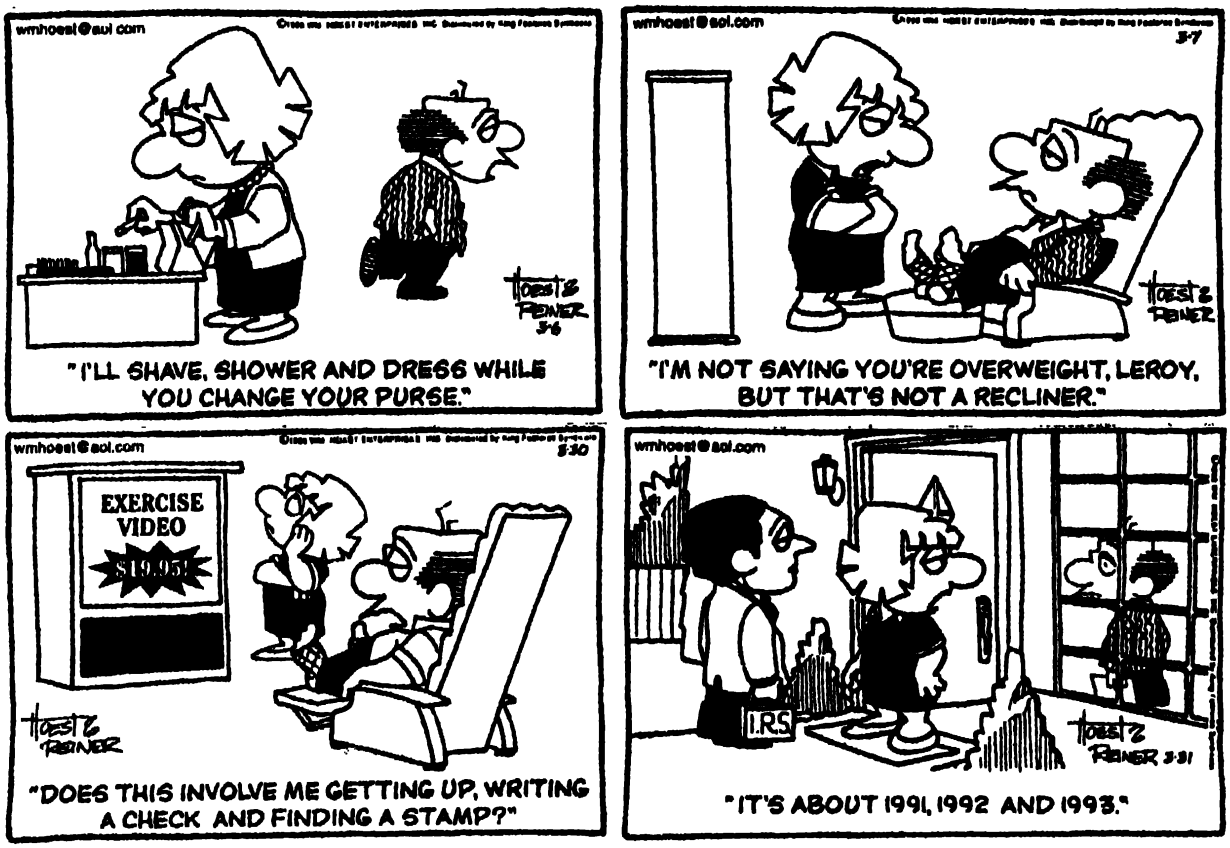
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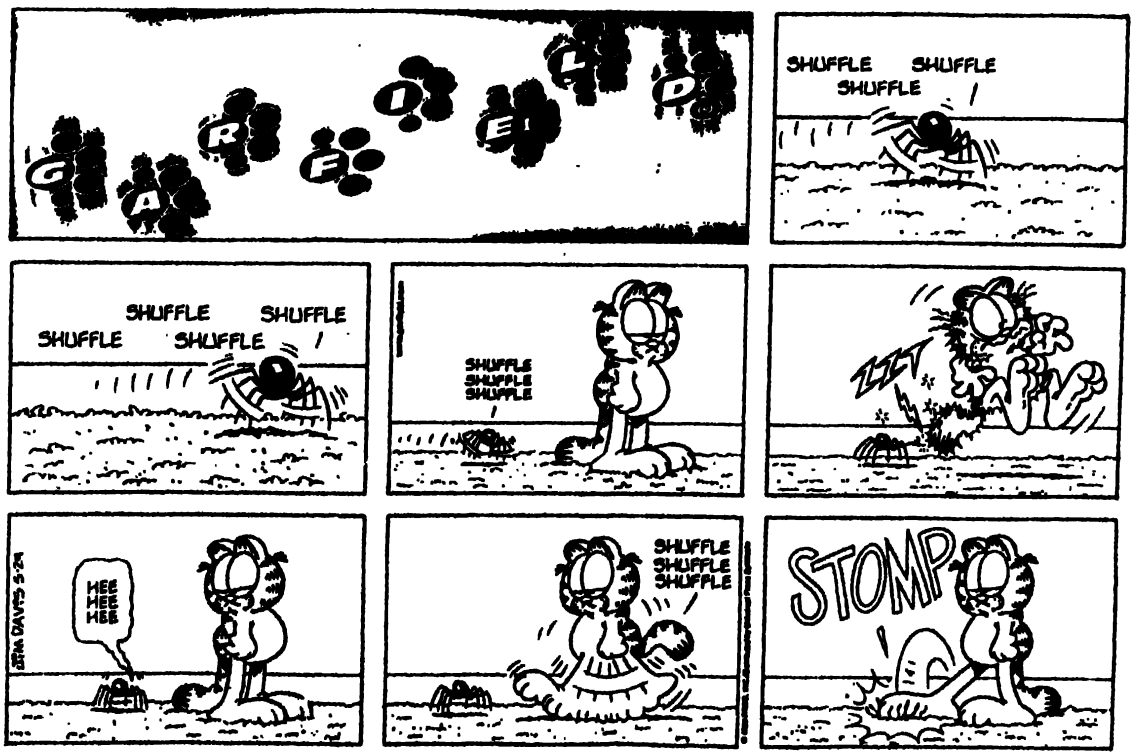
CALVIN AND HOBBES WATTERSON



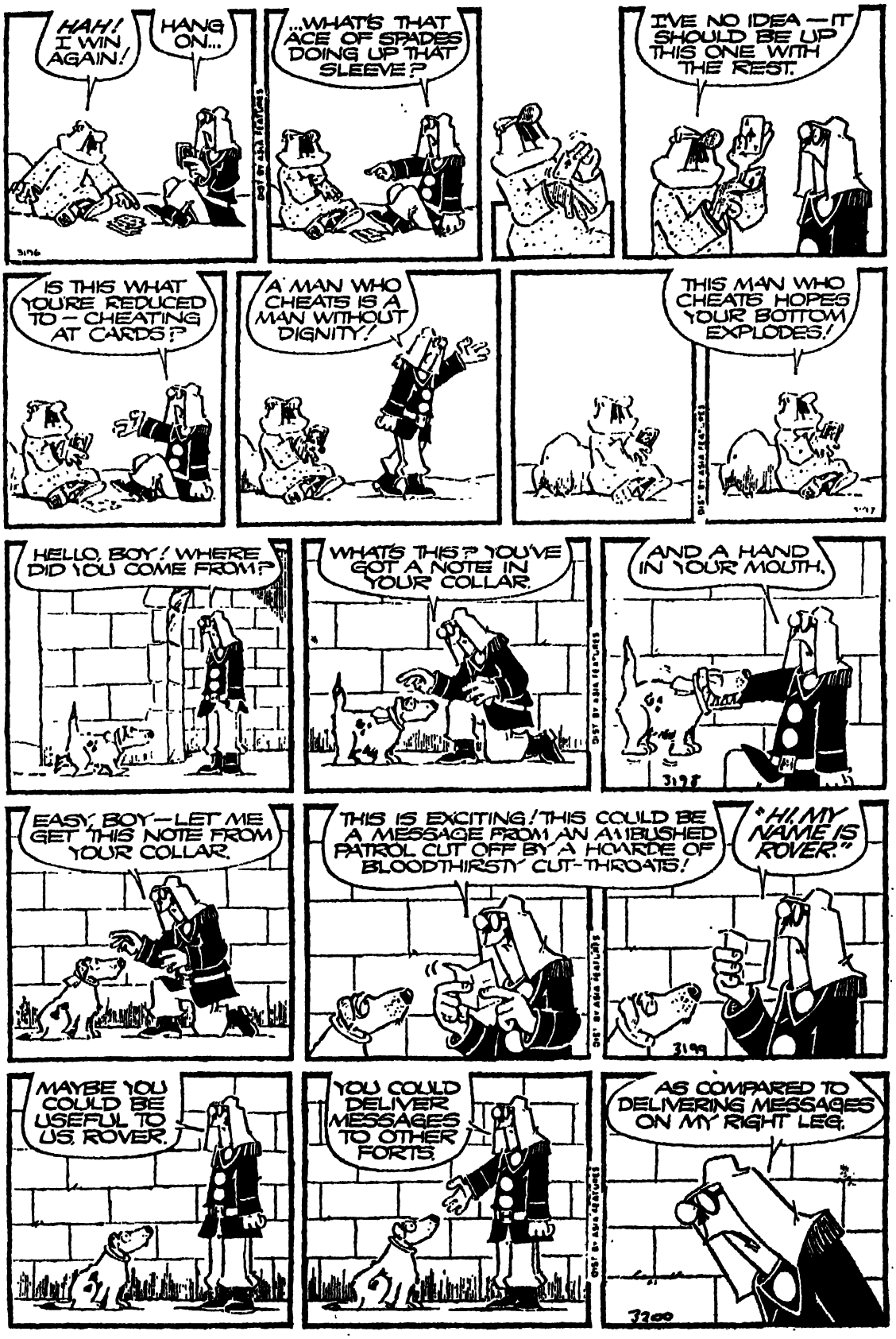
THE LOCKHORNS



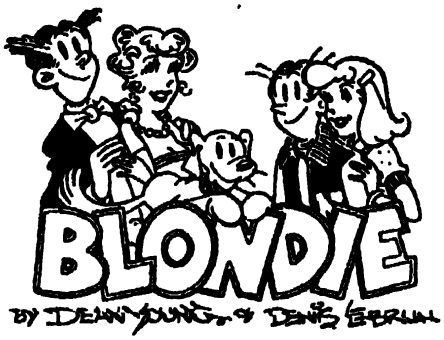
GARFIELD ▒ WATTERSON



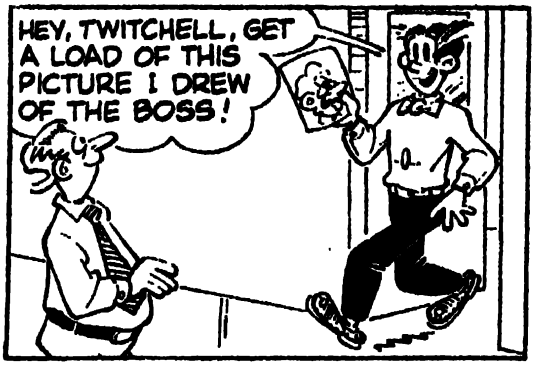
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE















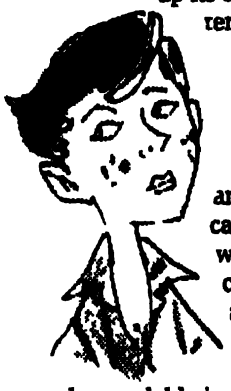


BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

Q *I get prickly heat rashes all over my body during summer. Can you suggest a solution to this problem?*
Swapan Paul, Cuttack.

A Prickly heat is a very common problem during summers. It is important to take cool drinks and light food so that the body builds up its own air-conditioning system from within. Cool *lassies*, drinks of mint, lemon, *jaljeera*, water melon juice etc., help in keeping the body cool. Try and avoid non-vegetarian and other heavy foods. You can make cooling *uptans* with sandalwood powder, cold milk and honey and apply it all over the affected areas. There are also various brands of talcum powder available in the market and they are very effective in combating prickly heat.



Q *I am a 25-year-old working woman. I have to travel a lot in the sun to reach my place of work everyday. My problem is that my hair has grown dull due to the heat and dust that I have to face everyday. Please advise.*
Meera Mukherjee, Calcutta

A With today's pollution, dust and grime, it is inevitable that hair, like the skin gets affected. Your major concern should be to ensure that your hair and skin are clean. Your hair requires extra conditioning.
For this, you can use a conditioner after shampooing your hair. You can make a conditioner at home with the following ingredients—two eggs, two mashed bananas and the juice of a lemon.
Apply this pack all over your hair and leave on for about an hour. Wash off normally.
Oiling the hair once a week is also recommended followed by steaming the hair with a hot towel. Henna is nature's most powerful conditioner and will make your hair soft, bouncy and lustrous. You could use it as henna conditioning twice a week will be of immense help.



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

To treat enlarged pores:

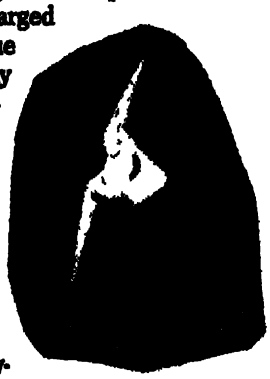
Rub an ice cube on the face as it helps to tone the skin

Q *I have read your suggestions regarding hair care. Can you please explain the correct way to steam hair. Should I apply the kaali mehendi or the red mehendi which is used on palms. Is there a need to shampoo one's hair before applying henna? Kindly elaborate.*
Sunita Sharma, Calcutta

A Steaming the hair is very easily done by dipping a large towel into hot water, wringing it out tightly and then wrapping it around your head allowing the steam to penetrate into the pores. This is also known as turban therapy. There is nothing really known as *kaali mehendi*, nothing at least that is totally natural. *Mehendi* powder is green in colour and gives a reddish tinge to the hair. It should be mixed with a cup of yoghurt, two eggs, the juice of a lemon and half a cup of *amla* powder. It is also important to remember that the hair should not have oil and should not be very greasy or dirty as the henna will not have its proper effect.

Q *I am a 24-year-old girl and have a very strange problem I have very big pores on my nose and cheeks which look frightfully ugly. Please advise.*
Amrita Gupta, Calcutta.

A You have a very common problem of enlarged pores. Enlarged pores are usually due to an excessively oily skin and it is important to understand that this type of skin requires a regular cleansing routine. I would suggest that you rub an ice cube over the enlarged pores and apply the following face pack after wiping with rose water. Mix two tsp of china clay with the juice of one lemon, two tsp of ground lentil and one tsp curd. Apply all over the face and neck area and leave on to dry. Wipe off with a sponge mixed in ice cold water. This is to be done thrice a week for a month until you



see an improvement. You must also remember that there is no permanent solution to your problem as you have a particular skin type. You can at best continue to adopt a regular skin care routine to offset the problem.

Q ***I am a 15-year-old girl and a regular reader of your column. I know that heredity plays a major role in determining the texture of hair but is there anything else one can do to have long, thick hair?***
Bhavna Verma,Calcutta

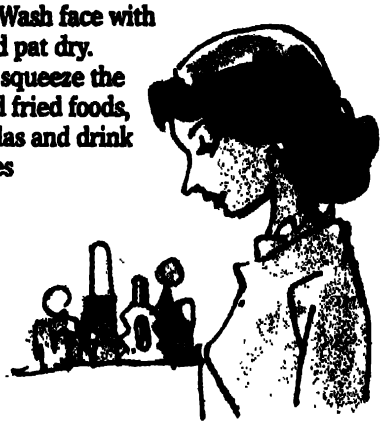
A It is nice to see that you are concerned about the need to look after yourself from a young age. This does not of course mean that you have to spend hours in front of the mirror scrutinising yourself but a10 minute routine will go a long way in making you feel good about yourself. At 15, it is important that you eat a nutritious diet and balance lots of exercise and fresh air with a regular study and eating time. Drink about 12 glasses of water everyday. You must also include milk and other dairy products like curd, cottage cheese and processed cheese.



Oil your hair with warm coconut oil once or twice a week.
Keep it on for about two to three hours before shampooing your hair. You could also put bhringraj oil in your hair as it is excellent for you. Remember to keep your hair and scalp very clean. This is a problem nowadays, because of the pollution.You could also include a tsp of pure almond oil in your milk once a day.

Q ***I am a 26 -year-old man with many pimples on my face. I have applied many types of cream but nothing seems to help. Please advise.***
Sachin Tarafdar, Calcutta.

A First of all, let me make this clear that if you have an oily skin and have been getting pimples, please avoid using of any kind of greasy creams on your face as this is only going to worsen the situation.Always try to keep your face scrupulously clean. Wipe your face with cold rose water several times a day and apply the following face pack—fuller's earth, ten ground cloves, lemon juice and rose water. Apply this evenly over the neck and face area and let it dry. Wash face with cold water and pat dry.



Never pick or squeeze the pimples. Avoid fried foods, sweets and colas and drink 10 to 12 glasses of water every day.
Check to see that you have any dandruff or constipation as both these ailments can cause pimples.
A healthy body will automatically lead to healthy skin and it is important that you take care of yourself internally as well as externally for a glowing complexion.

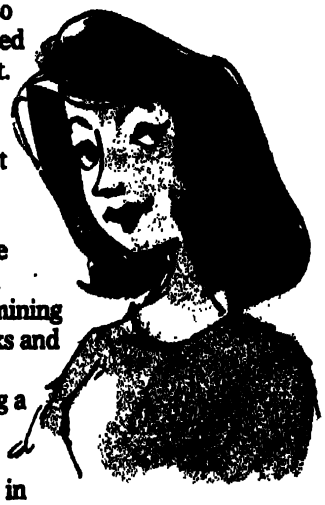
The right way to apply mehendi:

■

Mix it with a cup of yoghurt, two eggs, lemon juice and amla powder

Q ***I have dry and white hair with a lot of split ends. I do not even use a hair dye fearing that it may harm the quality of my hair. How do I get rid of the split ends and what is the best conditioner that one can use?***
Rakesh Nandi, Calcutta.

A Split ends arise due to under -nourished hair. The fact that you have mentioned that you hair is very dry also shows that you require to nourish your hair regularly. Mix two eggs, one cup of curd, amla powder, fenugreek seeds and shikakai powder and apply all over the hair. Leave on for about 30 minutes and use a mild shampoo to wash your hair.
Initially, you can also have the split ends removed by a professional. This will help better growth of hair. Also take a well-balanced and nutritious diet. Oil your hair regularly once a week and follow it up with turban therapy.



A regular hair care programme goes a long way in determining how your hair looks and feels
As far as not using a hair dye is concerned, it is true that the chemicals in the dye can harm your hair.
You can, however, use natural products such as henna for dying your hair.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



The French Connection

Celebrity chef, Richard Neat, shares his expertise in the kitchen with a select group of students. **Preah Narang** gives us a first person account

The five-day course held at Long Champ, the very French restaurant on the rooftop of the Taj Man Singh Hotel was a great success by any standards. Not only were we taught authentic contemporary French cuisine but we also got to eat a fantastic meal at the end of every session, when we could taste whatever we were taught each day. Needless to say, that we wanted to believe that we could or rather would be able to turn out the same on our own— only to have our hopes dashed in the privacy of our own kitchens. Richard Neat, the dashing blue-eyed chef at Long Champ was going to teach us for the next five days—we were handed out very well organised folders which told us what we were going to be learning. We were a group of 10 ladies and one man — all very excited to be doing something so different. It was a nice mixture of people —some could cook and some were good at ordering their cooks on what to cook . Some were hardcore non-vegetarians and some were vegetarians who wanted to learn something about non-vegetarian cooking. Anyway, we were all very lucky to get an opportunity to be able to see someone as accomplished as Richard cooking.

DAY 1: Our folder read 'Meats and Sauces', we learnt to make 'Chicken Jus, Guinea Fowl with sweet corn puree and Ballountine of Quail'. None of us had made any of this before, so we were looking forward to seeing all this being made in less than two hours—phew!

Richard broke the ice when he pulled out a dead quail from a pile of neatly arranged quails on a tray and executed it with a flourish. All 10 of us screamed. And then it was over until he wanted a volunteer. All of us demurred except one : she was going to behead the next quail!

Richard had worked so smoothly and with such ease that it all looked so simple. We realised how tough it must be when we saw our friend struggle with the bird.

The execution of the Guinea fowl was worse, being a bigger bird it was uglier but by now we were all used to it. By the time Richard was through with it, the Guinea fowl breasts looked very appetising—they had been roasted in the oven for about 10-12 minutes, deboned and seasoned, and then put aside till he prepared the other things that went with it .

The cylindrical shaped potatoes that Richard cut in precisely 30 seconds needed a lot of practice and skill. We, of course, did not realise this until

Guinea Fowl with Root Vegetables and Sweet Corn Puree

Ingredients	Quantity
Guinea fowl breasts (with bone)	2
Guinea fowl leg confit	60 gms
Butter	100 gms
Celeriac	150 gms
Carrots	150 gms
Potato	2 pieces
French rosemary	1 pinch
Chopped parsley	10 gms
Sweet corn	200 gms
Kenya beans	50 gms

Procedure:

★ Dice sweet corn, cover with water, boil, once cooked, liquidise and puree.

★ Cut potatoes in the shape of a cylinder and cook in half the butter.

★ Saute the diced carrots and celeriac, cook in a pan at 180°C for 14-15 minutes.

★ Toss the vegetables with Guinea fowl confit and sprinkle on chopped parsley.

★ Roast the guinea fowl breasts in the oven at 180°C for 12 minutes.

★ Toss the Kenya beans in butter.

★ Make a heap of the vegetables in the centre of the plate, pour in the sweet corn puree and place the potatoes on top.

★ De-bone the Guinea fowl breasts, cut into half and season.

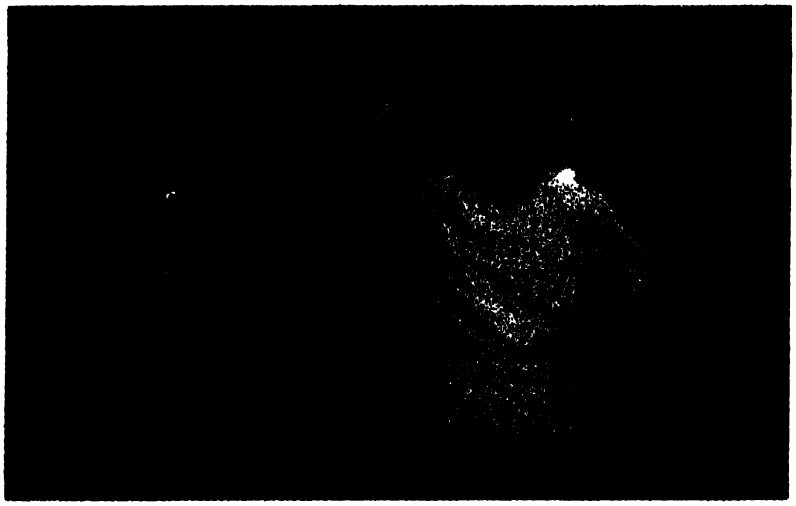
★ Place the breasts on top of the potatoes and top with Kenya beans and Chicken Jus.

Makes 4 portions

(a concentrated chicken stock) All the food smelt so nice, we could not wait to taste it. After all the cooking was over and all the food neatly arranged on individual plates, we were escorted out to the restaurant where we were to eat our lunch. We were all hungry by then and enjoyed every mouthful.

DAY 2: We learnt 'Soups and Vegetable dishes'. We were more relaxed with each other and were looking forward to learning 'Bouillon of Asparagus and Tagliatelle, Canneloni of White beans and Vichyssoise with poached Sole and Chives'. We were told how to choose good asparagus, how to keep it green after cooking and of course, how to enjoy eating it afterwards.

The Bouillon of Asparagus was quite a soup, a clear broth which when served looked like



one of us were told to try doing it. It took forever. Richard then suggested that we could dice the potatoes if we wanted.

The sweet corn puree sauce was the simplest and the tastiest. All Richard did was take tinned corn, puree and season it: and it was ready. One could also use this as a sauce for other things like vegetables or any other meat dish.

When all this was ready, he placed the vegetables in the centre of the plate, poured the sweet corn puree on top, placed the potatoes over it and finally placed the fowl breasts on top with the Kenya beans and Chicken Jus

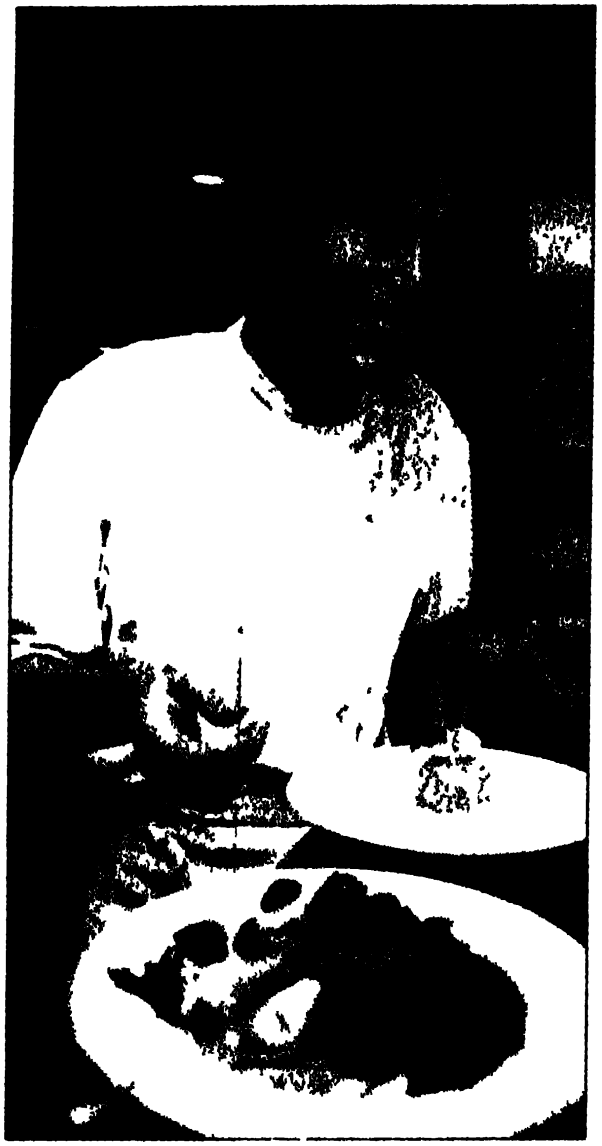
a cappuccino! Richard was very quick in preparing this soup as he told us that one has to keep two things in mind. Firstly, the asparagus should be put in a cold, salted water, just enough to cover it so that the flavour is concentrated, this should then be brought to the boil. Secondly, the asparagus for the garnish should always be refreshed in cold water after it is cooked so that it does not discolour into a pale yellow but remains a fresh green. Basically, there is a golden rule for cooking green vegetables— they should be cooked and cooled very quickly.

Richard then arranged the sauted rock lobster and mushrooms in a heated soup bowl. In a separate bowl, he whisked the bouillon till it got very frothy and then poured it over the garnish. This frothy effect would last for about 2-3 minutes, so the soup should be served immediately.

There was a lot of interaction between Richard and us, he was very happy to answer any question any number of times. He had even taken the trouble to give all of us a list of telephone numbers and addresses from where we could get certain ingredients that were not easily available in the market.

DAY3: We were taught 'Fish and Stocks'. This was one of my favourite days as I have always wanted to learn a simple hollandaise sauce and that was what we were going to learn today along with smoked salmon roularde and sole with deep fried oysters and brandade sauce. The hollandaise sauce was very simple, a clear recipe, not one of those complicated lengthy procedures which take hours and hours to accomplish. Richard took four eggs and beat them in a double boiler. When they were frothy, he added the olive oil very gradually to make a stable emulsion. He then added the vinegar and the seasoning, and it was ready! It looked so rich and perfect.

He than moved on to prepare the sole. The sauce was easy to prepare; he cooked the onions and leeks, and when they were nearly done, he added the fish trimmings, stirred it well and then finished it with cream. The mixture was then pureed and some more cream was added. This sauce was then kept aside. The fish acquired a golden hue after having been cooked in the



must try it if you are ever at Long Champ.

Day 4: Read 'Salad and Hors D'oeuvres'. This session was simpler than the first three—at least we thought so. We learnt ravioli of prawns, salad of duck with sardine puree and tartar of red mullet with roasted tomato and squid, again all very unusual, but Richard gave us many alternatives. We could substitute the duck for chicken and the mullet for avocado or aubergine, though, of course, you cannot expect it to taste the same.

The ratatouille mixture for the ravioli filling was easy and quick to make. All the different peppers made it look very colourful. All the vegetables were sauted and seasoned until soft. Four tablespoons of this mixture was then taken out and put aside for the filling. To the remaining, tomato puree was added. This gave it a nice rich colour. When handling the pasta for the ravioli, Richard told us to be careful not to use any extra pasta as an overlap, anything extra should be trimmed away, "people want to eat the filling, not some rubbery pasta!"

He showed us how to cut, fold and bind the pasta, after which it was blanched for two minutes, not more and immediately put in cold water. These ravioli pieces could then be put on an oiled plate, covered with cling film and kept in the fridge till needed. Just before serving, all one has to do is put in hot water and follow the recipe.

Richard first put the ratatouille mixture on the plate over which he



oven for a couple of minutes.

This dish looked surprisingly light. A nice dish to serve in summer. This session went off very smoothly, all of us felt very comfortable and confident that we would be able to turn out the same food at home Our lunch was delicious—we were served a delicious raisin bread that was a big hit—you

Chocolate Souffle

Ingredients	Quantity
Milk	1000 ml
Normandy butter (unsalted)	150 gms
Flour	90 gms
Cocoa powder	40 gms
Breakfast sugar	630 gms
Egg yolks	16
Bitter chocolate	100 gms
Egg whites	10

Procedure:

★ Boil milk, make a paste with butter, chocolate powder and flour.
★ Add milk and cook, whisking continuously till very thick.
★ Mix in egg yolk and sugar to above mixture and cook for 30 minutes.
★ Set aside and add chopped chocolate to it.
★ Beat egg white to soft peak and fold in the chocolate mixture.
★ Grease mould with butter, dust with chocolate powder and sugar.
★ Pour in the above mixture and bake at 180°C for 12 minutes
★ Serve hot with ice-cream.



placed the sauted ravioli, garnished it and it was ready to be served. It looked very beautiful, all the vegetables gave the ravioli the lift it needed. The one thing I notice was that all the plates were white—this made the food stand out more than the crockery. And that's the way it should be.

Day 5: We were going to learn 'Desserts'. All of us were aware of the number of calories would be adding to our lives, but they were worth it. There was a hot chocolate souffle, tarte tartin and a rice and mango pudding with lime sauce and pineapple sorbet. Richard advised us to get the sorbet from Baskin Robbins, but he gave us the proportions of a basic fruit sorbet in case we got adventurous. It is as follows: I kg sugar to 1 kg fruit cooked and then pureed in one litre of water, then put the mixture in a sorbet machine.

The chocolate souffle was a dark rich colour which he got by whisking the chocolate mixture continuously over the fire until it left the sides. It took time but it was well worth it. This mixture can be kept aside for 24 hours.

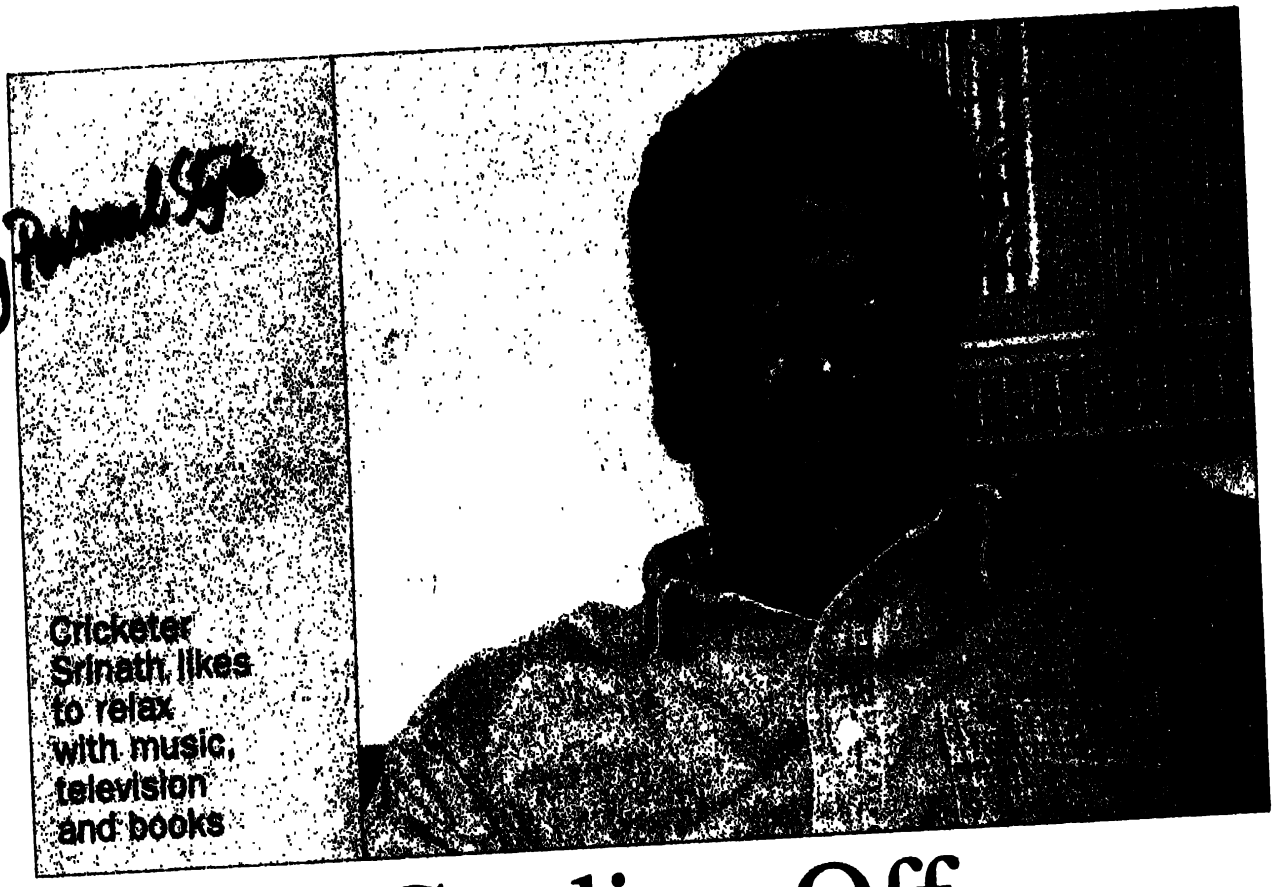
When whisking the egg whites, we were advised to use a hand whisk. "Why?" we all asked. The answer: because while whisking the egg whites the air bubbles should be small and uniform so that they have the potential to expand and rise in the oven. Over beating makes the eggs too stiff and makes the air bubbles very big—so they do not have the potential to expand and rise in the oven. Also the souffle dish was well lined with butter and then dusted with a cocoa powder so that the mixture does not stick to the dish.

The souffle was put in the oven for 12 minutes and came out smelling divine and looking heavenly! All the desserts looked like pieces of art— the perfectly risen pompous souffle, the caramelised and beautifully bronzed tarte tartin and the vibrant and fresh mango pudding. After eating all this we went home kilos heavier and feeling very sad that the course was over.

We were asked for any suggestions we may have, anything we thought was lacking—they were so open to suggestions and criticisms that we felt that they really wanted to serve us the best they could. We got our certificates, aprons and folders to take home —the only thing missing was Richard's mobile number in case of an emergency. ■

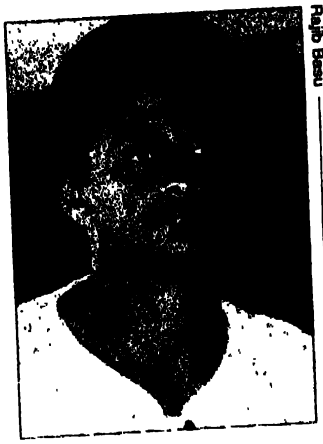
Note: Richard Neat will be conducting classes at Long Champ, at Delhi's Taj ManSingh Hotel. For further information, please call 011-3016162

My Personal Space



Cricketer Srinath likes to relax with music, television and books

Cooling Off



Ralph Baiel

FIT AND FINE :

Being a sportsman, staying fit is *numero uno* on my list of priorities. I naturally have to follow a rigorous exercise regime. In fact, I quite enjoy it. The injury I suffered on my right shoulder last year and the subsequent surgery has not imposed any restrictions on my exercising. On the contrary, I am into more exercises these days, albeit of a different kind.

I prefer spending my leisure hours by doing simply nothing. This is particularly because given the tight schedule we cricketers are subjected to nowadays, time, which we can call our own, is at a premium, to say the very least.

Thus, whenever I am at home in Bangalore, I indulge in the luxury of relaxing. If the break from the game is for a mere couple of days, I prefer to just sit back, put my feet up and cherish these moments of being only with myself.

If, however, the time at my disposal is substantially long, then of course, I like doing several other things — like socialising, meeting up with old friends, relatives and people who really matter to me. And of course, entertaining, as well.

I try and catch up on my reading as well — Sidney Sheldon, Jeffrey Archer, John Grisham being some of the authors whose books I enjoy browsing through. Serious stuff, frankly, is not quite my cup of tea.

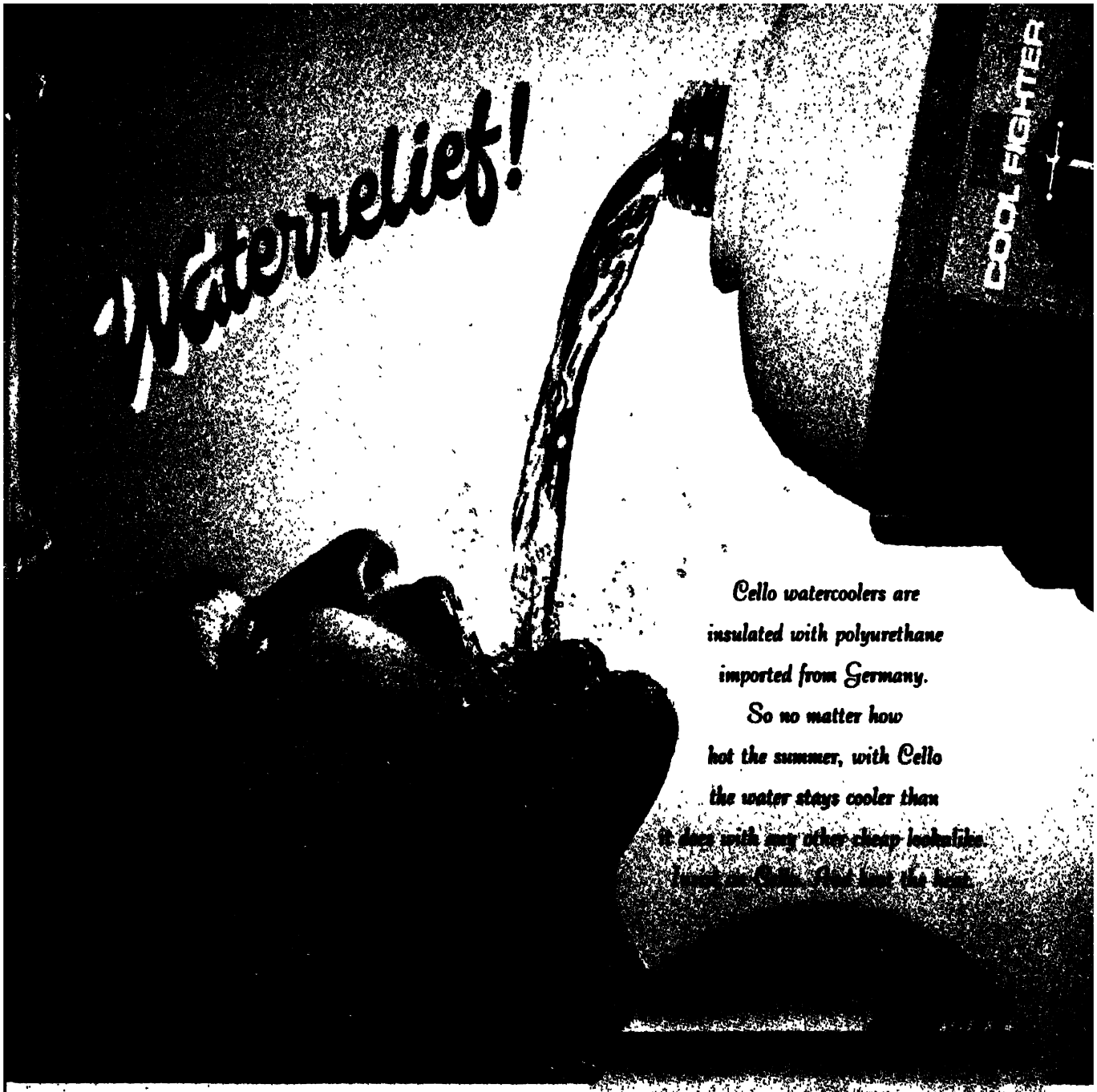
Travelling does not usually have a place on my agenda. My normal schedule involves so much of travelling that given a choice, I'd rather stay at home and watch television. The Discovery Channel holds a special appeal for me as well as the movie and sports channels. I tune in to popular music quite often — there's no better remedy to soothe the nerves which get frayed by the constant tension and pressure we are subjected to.

Being a sportsman, staying fit is *numero uno* on my list of priorities. I, naturally, have to follow a rigorous exercise regime. In fact, I quite enjoy it. The injury I suffered on my right shoulder early last year and the subsequent surgery has not imposed any restrictions on my exercising. On the contrary, I am into more exercises these days, albeit of a different kind.

I have to follow a strict diet — just cannot go on an eating binge even though I often wish I could. Sweets are an absolute no-no for me. Fried and fatty food are also to be avoided. I am a strict vegetarian.

I would be doing a gross injustice if I did not mention that playing cricket is also my way of relaxing. The fact is, cricket is an obsession with me. It's my lifeblood though sometimes the non-stop matches do tend to tire me out emotionally and physically. It is this very game which helps revive and revitalise me.

■ As told to Madhumita Ganguly



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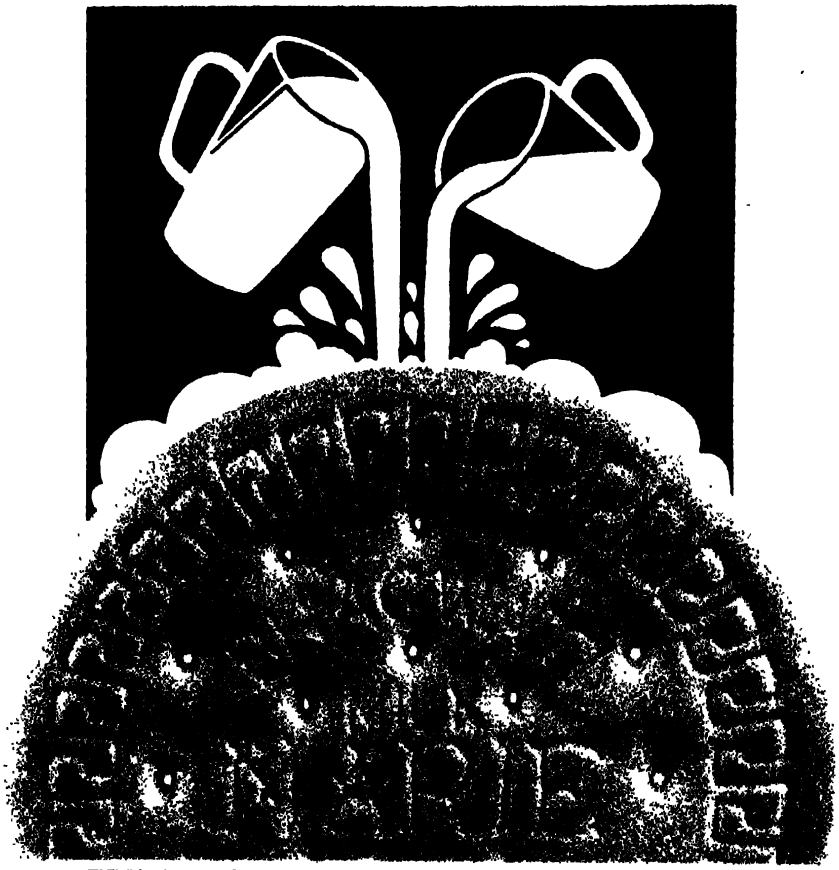
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POST MORTEM

Namaste Girl

Thank you for your cover story on Persis Khambatta ('The Star's Trek', April 26). As an Indian, one feels proud of her successful stint as a model and actress for several prestigious assignments — both national and international. But alas, time has left its scars on a woman who was once a bewitching beauty and the toast of Hollywood. Perhaps, it is best for her to make a graceful exit as a successful Hollywood star and open a professional modelling agency or a training school instead of trying her luck on the small screen.

Gargi Mukherjee, Calcutta



Persis Khambatta might be the first Indian to make it big in Hollywood. But she should have returned earlier to repeat the feat in Bollywood. The fact that she managed to 'further her career abroad' should be consolation enough now.

Mani Jena, Durgapur

It is heartening to know that Miss India of 1965 did so well in Hollywood. Her decision to settle down in India is certainly welcome. But she should devote more time and energy for charity work in the country where 36 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. She still possesses a big and beautiful smile which should come in handy for any humanitarian work.

Sukla Das, Jamshedpur

The Telegraph

7 JUNE 1998

PAGE 14

Picture Perfect

The fashion industry comprises not only models,designers and choreographers but also the feisty photographers who freeze the images which make up the Indian fashion scene

PAGE 12

The Best

Despite 30-odd television channels vying for space, channel surfing remains the sacred right of the viewers

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Theatre personality Feisal Alkazi likes to wear Indian clothes

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PROFILE

Mock 'n' Tell

That's what Sai Paranjpye, noted filmmaker and a versatile writer, tries to do—adding humour to mundane situations, says **Geeta Sharma**

Several years ago, at a sheep farm in Australia, a little girl would sit for hours at a stretch on a rocking chair, staring dreamy eyed into space. The lady in the neighbouring farmhouse, worried at the frequent sight, finally came over one day to ask the girl's mother about it. The mother simply told her, "It's OK, she is busy weaving stories."

The worried neighbour, walked away, a little bewildered at the explanation. Little did she know why she was told that. Barely a year before that, when the mother and daughter were in Pune, India, the mother had told her little girl one fine day, to tell her a bed time story for a change. The little one did, not one, but several. The mother could not believe that her daughter had imagined them all. And when more stories came rolling out of her mouth, the mother made her write them all down and got them published.



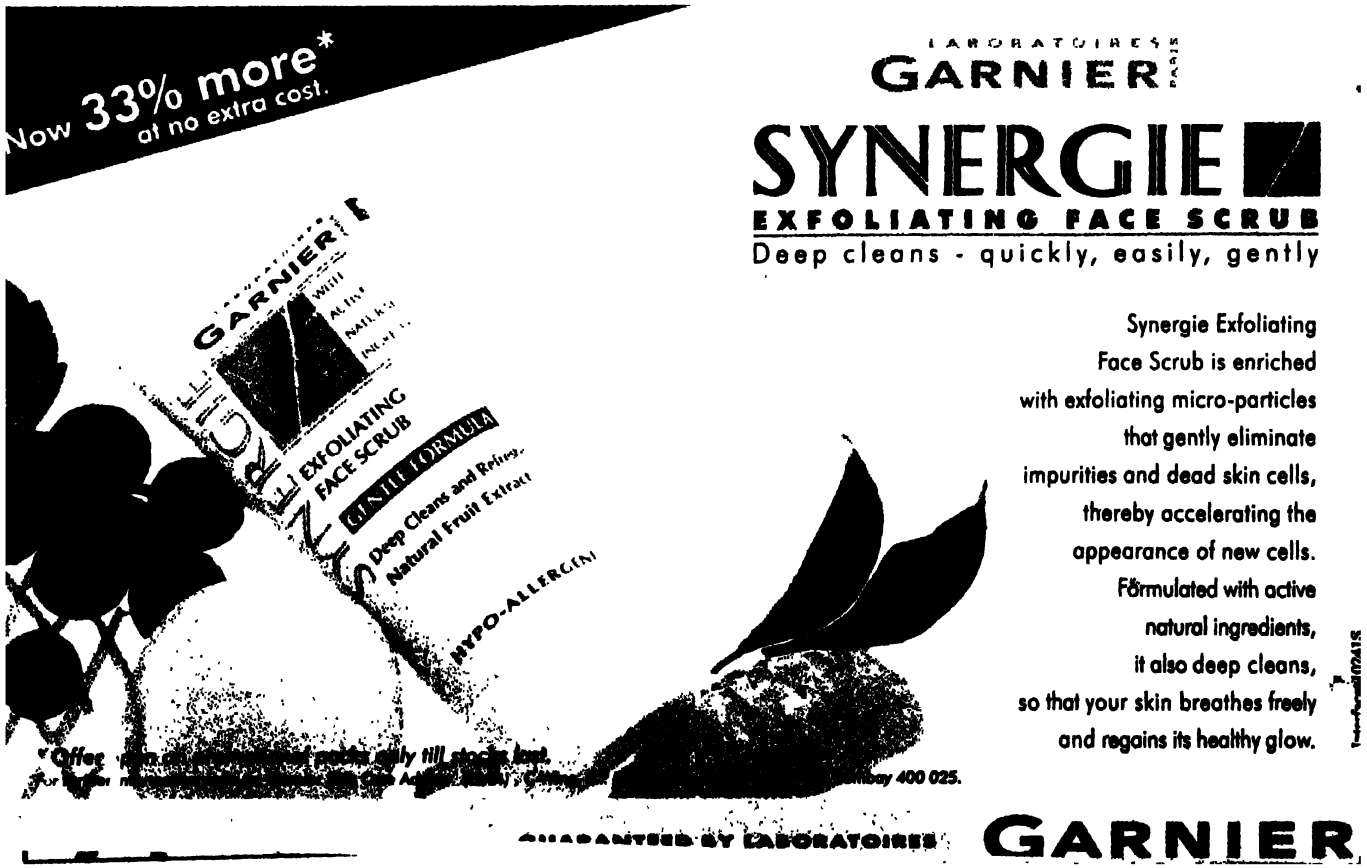
Kishan Chaterjee

Sai Paranjpye: Sunny thoughts

And so with the publication of *Mulancha Mewa*, (Children's Sweets) Sai Paranjpye became, perhaps the youngest of authors of her times. And why not. Imagination has always been Sai's strongest point, to which she has added her other natural attribute — humour— and lent a lighter hue to the most mundane of situations.

In fact, it is there for all to see in the work of this versatile personality. Be it the books and plays she has penned, the plays she has acted in or directed, or the films and tele-serials she has produced. Her sense of compassion and comedy are all too evident.

In her films for instance, take the story of three college-mates falling in love with the same girl in *Chashme Buddoor*; or the twist of fate in the parallel story of two village youth who come to Mumbai, in *Disha*; or the re-vamped version of the 'Hare and the



Tortoise' fable in *Katha*, where in keeping with the modern times, it is the fast-talking hare that scores.

And all through what comes across in Paranjpye's work is the conviction that one can make a very entertaining and appealing programme out of serious mundane stuff. It is with this approach that Sai, as Chairperson of the National Centre of Films for Children and Young People (NCYP) is making a tele-magazine for children called *Bal Doot*, and producing *Behna*, a tele-serial on women's empowerment

"So what if women's empowerment is a dry subject. One can still make it absorbing and dramatic," Sai maintains. The 13-episode serial features women who have become sarpanches, have fought against alcoholism or taken up jobs like plumbing, locomotive driving and so on.

A modest Paranjpye says she owes whatever she is today to her mother, Shakuntala Paranjpye, a social worker and Marathi playwright Her mother had divorced her Russian husband and came back to live in India with Sai, her only child. So Sai was brought up by her maternal family, first in Australia, where her grandfather, Sir Raghunath Paranjpye was posted as India's first high commissioner, and then in Pune, Maharashtra.

Sai recalls that her mother who never remarried, directed all her attention to her only child. "She would make me write three pages of Sanskrit *shlokas* or something or the other every day. I could not go out to play till I had done so and even today, I can recite the *shlokas* like a parrot!"

Sai tells you that she still fights over it all with her mother, who at age 91, lives alone in Pune. "My daughter Winnie, tells me, 'Ma, you are ridiculous, you are actually digging out old tales from the past and fighting over them.'"

But in the same breath, Sai also tells you that had it not been for her mother's insistence and efforts, she might not have been what she is today.

A candid Sai admits that though she had not inherited the 'intelligence' of her illustrious and educationist grandfather, she was considerably good at other activities — drama, debating and elocuting. "There was not a play in school that could be done without me," she boasts.

As a fat and plump child, Sai was not good at outdoor games. So to keep her friends from leaving her alone and running away to play, she would use her strong point —her imagination — to invent games involving thieves and robbers, ogres and magicians and "even involve cooks, aunts and grandmothers in the intrigues."

From school to Pune's Fergusson college and to her first job, as a



Sai with daughter Winnie: Very much a family person

Marathi radio announcer, theatre remained Paranjpye's first love. Along the way, in the mid-seventies, her affair with television began. And even though it made her shift her base from Mumbai to Delhi, it only saw Sai team up with husband, Arun Joglekar, to float a theatre outfit called Natya Dwayi.

In fact so deep was their involvement with theatre that Sai and Joglekar continued their professional association even after their divorce.

Also while in Delhi, discipline was an attribute that Sai picked up during her theatre training days under the indomitable Ebrahim Alkazi. So the lack of it in Mumbai, when she went back there, made her give up theatre for films and television. She met with instant success there too as her very first film *Sparsh*—a tender love story between a blind school principal and a divorced woman— won six awards including the President's gold medal.

On her last year's release, *Saaz*, that has evoked instant interest and comparisons with the lives of the famous Mangeshkar sisters, Sai is vehement in maintaining otherwise. "Of course, it was inspired by the sisters and there may be a couple of instances similar to their lives, but then it has a lot of real life instances from my life too in it," Sai points out.

Paranjpye says she had always wanted to explore the grey shades of a relationship where you had someone stand so close to you as a rival and "that is what I have tried to do in *Saaz*."

As for her indomitable sense of humour, Sai again credits it to her mother. "It was she who taught me to laugh at myself and that can be a big weapon, mind you." The grand diva of romantic comedy says she is sick of the fake and phoney stuff that is shown in Hindi films day in and day out. "You have children addressing their parents as '*Pitaji* and *Mataji*' and wives groveling at their '*Pati Parmeshwar's*' feet. Come on, no one does that today," she says.

And surely, Sai believes, there are several humorous moments and delightful encounters in husband-wife relationships that we simply miss out on. It is precisely this over-sight, where humour is the casualty, that she has made an intrinsic part of her work. "But mind you, my humour is never without compassion," she adds.

Little wonder then that this approach is also determining Paranjpye's next film venture. If all goes well, it would be an Indo-French collaboration that would show Indians, not as poverty -struck, sorrowful beings, but as warm, affectionate, fun loving happy folks.

Sai has been as much a family person as a creative career person. Strongly attached to her mother, who lives in Pune with her son and her daughter Winnie, Sai has also made it a point to keep in touch with her step-siblings. "My father was quite a thing. I have three step-brothers and sisters — French and Italian step-sisters (the latter is no more) and a Martinicase step-brother. I am the closest to my French step-sister, even though she is almost 20 years younger to me!" reveals the lady with a sunny touch. ■



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a 22-year-old girl studying in college. I have a boyfriend who lives in Delhi. My problem is that he does not contact me very often. In fact, during the five years that we have been together, he has come down to see me only once. It seems to me that I alone have to take the initiative in our relationship, calling him up etc, as he does not seem to be interested in writing to me. When confronted, however, he says that there is no one else in his life. Please advise me as to what I should do. Should I end the relationship ?*



XYZ, Darjeeling

A. Although your friend seems sincerely fond of you, I feel the friendship lacks commitment on his part. There is no reason for you to break off this friendship, but the point is that you should not make any life plans on the basis of this elusive individual. Most girls your age visualise settling down and starting a family, although I strongly feel that this is not the only objective today's women should be looking forward to. You must not build up an imaginary or illusory scenario which could lead to heartbreak later on. Try to start meeting up with young men and women who live in the same town as you do, and once again become responsive to your own social environment and I am sure you will encounter your hero some day.

Q. *I am a 20-year-old student. My problem is that I am obsessed with rich, handsome and smart men, preferably celebrities. Due to this reason, I cannot pay attention to ordinary men that I meet in everyday life. Moreover, I truly believe that I am going to marry a man of my dreams (the rich, handsome type, of course!). My parents, however, cannot understand my mind and are keen to arrange my marriage soon. I am very scared as I want to study further till someday, I meet the man of my dreams, instead of being trapped in a loveless marriage with the liability my parents find for me. What should I do?*



Obsessed with rich, handsome men? As you grow older, you will certainly realise that real heroism comes with dignity, decency and other ordinary things. So-called celebrities, on the other hand, are often vain and disappointing on a personal level

ABC, Asansol

A. You are obviously an incurable romantic. The funny thing about incurable romantics is that the heavens do sometimes bend down to gift them their heart's wish. I certainly agree with you about resisting the compulsion to settle down in a loveless marriage. Where I do not agree with you is in your definition of the extraordinary man. As you grow older, you will certainly realise that real heroism comes with dignity, decency and other ordinary things. So-called celebrities, on the other hand, are often vain and disappointing on a personal level. So do not discard the people in your immediate environment as being too ordinary.



Q. *I am a 26-year-old girl and I always used to be under the impression that my parents are very liberal and would allow me to do whatever I wanted. With regards to my career, I always knew that I wanted to stand on my own feet. I was not very enthusiastic about the teaching profession, although my parents were. After completing my Honours in Bio-Science, I came to Calcutta to pursue a good vocational course but in the meantime, I got admitted to the Master's Degree which my parents insisted I complete and I did not disregard their wishes. At the moment, I am doing nothing concrete. I am also too old for giving competitive exams. To top it all, my parents are trying to fix my marriage. I feel totally let down by them as they did not allow me to pursue any vocational course and now they want to tie me down with marriage. What should I do?*

S.S, Agartala

A. I really think 26 is too old to blame your parents for everything. On the other hand, 26 is not too old to pursue a vocational course if you really want to. I think what you lack in life is a sense of momentum or urgency. Where your parents have probably failed is in giving you too much security. Perhaps it is time for you to pick up the threads of your own life and proceed determinedly in the direction of your desire.



Q. ***I am a student of a co-educational school. My problem is that I get attracted to nearly every boy I meet. I, of course, know that this is a normal tendency but in my case, it seems to be getting exaggerated. This is more of a problem as boys find me irresistible. At such an young age, I have had several affairs. I recently got engaged to an engineering student. I feel that I might make a disaster out of my marriage, given my tendency. Please advise me.***

A.B, Calcutta

A. Being a compulsive flirt does not really pay off in the long run. In such a frame of mind, you forget to invest in integrity and trust into your fleeting relationships. This sort of compulsive flirtation is really a form of intense vanity, for you are simply looking to confirm your own self-image of being irresistibly attractive. Real and lasting relationships, on the other hand, consist of loving, giving and sharing. Think about what I have said. Good luck!

Q. ***I am a 35-year-old woman married to a London-based man. I had an arranged marriage. After my marriage, I got to spend a few days with my husband after which he promised that he would take me to London, once the visa formalities were over. I was staying with my in-laws who started treating me very badly and demanding dowry. In the meantime, I did not hear a word from my husband. I have tried to file for a divorce but even the attorney is very discouraging saying that they have sent a letter to my husband but he has not replied. I want justice. What should I do?***



Compulsive flirt? This sort of flirtation is really a form of intense vanity, for you are simply looking to confirm your own self-image of being irresistibly attractive. Real and lasting relationships, on the other hand, consist of loving, giving and sharing

D.R.S, Assam

A. You seem to be stuck in an unsavoury situation which is further precipitated by an incompetent lawyer. You have not mentioned your parents — have you discussed your problem with them? Is it possible for you to move back with them? But all these are secondary issues, and the first and most important thing you have to do is find a competent lawyer. Try approaching a women's cell in your area. They offer counselling, and some even offer free legal aid. At this point in your life, you must keep up your courage, and I am sure you will come out on top.

Q. ***I am an outgoing 25-year-old girl working in a famous ad-agency. My problem is that the office environment in the place I work is rather nasty. People are always gossiping and back-biting here. I don't want to be a party to this and have thus been forced to keep to myself. This has given my colleagues the impression that I am a snob. I am finding the situation intolerable but I cannot give up my job as it gives me immense job satisfaction. But the sense of alienation that I feel is depressing me. What should do?***



Ira Bhowmick, Calcutta

A. There is something about advertising agencies — the atmosphere is always nasty and full of gossip and back-biting. Creative people work best under pressure, and often they build up this pressure artificially in the form of office politics.. Deep down inside, I am sure they are all perfectly nice and likeable people. I think you should let down your defenses and learn to become one of the crowd. When you operate in a participative mode, you will be surprised to find how much camaraderie there really is, despite the surface tension.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

FOCUS

Fast Forward

There are many reasons to lay off food these days, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**. You may wish to make a political point, follow the tenets of your religion, or just lose a few kilos

Call it a means of non violent protest, an upsurge of religious sentiments, or a plain health fad, but fasting seems to have become the buzzword of those craving attention Not since Mahatma Gandhi took up fasting to spiritualise the Indian freedom struggle, has fast ing cast such a halo around its practitioners



Princess Diana Starving or fasting can cleanse the system but it may also lead to eating disorders

Take the case of the six Tibetans who went on an indefinite fasts-unto-death at Delhi's Jantar Mantar They attracted the attention of both the national and international press, and none other than Hollywood star and celebrity Buddhist, Richard Gere, flew down to commiserate with them The result was a media frenzy which continued long after Gere had moved on to other things

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of the Tibetans, however, spoke of his disapproval of the self-immolation attempts and the fasts-unto-death as methods of protest He was referring to Thupten Ngodup who had set himself on fire and the six Tibetans who were admitted to the Ram Manohar Lohia hospital when they



Tibetans from the northeastern state

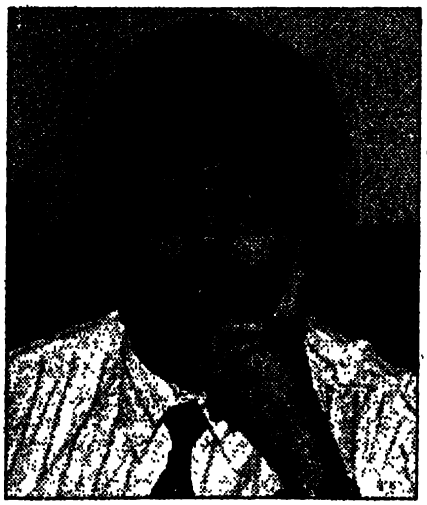
were on the verge of completing 50 days of fasting Thupten succumbed t his burn injuries, but the other six were reported to be gaining in strength after being force-fed with food and fruit juice — never mind the morality of such a move in the land of Gandhiji

This incident did not stop five more Tibetans from starting a second round of fasts-unto-death. Outside the tents, 50 monks and an equal number of nuns sat on two separate carpets, chanting prayers. They had arrived from Dharamsala in Himachal Prades and had begun a 48-hour hunger strik in support of the five volunteers

As the Tibetans had the world agog, news of a Jain Muni's record-breaking fast also did the rounds. In the ultimate victory of spirit over flesh, the Jain spiritual leader, Tapa Smarat Sri Sahajmuni, was felicitated

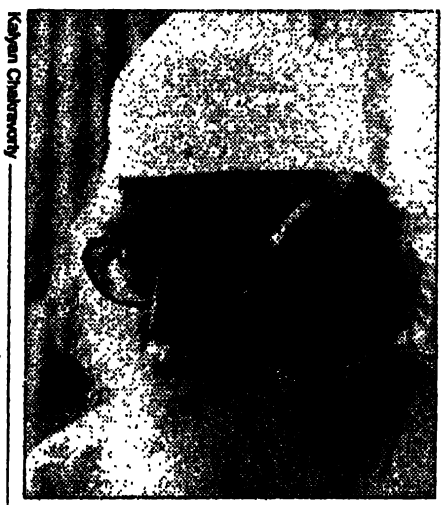


-hour fast: Drawing international media attention



Dr Achal Bhagat

at a grand function in Bangalore to commemorate 365 days of fasting on April 30. The muni broke his fast on May 1 this year.



Kalyan Chakravarty

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

A function was organised under the aegis of the Sri Vardhaman Sthanakwasi Jain Shravak Sangh. Thousands of men, women and children thronged the place to catch a glimpse of the sage. Since 1964, the muni had been fasting for 21 to 201 days. The last fast was for the sake of world peace and self-purification through the entire span of which he survived on half a glass of water once a day before sunset.

The system of fasting is as old as religion itself. According to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, president of the Islamic Centre, fasting in Arabic means *Saum* (abstinence). Adds Amrita Srinivasan, associate professor at IIT, Delhi, "It is a weapon of self-restraint—a kind of action you inflict upon your body."

Fasting has been practiced worldwide from ancient times onwards by the founders and followers of many religions, by culturally designated individuals for initiation rites and by individuals or groups for whom the fast constitutes a symbolic protest against violations of social, ethical or political principles.

In the religions of ancient people and civilisations, fasting was used to to prepare people, especially priests and priestesses, to approach the deities. In the Hellenistic mystery religions, the Gods often revealed their divine teaching in dreams and visions only after a fast that required the total concentration of devotees.

Among the pre-Columbian people of Peru, fasting often was one of the requirements for penance after the confession of sins before a priest. In many cultures the practice was considered a means to assuage an angered deity or to aid in resurrecting a deity who was believed to have died.

Fasting for specific purposes or before or during special sacred times is a characteristic feature of the major religions of the world. In Jainism, for example, fasting according to certain prescribed rules and practising certain types of meditations lead a person to attain a transcendent state. "For them, fasting is almost a matter of daily discipline. A person might fast once every week or even every alternate day," points out Srinivasan, "without giving up any of the normal day-to-day activities."

Buddhist monks fast on certain days and confess their sins in quiet whispers. Among the Western religions, only Zorastrianism prohibits

fasting because of its belief that such a form of asceticism will not aid in strengthening the faithful in their struggle against evil.

Western religions like Judaism, Christianity and Islam emphasise upon fasting during certain periods. Judaism which developed many dietary laws and customs observes several annual fasts, mostly on days of penitence (the Day of Atonement) or mourning. Christianity, specially Roman Catholicism and Eastern Christianity used to observe a 40-day fast period during Lent, a spring period of penitence and during Advent, a penitential period before Christmas.

Among Roman Catholics, the observance has been modified since the second Vatican Council (1962-65) to allow greater individual choice, with compulsory fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Protestant churches usually leave the question of fasting to the conscience of individual church members.

"The Muslim practice of keeping *Rosa*—an Urdu word signifying fast—in the month of Ramzan when no food may be eaten from dawn to sundown, was ordained by the Koran to foster a feeling of oneness," says Maulana Wahiduddin. He adds, that our being exists in two forms: the physical and the spiritual. Fasts are meant to weaken the physical being——that require food and water—so that the spiritual self dominates. This principle he says, applies to both Hindus and Muslims.

The incidence of fasting among Hindus has led to restrictions on food in some form or the other. Brahmins are supposed to fast on the 11th day after the new moon and after the full moon. "Vegetarianism is a form of abstinence, for instance, and even among meat-eating communities, certain types of food are prohibited on particular days," says Srinivasan.

She adds that specific types of fasts where a person might not have cereals or food cooked with salt have made possible a very personal regimen of fasting. Indian women are forever giving up some food or the other; they are expected to fast for the welfare of their family, though the same does not apply for men. Agrees Ravinder Kaur, assistant professor, at IIT's Humanities and Social Sciences department, "A Hindu woman's worth was dependent on the well-being of her husband



Kalyan Chakravorty

Sailen Chatterjee



Kalyan Chakravorty

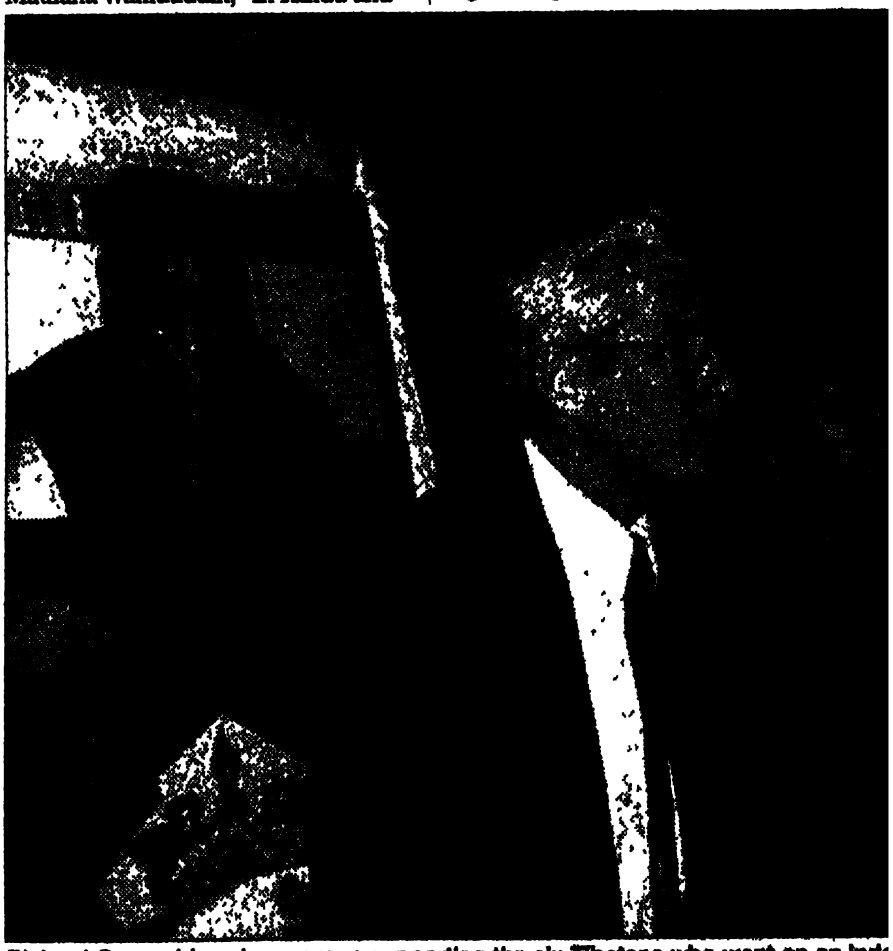
Amrita Srinivasan

which prompted her to make these sacrifices for the family."

The significance of fasting always varies from faith to faith. Says Maulana Wahiduddin, "In Hindu and Buddhist religions, fasting is related to shakti. People are known to acquire a certain level of spiritual enlightenment and are often deified in the process. But apart from self purification (*tazkia*), Islam does not believe in an individual's elevation to demi-god

status—he remains where he is."

Mahatma Gandhi, a Vaishnavite, was perhaps the first to take fasting to the political arena, and on more than one occasion—in 1924 and 1947, for instance— fasted for communal harmony. He wrote to Shaukat Ali on September 19, 1924, "My religion says that only he who is prepared to suffer can pray to God. Fasting and prayer are common injunctions in my reli-



Richard Gere addressing a group supporting the six Tibetans who went on an indi



Mahatma Gandhi: First to take fasting to the political arena



Delhi's Janfar Mantar

gion. But I know of this sort of penance even in Islam..... After I have fasted and prayed I shall be all the stronger, with all my reverence for slam to appeal to both the communi- ies. It is my firm belief that the trength of the soul grows in propor- tion as you subdue the flesh...."

Sailen Chatterjee, a veteran journalist associated with Gandhiji for the last three years of his life, recalls "a local miracle at Calcutta when Gandhiji undertook a fast to stop hooliganism and riots in the city." Gandhiji who had begun the fast on September 1, 1947, agreed to "end it only if and when sanity returns to Calcutta". On September 4, says Chatterjee, when "the people responsible for the killings surrendered their weapons before him pledging never to resort to violence again" Gandhiji knew he had succeeded in doing what his "word in person could not...."

But his fasts had their effect only because people cared enough to be moved by the code of self-discipline he undertook to purify himself, and in effect, the world around him. "A fasting person must have some moral worth to be able to command that kind of influence," says Kaur. It is not the same as an ordinary person fasting to create awareness. In all his fasts—the duration ranging from 24 hours to 21 days—Gandhiji permitted himself "to drink water to which was added salt and soda bicarb," says Chatterjee. Very often, at Natal in South Africa or later, at the Sabarmati Ashram, Gandhiji fasted for moral lapses among the Ashramites.

In today's world, fasting has retained its spritual clout, encompassing a broad cultural fabric where both the rich and the poor—who have so little to eat—observe fasts with equal fervour, says Srinivasan. But what may have increased its contemporary value are health clinics urging people to follow various dietary patterns.

While starving for certain days in the week can actually cleanse the system for those who are well-fed, syndromes related to eating disorders have also become common. "Anorexia nervosa, which is fasting in a pathological sense, is one such case in point," says Srinivasan. "In a bid to control the world, the young woman exercises control over her own body by not eating." But anorexics tend to be solitary individuals as opposed to those who participate in community or political fasts which are public.

Says Dr Achal Bahagat, senior consultant psychiatrist at Delhi's Apollo Hospital, "The psychological effects of dieting also extend to bulimia nervosa, depression and low self-esteem. Its physical effects can include a loss of calcium from the bones, liver diseases and in some extreme cases, renal failure."

He observes that the concept of fasting has radically changed over the years. "Ours was an agricultural society where people waited for things to happen. This gave them adequate time for spiritual contemplation, starting a trend of fasting which was a way of abstaining from material goods." Bhagat further states that in the second phase, fasting became linked to religion, fear and wish fulfillment, acquiring a more ritualistic character.

But in this age, fasting seems to be linked with dieting, a vexing urban malaise. "What is interesting to note, says Bhagat, is that "the urban middle class is becoming more aware of their physical needs and body images. With dieting becoming a tool to control our personality, there has been a complete turnaround from the original aim of fasting. Now it is the body which controls the mind," he says ironically.

Granted, fasting is in fashion. But the very fact of its survival and evolution is an indication of its benefits upon the mind and body, argues Kaur. Fasting has prevailed, feeding on people's anger and desires; it is a way of life for those who think nothing of putting themselves through considerable discomfort. As they say, you gain some, you lose some. The score has to be settled somehow. ■

SUNEET VERMA

Fashion Designer

■

Among the television programmes, I like Vir Sanghvi's programme, *A Question of Answers*. I like it because he has got his hand on the pulse of things and has a good idea of what is happening today. The programme focuses on issues and questions that are on everybody's mind but nobody is ready to answer





Sunita Kanwar

UMA SHARMA

Dancer

■

My favourite is Rajat Sharma's *Janata Ki Adalat*. I like Rajat's style and the bluntness with which he interrogates his subjects. Also I find his programmes thoroughly well-researched and full of wit and humour

Channel Surfing

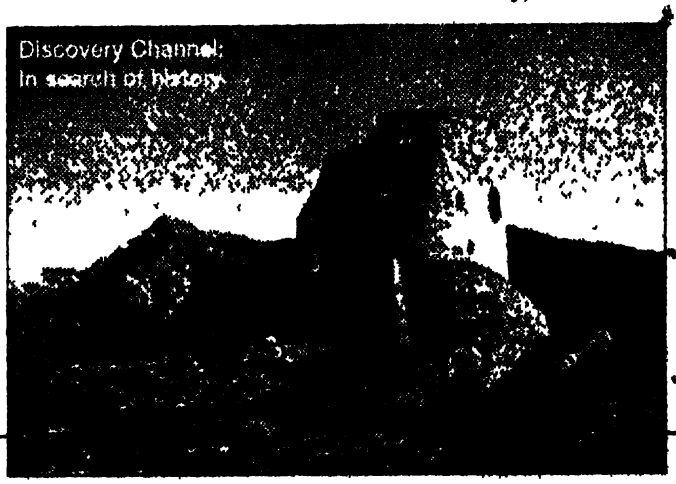
With the remote functioning as the audience's secret weapon, channel loyalty is a thing of the past, says **Geeta Sharma**

The Indian viewer has never had it so good. With 30-odd national and international channels jostling and vying for space on Indian TV sets, television has come a long way from the days when Doordarshan was master of all it surveyed.

Be it a Hindi satellite channel, local cable channel or an international broadcasting and film network, each has been trying earnestly to woo the humble viewer with its programme fare. The wooing has varied with the channels offering attractive merchandise material such as cars and television sets and even diamonds as gifts, free tickets and travels and foreign trips to the audience. In-channel promos and aggressive advertising through newspaper and audio-visual media, have emerged as another way of luring the viewer.

But despite such concerted warfare, channel loyalty is something that has not yet emerged as a concept among the evolving Indian audience. Unlike the US which has 160 mainstream and niche (specialised programmes) channels that command a dedicated viewership, the Indian channels have to contend with a host of viewing patterns. These range from programme loyalty to personality loyalty to station hunting.

"Satellite television with its multi-channel fare is barely six or seven years old. There is as yet no base of good script writers, artistes, actors and directors who could put together exceptional software that would hold sustained audience interest. So the concept of big segment viewership has not yet developed here," says A. Sinha Roy, Senior Vice President (Corporate Affairs and Publicity) Star TV.



Also, the multi-hued, multi-lingual Indian audience is still evolving and it is difficult for a channel to pattern its programming to cater to such a large section of viewers.

So instead of channel loyalty, what you have is a 'channel habit,' adds Kunal Dasgupta, Chief Operating Officer, Sony Entertainment Television. Television viewing is essentially habit forming and once a viewer becomes used to watching a particular channel, he or she starts his television viewing for the day with that particular channel. It is only if the programme fare at that hour is dismal, does he begin to channel surf. About 60 per cent of viewers, according to him, fall in this category.

Sonam Malik, a college lecturer, who says she is a habitual channel surfer, says given the fast pace of life today, the attention spans of people have shrunk.

Programme loyalty is another dominant theme among the viewers. If media surveys are any indicators, almost 40 per cent of all television viewing falls in this category. On an average, in a week, a viewer makes about three 'appointments' a week, across the channels, with particular programmes of his or her choice, says Dasgupta of Sony.

Each of the top three channels, Zee, Sony and Star TV have a mixed fare that commands programme specific loyalty. Zee, for instance, has viewership for a host of serials such as *Amanat*, *Hasratein*, *Parampara*, *Dastaan* and *Shapath*. Sony is offering *Boogie Woogie*, a dance game show; *Just Mohabbat*, a family drama; *Chamatkar*, a comedy serial; *Ahaat*, a thriller; *Star Yaar Kalakaar*, a musical game show, that has dedicated audiences.

The Star network also offers suitably mixed fare. Besides its news programmes, it has a large audience for *Rin Ek Do Teen*, a parody film show, *Living on the Edge*, an environmental series, *Janata Ki Adalat*, interrogation of celebrities, and *A Question of Answers*, a debate on complex, topical issues, *Saans* a serial, and *Tu Tu Mein Mein* a comedy serial.

Each programme caters to a particular need of the audience which can be defined in terms of moods, taste and choice. "For the 'telegentsia' a stimulating talk show would be entertaining, while for the youth, the preference would be for game and musical shows. Hence every genre of programme has its own set of loyal viewers," says Sainath Iyer, spokesman for Zee TV.

Personality loyalty is another major factor that has come to determine viewership for a channel. So whether it is the late S.P. Singh anchoring *Aaj Tak* on Doordarshan or Prannoy Roy anchoring *Star News* at 9, Rajat Sharma interrogating in *Janata Ki Adalat* or Vir Sanghvi hosting *A Question of Answers*, the viewership of the respective channels registers a sharp increase at that hour.

This loyalty has to do with the fact that television is basically a personality-based medium. Unlike films, which have a mass appeal, television programmes work on a one-to-one equation with the viewer, and the personalities almost become brand names. "But what is more important is that these personalities should act as examples for better anchors and hosts," says media critic Amita Malik.

In the midst of such diverse viewing habits, news-based programmes stand out among the others for the clear-cut audience loyalty that they command. Whether it is *Star News* at 9, or *TVI Khabar* at 8 or Zee news in Hinglish or *Aaj Tak* on DD, there is a dedicated viewership for all of them.

Nandan Unnikrishnan of the TVI network—a popular news and current affairs channel—feels that this loyalty is akin to the morning newspaper habit. "News is essentially habit-forming like a morning newspaper. So just like you have your favourite newspaper that you have stuck loyally to for years, so you have your favourite news bulletin."



The abiding interest in news-based programmes also has to do with the fact that "we as a race are more politically aware and motivated than the others. So even a rickshawallah would be debating and wanting to know about the fall-out of the nuclear tests, as much as an upwardly mobile executive in a metro," says Mahesh Narayan, Executive Vice President, Marketing for TVI.

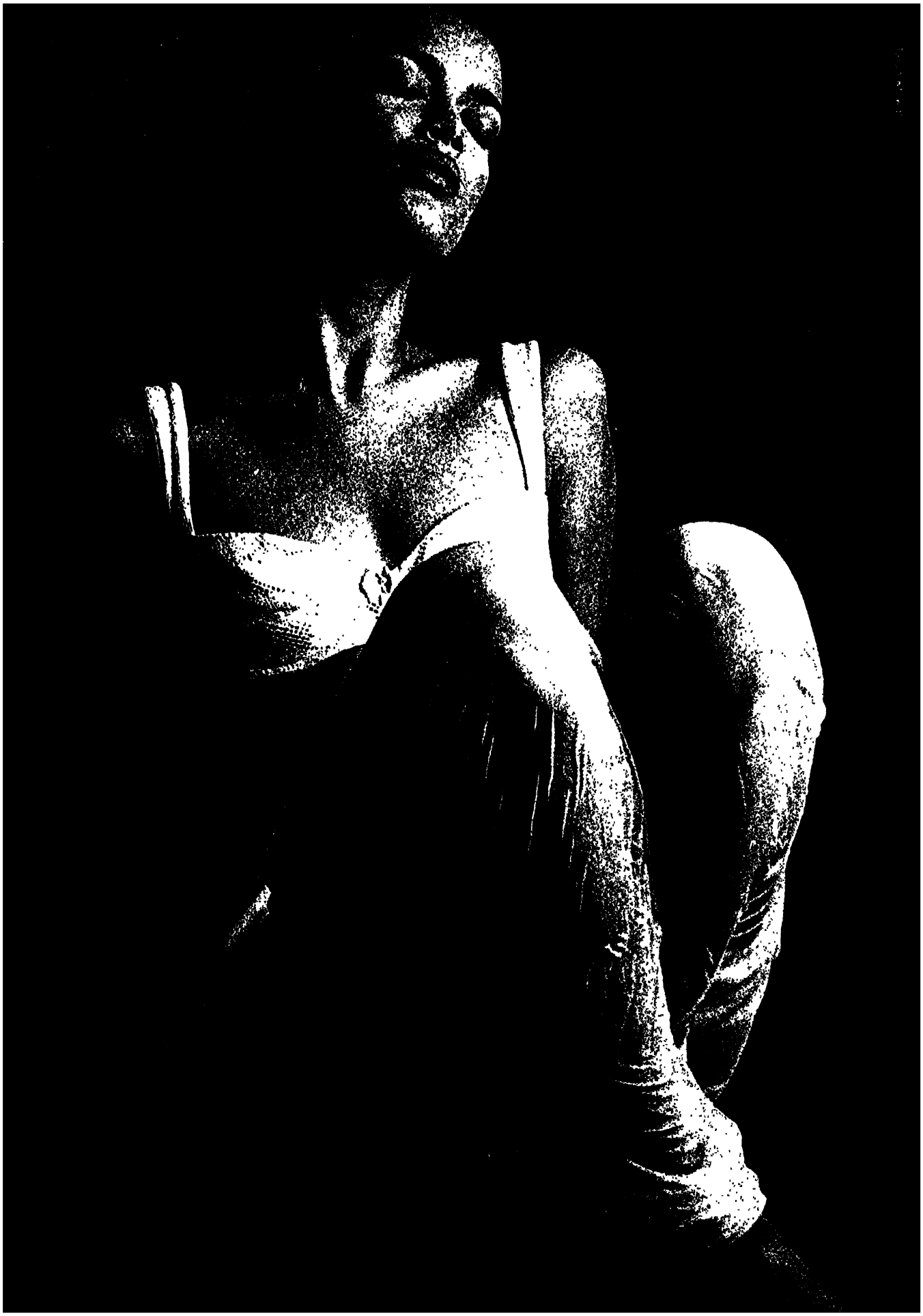
But even this abiding interest doesn't engender channel loyalty in an audience which regards channel surfing as its sacred right. After all, no matter how interesting the show on Star, what's to say that Sony's not showing something far more enthralling? ■

RENUKA CHOUDHARY

Politician:

My favourite programmes on television are those on the Discovery channel. The programmes on nature are so informative and fascinating that one just forgets about one's immediate surroundings and is transported to this wonderful world of nature and discovery.





Samita Bhatia aims her lens at India's fashion photographers

COVER STORY

picture Perfect



Sharad Sikka

The hype surrounding the fashion industry hasn't just thrown up fashion designers, models and choreographers. It has also made instant celebrities of the photographers who document the images that make up the Indian fashion scene.

If the forte of this fraternity of shutterbugs is people, then the view from behind their lens is a personalised interpretation of prevailing fashion trends. But perish the thought that they be tagged as 'fashion or glamour photographers'. They are a breed that's continuously evolving and metamorphosing with every passing fad, or so they would like to believe.

Says Tarun Khiwal, the photographer who attempts to capture the character and the soul of his models rather than just freeze a beautiful face on film, "That people should start identifying my style is a scary thought. I want to grow and change with time."

This specialised stream of camera-toting men and women have worked in close quarters with celebrated fashion

designers, advertising agency gurus and naturally with the very best who sashay the catwalk. They've put together that all important first portfolio that's put these men and women on the ramp. Sometimes they've caught them in the raw as Prabuddha Das Gupta did with Madhu Sapre and Milind Soman in the Tuff shoes ad.

But naturally they are picky about the faces they shoot and according to Sumiko Murgai Nanda "the face must have potential".

Bonnie Hazuria shot the first portfolios for top models Marc Robinson' Ruchi Malhotra and Simar Duggal. She saw promise in Ruchi Malhotra, Priti Mankotia, Manpreet Brar, Mini Mathur and Divya Chauhan who have all made it big in the world of glamour.

And it's not just about making pretty pictures. A good picture means different things to different people and to them their field of specialisation is a fine art. To Prabuddha a perfect picture is all about timelessness and its power to hold its own, "It just IS," he says with a distant look.

If for Bharat Sikka, the country's ace lensman at 24 years, a good photograph is a meshing of mind and art, Tarun thinks it's the image rather than styling or make-up that counts. "I don't want anybody — technicians or make-up specialists or stylists — overpowering my image," he says firmly.

While a picture must reflect good composition and form, spontaneity gives it substance. Confirmed cynic Rohit Chawla, senior creative director in charge of photography, Hindustan Thompson Associates (HTA) says firmly, "Of course spontaneity is a big lie, just like Oscar Wilde said — being natural is the most difficult pose to strike."

But just in case anybody thinks that glamour photography is all play and no work, you can think again. Says Tarun, "It's a tough profession. There are no schools of photography, and you must learn the hard way. It's not just a glamorised field, it's back-breaking work and often frustrating."

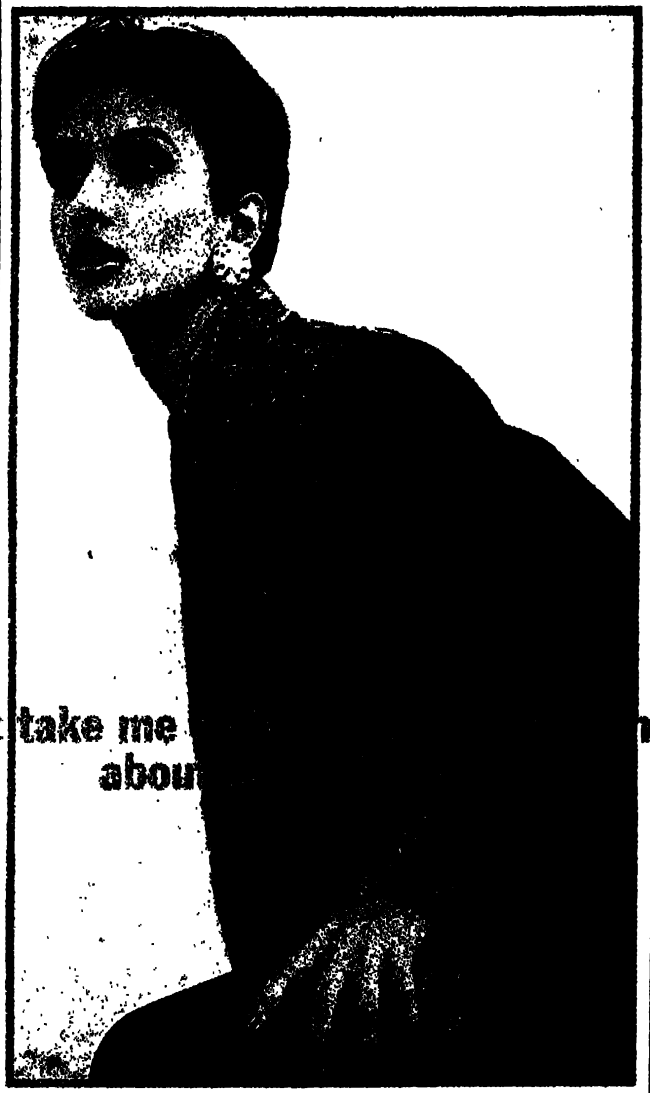
But perhaps not as frustrating today as it was a decade ago. Prabuddha smiles his lopsided smile and says as he rolls himself a cigarette, "If ten years ago you told someone that you were a photographer you were immediately dismissed as one taking *shaadi* pictures."

Today a fashion photographer might be that guy who'll slap you a bill of Rs 35,000 for a day's shoot. He's perhaps on the net and may even hand you over his portfolio on a CD ROM (like Tarun Khiwal does). And he's definitely the guy who traipses the world for some high profile fashion (or-something-else) assignments.

Like Rohit, whom you catch on the eve of his departure for Sydney. He explains, "I am slated to shoot a waterproof line underwater at the Australia Fashion Week and work with upcoming Australian fashion designers." Or like Bharat who has just returned from an assignment in London.

So what brought about the sea-change in attitudes and perceptions about this profession? "The colour of money," says a cynical Chawla, who is also known for shooting from the hip.

He's not far off the mark, as a fashion assignment could earn a beginner anywhere between Rs 5,000-10,000 for a day's work. In the more rarefied realm the going rate is believed to be to the tune of Rs 20,000-25,000 a day — to hit the ceiling at Rs 30,000-35,000 for a day's work. The staggering fees are put down to equally mind-boggling equipment costs and those incurred when experimenting with new styles.



Bonnie Hazuria

"People don't take me ... about ... and get confused

Some do have qualms. Says Bharat, "Sometimes I don't feel comfortable charging that kind of money, it doesn't seem justified."

Since the profession commanded little respect in the years gone by, it isn't surprising that those who are today the pick of the lot had no intention of taking to the medium seriously. Rohit Chawla took to photography when in school but only for "the extra bucks". When he began shooting in earnest it was only with the idea of "giving it a shot for six months".

For Tarun growing up in



Lucknow with aspirations of becoming a professional photographer wasn't easy. Though he had been "shooting like mad" through school and his engineer days he never thought that he could realise his dream of shooting pictures to make a living.

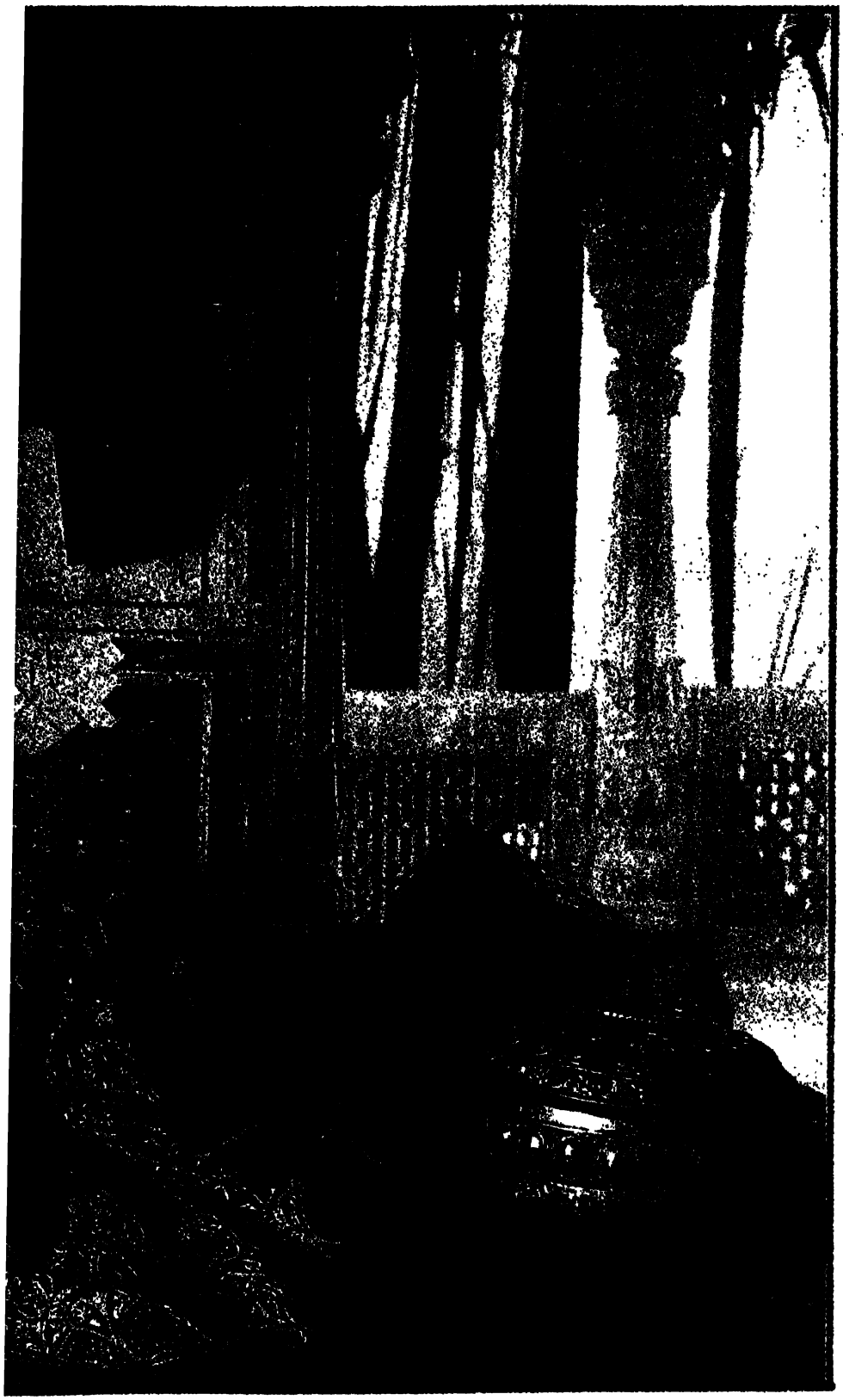
It was Prabuddha — often referred to by his understudies as the "God of Indian photography" — who made Tarun see that brilliant pictures could be shot even with an ordinary camera fitted with an equally ordinary lens. "He changed my philosophy of photography. I learnt that how you think or visualise, is all here," says Tarun tapping his temple.

Prabuddha may be the prevailing deity in the field today, but he too had never pictured himself as a professional. A closet photographer for many years, Prabuddha began his career as copywriter. "However, photography was my way of responding to everything around me," he says.

Even less surprising is the fact that there are few women in the fray even today. Would-be cinematographer turned photographer Sumiko Murgai Nanda says, "Your work counts rather than the gender." However, since the profession is so male-dominated, women, she feels must work twice as hard to prove themselves. "Men can make mistakes and get away with it. However, if I were to screw up they'd put it down to the fact that I was a woman," she fumes.

When Sumiko took to photography the profession was just about coming into its own, though with little room in it for women. In the glamour world women were either models or model coordinators. "However," she says, "if you allow your work to do all the talking





Prabuddha Das Gupta

"When we started out the attitude to beauty and being photogenic was healthy"

PRABUDDHA DAS GUPTA

then there will always be place for you."

She found her way up like the others by playing apprentice to a photographer, shooting everything from table-tops to interiors. Today she says of herself: "I'm more of an artist." Now she abhors shooting table-tops and instead thrives on "the energy that happens with people and the interaction with them."

It was easier for Bonnie Hazuria, as father Kitty Hazuria was an established photographer. She picked up a camera in earnest in 1988, around when her mother launched 'Catwalk', a modelling agency. So from days spent shooting her friends with a camera borrowed from her father she graduated to more serious stuff and learnt the ropes of indoor photography.

More recently she has repositioned herself. From shooting pictures for designers and models, she decided to try her hand at fashion designing. "The shift was very gradual but I am still very much in touch with photography. But people don't take me seriously sometimes and get confused about my real interests."

From being looked upon dismissively (Chawla says self-mockingly, "my father-in-law must have been a very brave man to marry his daughter to me some 11 years ago!") to being the hottest profession going, fashion photography has traversed a tedious path.

What was the turning point for the visual medium? At the top, you find Prabuddha Das Gupta surveying the arena despondently.

Prabuddha charted the field when the "Consumer boom hadn't set in". Time when fashion design and fashion photography were just coming into their own.

Then the market opened up to the visual medium and the focus shifted considerably to photography. Simultaneously, with satellite television beaming in so many different images from all over the world the Indian mindset became more receptive.

With the industry opening up there was plenty of work generated; so too the number of photographers in the fray. "But while most have the knowledge few have the aptitude," laments Sumiko.

In numbers they may proliferate but Bharat says that there is no competition worth mentioning. "Competition makes you grow, but I find it completely missing here." What does breed is a repetitiveness of ideas and styles, until most photographers' pictures begin to look identical.

So we start accepting, even worshipping, mediocrity and lack of talent, adds Bharat. He wonders as to how much of this has to do with media hype. Prabuddha observes, "Even in the field of advertising — after the `70 and `80s I haven't seen anything original or with a spark." He tries hard to find some picture that will surprise him, but fails.

He feels that today people are getting into photography not for the love of it but for the glamour and travel that it brings as an add-on.

This attitude is a far-cry from the time when the economy was opening up. Prabuddha notes, "A lot of motivated people had a fire in their belly and wanted to do something and money wasn't necessarily the bottom line."

Prabuddha too was fired with a sense of purpose and hoped he too could contribute in some way to define a collective sensibility uniquely Indian, though relevant in the global perspective. He rues, "Somehow nobody realised then that consumerism is a very powerful force. Or the fact that the lure of money is difficult to ignore."

Says Prabuddha, "Even if the market became more receptive to our medium, on the downside came the attendant evils of consumerism." And the horrifying impacts of the glamour business. He explains, "It has engendered a kind of obsessiveness with the physicality of things — of YOU. When we started out the attitude towards beauty and being photogenic was healthy."

While magazines like *Elle* and *Cosmopolitan* may be "great quality productions", he feels that they are furthering the same concept. "As a woman there's no place for you if you don't conform to the established norm of beauty."

So he's never likely to do ads for fairness creams and "products based on absurd concepts that hark to our colonial hangover," Prabuddha says firmly. Today young girls and their parents call him quite frantically hoping he can shoot their portfolios or help them make inroads into the glamour world. "This borders on a collective mania of the middle class," he despairs. Chawla's woes have more to do with the people in the business. He says, "I hate the creative pretensions that professionals have developed. What's this creative Muse they talk about?" A majority of fashion photographers, he says, thrive by flogging borrowed images. In the Indian context those who are first to copy somebody else are assured of success, he says scornfully.

He's irritated by the fact that the average photographer doesn't know the difference between a photograph and a fashion picture. He says candidly, "What's



Sumiko Murgai Nanda

If you allow your [illegible] then there will

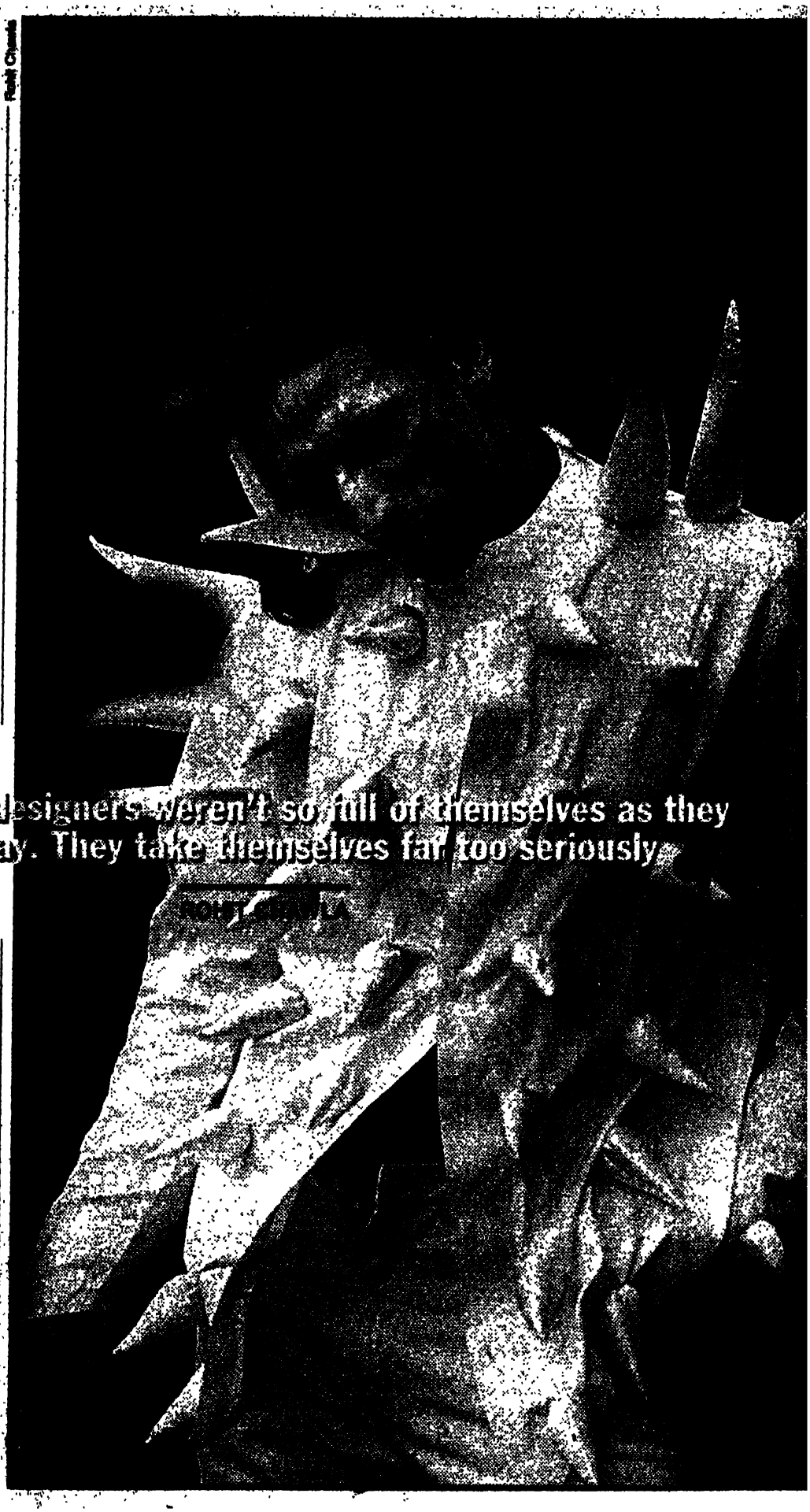
more there is no Indian idiom in the photographic medium. Some direct lifts from *Elle* and *Vogue* and hey presto, you've made it. What makes you good is how well you market yourself."

Sikka couldn't agree more and says angrily, "I've had my contact sheets and even prints taken away from studios and copied unabashedly."

Ditto fashion designers who they shoot for. Rohit questions, "Ten years ago would you have written about your neighbourhood tailor?" The fashion world is surrounded by too much hype, he says. "At the start designers weren't so full of themselves as they are today. They take themselves far too seriously," he says boldly.

To make his displeasure public, Chawla has planned an exhibition of photographs tilted 'Fashion Sucks'.

"People often comment that I'm lucky to be in such a glamorous profession. I tell them that it only gives me more than my share of bimbos to deal with," he says curtly.



> "At the start designers weren't so full of themselves as they are today. They take themselves far too seriously."
>
> Rohit Chawla

However, with glamour on a definite high, even if some professionals are low regarding the prevailing scenario, most of them continue to experiment with glamour and its various facets. Recently, Sumiko shot a fashion catalogue on the Ganges, which proved to be quite an experience. She hopes some day to shoot wild life. Rohit Chawla, for his part, is currently work-

"It's a tough profession. There are no schools of photography, and you must learn the hard way"

TARUN KHIWAL

ing on a glossy on graphic forms in everyday life, and another on how six designers — Indian and foreign — view the Indian saree is on the anvil.

Prabuddha for his part may have raked controversy with the Tuff shoes ad campaign and won much acclaim with his first book titled, *Women*. But is his forthcoming book on Ladakh a

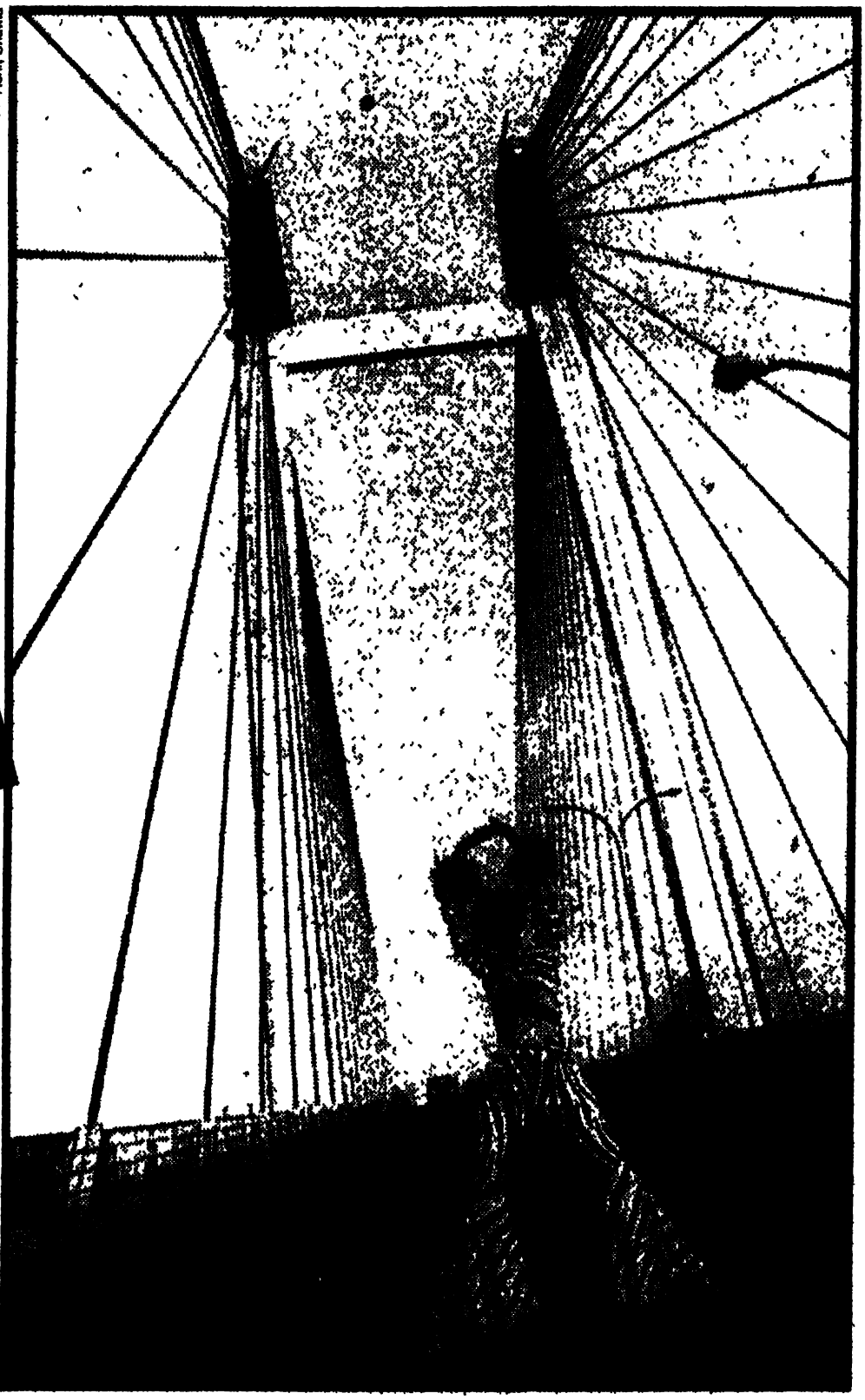


Bharat Sikka

knee-jerk reaction against consumerism and glamour overkill?

Not really. He explains, "My approach to a picture has always been minimalistic. Even in a fashion portfolio the approach was to strip down rather than embellish. And isn't that what Ladakh is all about?" he asks. What makes his latest assignment different is that "landscapes are a new genre for me," says Prabuddha.

And just what makes these professionals click? A thought, a mood, a space, a beautiful form...anything. Moments that they freeze in time for posterity. ■



Rohit Chawla

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Another extremely busy week lies ahead for you. It is going to be race against time, sometimes as you fit in partnerships, collaborations, family commitments, bonds and ties with loved ones, journeys, dealing with legal matters and lawsuits, even trusts and inheritance. Do not rely on others.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



A dichotomy of interests and focus but the two themes have been running parallel right through the last few weeks—the themes of family and finances. It is a favourable time for matters relating to property and resolving pending disputes. You gain in popularity in the family and business spheres.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



The moon trines with Jupiter, which is a very good position, leading to happy relationships, social and family activities, even realisation of some of your fondest hopes and ambitions. You must display a degree of altruism, of caring for others and also a willingness to meet new people.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



The effect of the Moon-Jupiter trine is felt in the realm of money, which will now add a zing to your life, put a spring in your walk as money worries get ironed out and there are no more holes in your pockets. A degree of fanfare is also possible in your life and you are almost certainly going to travel.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



There are new beginnings for you, a journey(once again), partnerships and ventures, either fresh or existing ones. In addition to all this, love will knock at your door and maybe, you should give it a chance—after all, it is love that makes the world go round. Some loss in business is indicated.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



You find yourself actively involved in the power game. You will certainly find funds and loans available for your new ventures, undertakings and business enterprises. Personal complexes, nagging worries and apprehensions will require an effort to be worked out from your system.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



A whole string of makeovers—renovation, decoration, acquisition or updating of possessions. Property, home and house keep you occupied as do family and family matters. There is also a strong possibility of you acquiring a new wardrobe and jewellery. Try blue-green for luck. Health needs attention.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



A state of flux, of movement will be part of the main trend along with finances and money. Acquisition of wealth, lucre, the inflow of cash—all this will occupy your mind as you deal with joint finances, loans and funds, a legacy or even a lottery. From this, you can safely say that there may be a sudden fall.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



You find your fun-time coming to a grinding halt and it is sincere and hard work that is once again the need of the hour. It is the time for business transactions, negotiations and even wheeling and dealing. You will often feel that you have had enough, but keep at it. You are bound to be well-rewarded.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



You do a bit of emotional and mental stock-taking. You will try to weigh up your attitudes, achievements and values. Having done so, you will feel that the balance tilt heavily in favour of home and health, family and loved ones. You will have to deal with funds,marital settlements and take care of elders.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Interactions and relationships will become more wide and personalised. They will extend to include not just the family but someone special who finds a place in your heart. Love and romance are there but there are other bonds too. You have varied interests, which act as a source of income.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



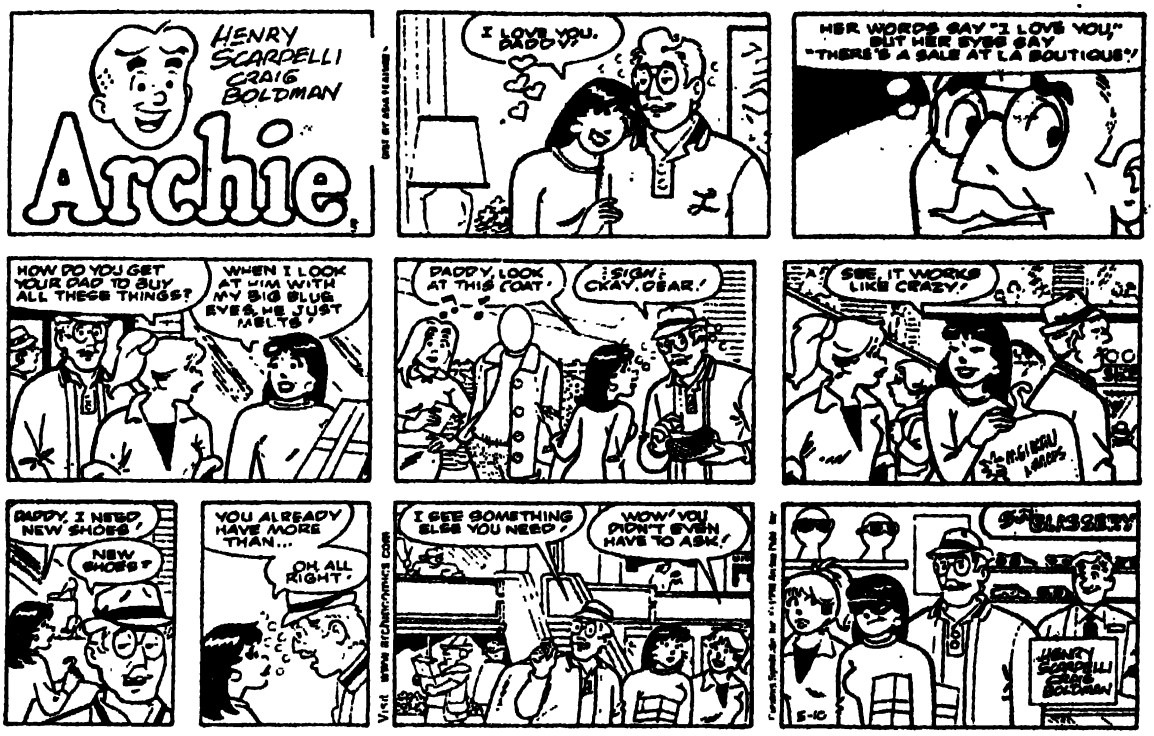
You rise to the occasion splendidly, and invest all that you do with much grace, style and class. There is no feeling of resentment from your lot anymore, rather a gracious acceptance. Maybe this is engendered by your continued interest in spiritual matters and your loving and caring attitude for dear ones.

BIRTHDAYS

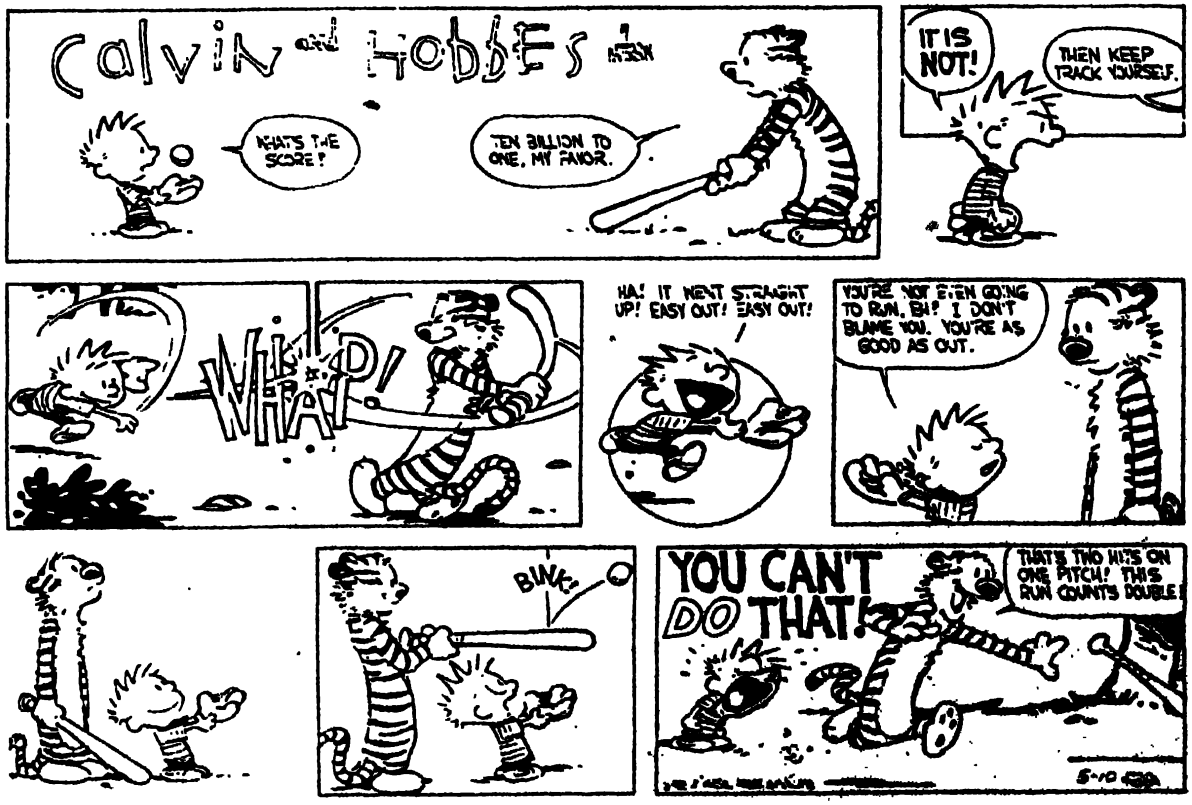


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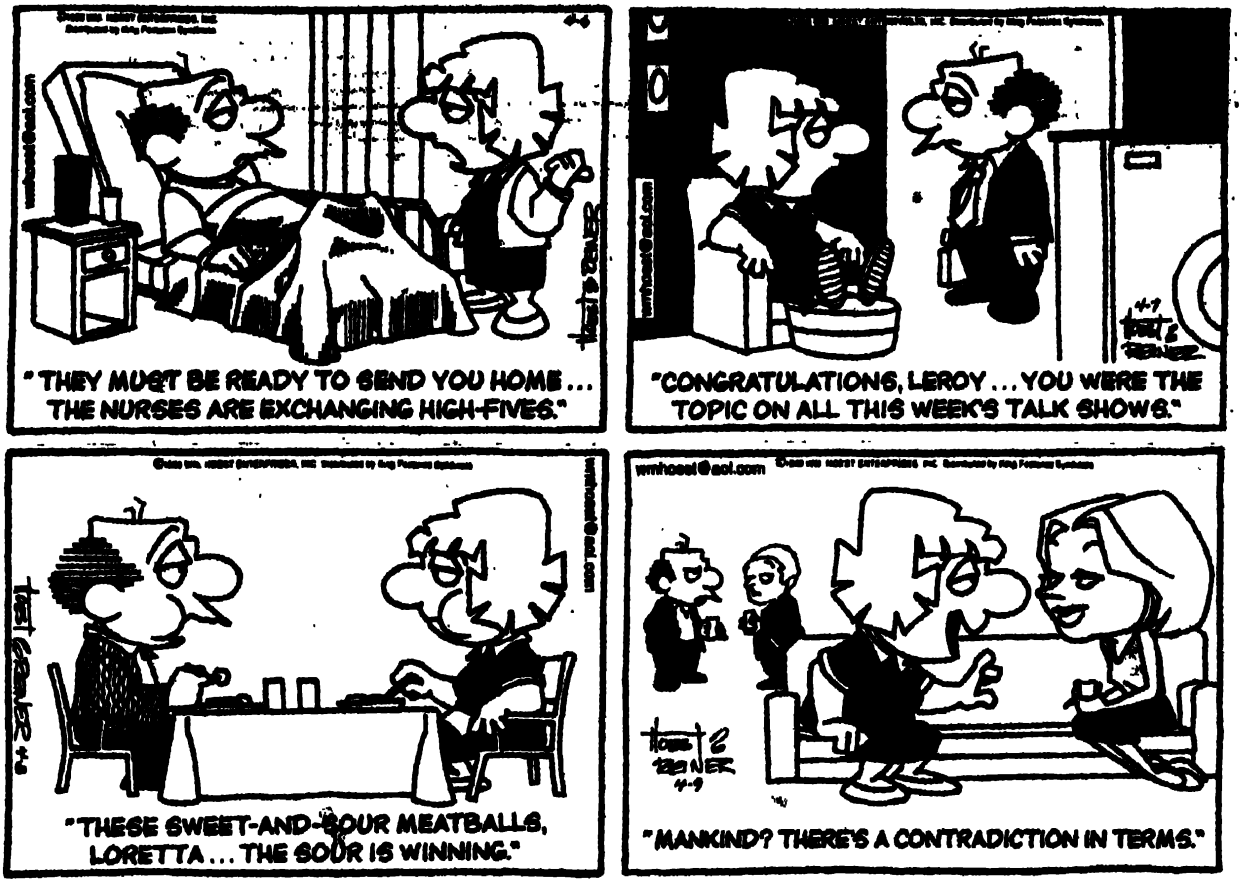
ARCHIE



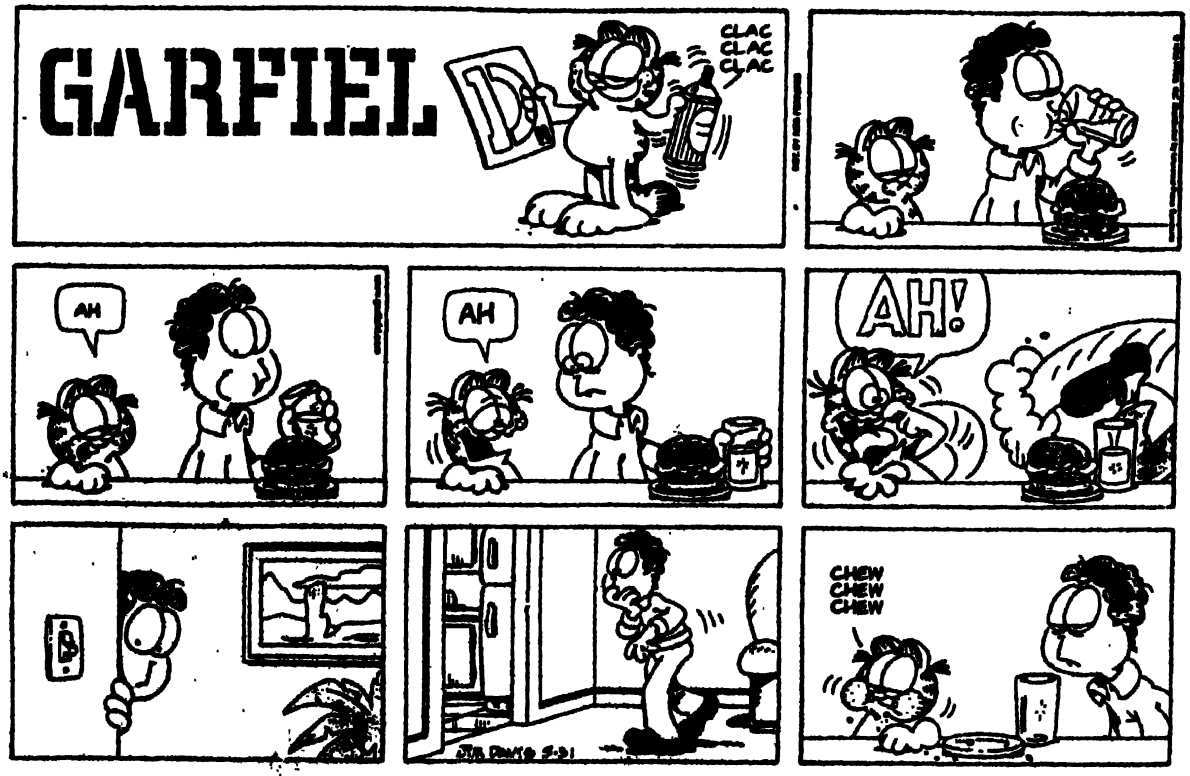
CALVIN AND HOBBES ■ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



GARFIELD ■ WATTERSON



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
IC 741	1240	3 5 7	IC 742	1110	2 4 6
IC 741	1240	1	C 74[illegible]	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1 2 5 6	IC 744	1220	1 [illegible] 5 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	13 0	3
IC 743	1400	4 7	IC 744	1620	4 7
CD 267	1620	2 4 6	CD 268	2155	2 4 6
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			C 202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1415	6
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 4 5	IC 722	1625	1 2 3 4 5
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W 12	2125	daily
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	C 778	0910	1 3 5
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
IC 263	0700	daily	9W 401	0815	daily
9W 902	0850	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC 856	1545	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W 311	920	daily
			IC 764	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	3 5 7
IC 701	1130	1 3 5	IC 702	1440	1 3 5 7
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 25	1455	1 4
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	3 5 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	9W 612	1250	1 2 4 6 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1105	6
			IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			I 202	1655	1 3
9W 611	1000	1 2 4 6 7	C 714	1430	4 7
9W 511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2125	daily
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1 3 5
CD 255	0530	1 3 5	CD 256	1000	1 3 5
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD 213	1300	2 6
IC 713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD 213	1300	2 6
9W 621	0950	3 5	9W-622	1305	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1 4
C 201 209	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1 3
CD 412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
9W 202	0645	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5
AI 305	2025	3	A 306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W 211	1905	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
CD 412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
CD 285	0530	2 4 6 7	CD 286	1010	2 4 6 7
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
CD 253	0550	2 4 6	CD 254	0820	2 4 6
CD 255	0550	1 3 5	CD 256	1020	1 3 5
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3 5
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3 5

RJ-185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
KL 476	0325	7	KL 475	0130	7
KB 105	1025	2 6	KB 106	0915	2 3 7
KB 105	1010	4			
IC 731	1015	4 7	TG 313	1295	1 3 6
IC 855	0855	2 6	IC 732	1610	4 7
TG 314	1350	1 3 6	IC 856	1500	2 6
AI 306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
BG-898	1250	2 5	BG 897	1210	2 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA 142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-536	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU 538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed, Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep. Mon., Tues, Fri. & Sat. Arr Mon., Thurs, Fri & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs, Fri & Sat Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs, Fri. & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun; Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat. Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon, Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20 15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon, Tue. & Thurs..; Arr: Mon, Thurs. & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-16	Gour Express	5-15	3154
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	6-45	3148
5663	20-00	Kather Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3139	20-55	Mughal- Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gaighata) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr. Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21 35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5 00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday; Arr Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13 45	6321
5623	14 10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2208486 (manual enquiry).

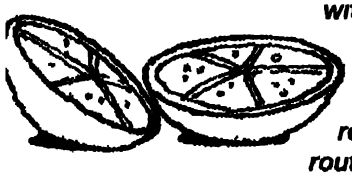
BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

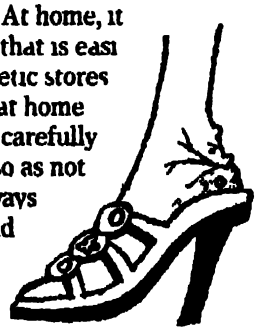
Q *I am a 25 year-old girl and I used to have a lot of pimples on my face For this, I used chemical lotions and antibiotics tablets, prescribed by my doctor Now I find that my skin has become dry and dull with wrinkles all over my face Can you suggest a regular skin routine to make my skin glowing again?*
Sharbani Sen Calcutta



A I suggest that you stop using these medicines immediately Your skin is essentially oily but due to these medicines, the oil formation in your skin has reduced drastically I would suggest that you massage your face with one tsp of olive oil to which you have added the juice of half a lemon Wipe your face clean and apply a face pack of sandlewood powder, fuller's earth, two ground powdered cloves and one egg This mask should be left on till completely dry Wash off with milk and then water. This should be done thrice a week Now that summer has set in I would suggest that you take lots of fresh vegetables and fruit juices as well as water to flush out toxins from the body in a healthy manner

Q *I am a regular reader of your column and find the beauty tips very helpful Please tell me how to prepare lemon and sugar hair removing cream at home*
Riya Gupta, Howrah

A I have never mentioned anything about using lemon and sugar to remove hair in the form of cream! You are perhaps confused Lemon and sugar, when boiled to a thick consistency will make wax At home, it is safer to use cold wax that is easily available in the cosmetic stores and can be safely used at home Be sure to pull the skin carefully where you are waxing, so as not to peel the skin and always wipe the skin with a cold compression or cold towel after waxing and not a hot one This is to close the pores and prevent the skin from sagging Most salons use a hot towel to get rid of remaining wax easily but it should be actually done with a cold compression
Sharbani Sen, Calcutta



For dark, patchy and dry feet:

■

Soak your feet in warm coconut oil and one tsp of glycerine

Q *I have a red flaky patch on my skin which appears and subsides at will. How do I permanently get rid of this patch on my skin?*
Vijaylakshmi, Calcutta

A You cannot let such patches go and come as they please Get to the root of the problem. If it is an allergic reaction, get an allergy test done Also since your skin is on the drier side, the patch may be due to excessive dryness Thus, you should massage the area with almond oil every night and leave on overnight This should be done daily at least for two weeks for effective results



Q *I am a 25-year-old woman and my problem is that the skin on my feet is very dark, patchy and dry, which makes me conscious when I have to wear open footwear. Even the skin on my hands is all wrinkled and dark and makes me look older beyond my years. Please advise me on ways to make my skin look and feel soft, young and beautiful.*
Shaheen Khan, Murshidabad.

A Ever heard of anything called manicures and pedicures? Well, they were actually designed to pamper the feet and hands. If you do not act fast, your hands and feet will be beyond repair and at 25, that would definitely be a sorry saga. You must properly evaluate the time you spend on your hands and feet. If you don't want to go to a professional, you can surely treat them at home. Soak your feet in warm coconut oil and one tsp of glycerine. Arm yourself with a nail-cutter, pumice stone and filer. Trim nails and file them before dip-

ɔing your feet. Scrub the skin on your soles, ıeels and top of your foot. The same thing can ɔe done with your hands as well. Moisturise your hands with pure almond and coconut oil nixed together, and then apply the following ɔack—gramflour, lemon juice, two tsp cream. Apply a thick layer to hands and feet and leave ɔn for ten minutes. Wash off with warm water ınd then dab dry. Another quick daily routine s to massage hands and feet with lemon juice ınd then massage them with lemon halves and ıugar. Remember, however, that all these nvolve time and hard work. There are no magic ecipes to make your hands look beautiful, oung and soft.

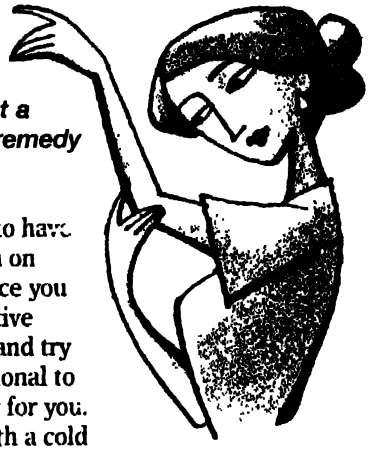
Q ***I am a 24-year-old woman having extremely dark and rough elbows and nees. Please suggest a way to make them oft, smooth and fair.***
eema Seth, Calcutta

A Look after them at least twice a week! Massage these neglected areas with olive oil ınd almond oil and make the following crub—rice powder, lemon peel powder, gramlour, grated potato and milk. Scrub on the ıreas gently and and wash off after ten to fifcen minutes. You should also use a pumice tone daily while bathing for smoothing out the kin and getting rid of dead skin which gets easily accumulated on these areas

The correct way to wipe your skin after waxing:

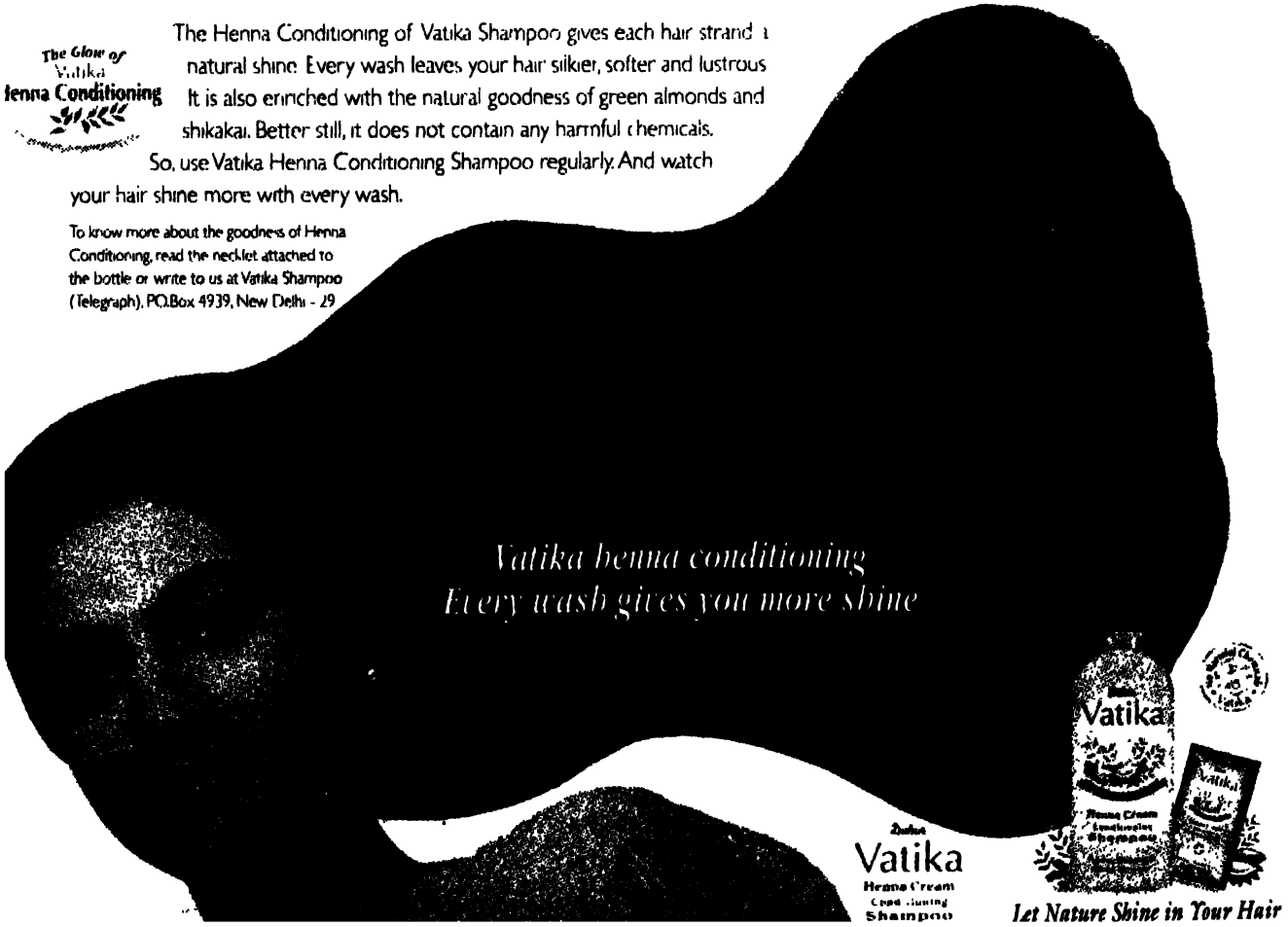
Always wipe off with a cold compression and not with a hot towel

Q ***I am a 21-year-old woman My problem is that every time I remove hair with my hair remover, I get rashes and the skin looks red and it is very embarrassing for me to wear clothes which show a bit of the skin. Please suggest a natural home remedy*** *Madhu Jain.*



A You seem to have quite a problem on your hands! Since you have very sensitive skin, be gentle and try to get a professional to remove the hair for you. Always wipe with a cold compression after waxing and never a hot towel. This will prevent any rashes from appearing. Wipe the affected areas with cotton pads and never with towel as this can be harsh on your skin. These little tips will allow you to show all the skin you want to looking smooth and silky soft.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



by Personal Style



That sums up theatre personality Feisal Alkazi's sartorial philosophy

Be Indian, Wear Indian



Kalyan Chakravorty

BEATING THE HEAT:

I believe that nothing but Indian clothes suit the Indian summer. I can't imagine wearing bulky western outfits in the sweltering heat of Delhi which calls for airy clothes.Similarly, I believe you can't wear anything but *chappals* in Delhi Apart from the fact that they go well with *kurta-pyjamas*, they are the best thing to wear in summers. Not only comfortable and practical but also healthy, I suppose

When it comes to clothes, I am an Indian to the core. Not that I am not an Indian otherwise, but it is just that I believe nothing but Indian clothes suit the Indian summer. I can't imagine wearing bulky western outfits in the sweltering heat of Delhi which calls for airy clothes.

I won't be caught in anything but a *kurta pyjama* or perhaps a *churidar kurta*. I suppose that is the best thing to beat the Delhi summer and also fast-approaching middle age. Besides, it also suits my kind of personality and temperament.

And for my choice of *kurtas* and *churidars*, I rely extensively on Fab India which suits me very well.

Similarly, I believe you can't wear anything but *chappals* in Delhi. Apart from the fact that they go well with *kurta-pyjamas*, they are the best thing to wear in summers. Not only comfortable and practical but also healthy, I suppose. In tropical climates, it is very essential that the body has access to air and is not covered in impermeable layers.

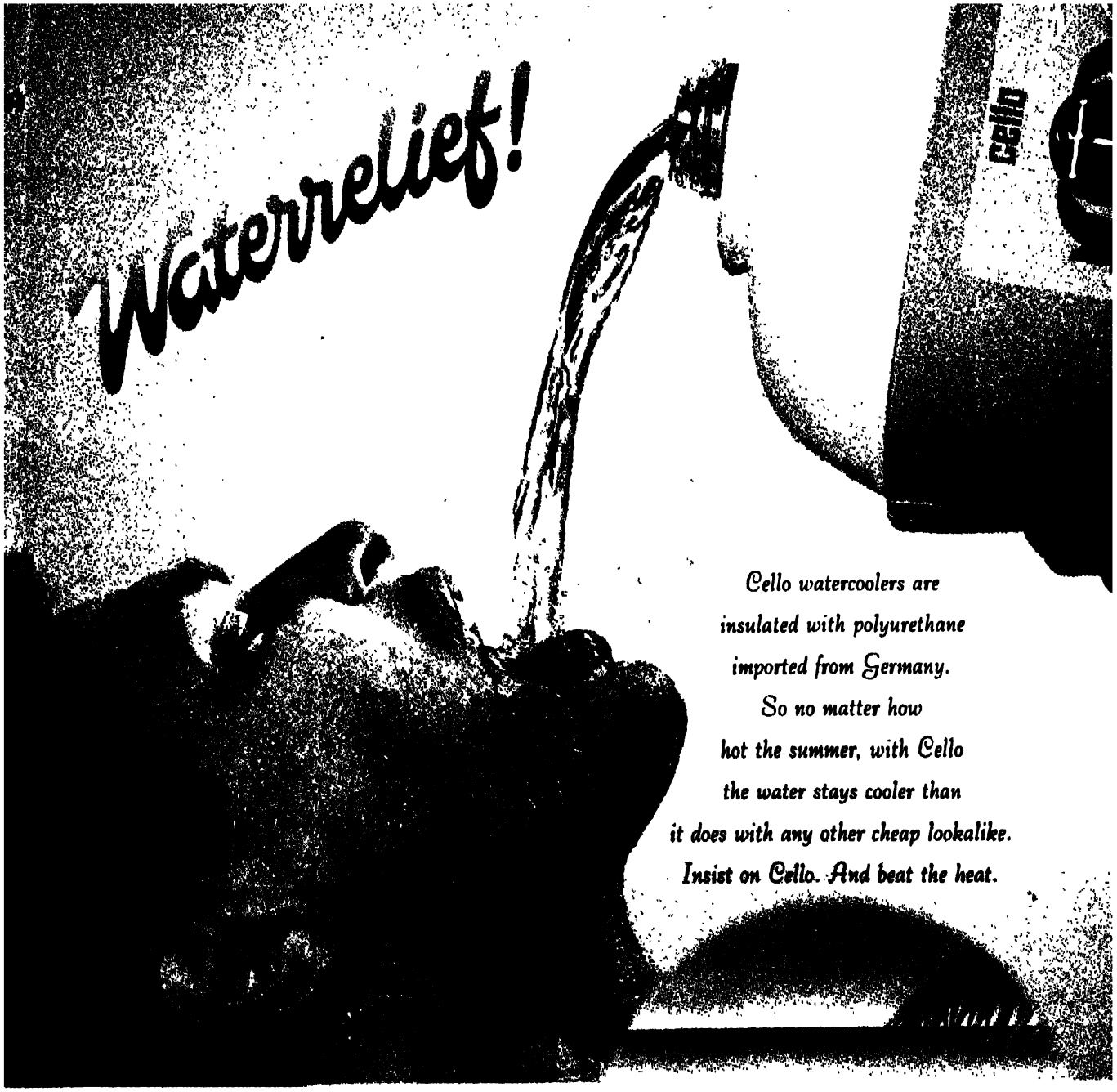
This logic extends to formals as well. For formals, I prefer to have some kind of embroidery on my *kurtas*. Nothing elaborate, just simple, elegant embroidery. Preferably *chikan* work or sometimes the Bengal work. I don't like any accessories. I think they get a bit too much.

For formal footwear, nothing like *chappals*, *jootis* or *mojris*. Though summer is not really the ideal time for *mojris* as they get very uncomfortable, but on some occasions, I suppose, they are fine.

I make an exception in winters. They are spent mostly in western clothes. Mainly sweaters, jackets and shoes. Good as they are, Indian clothes just don't do the trick in winters. You know, *Jawahar* jackets and shawls look very nice and elegant but they don't really serve the purpose.

But for formals, I go back to Indian outfits— *Kurtas* with *Jawahar* jackets and shawls. I have built quite a nice collection of *Jawahar* jackets and these really huge man-size shawls. I love them and have a lot of them. One thing I can never wear despite the weather and my love for Indian clothes are *sherwanis*. I have never worn them.

■ **As told to Ghazala Wahab**



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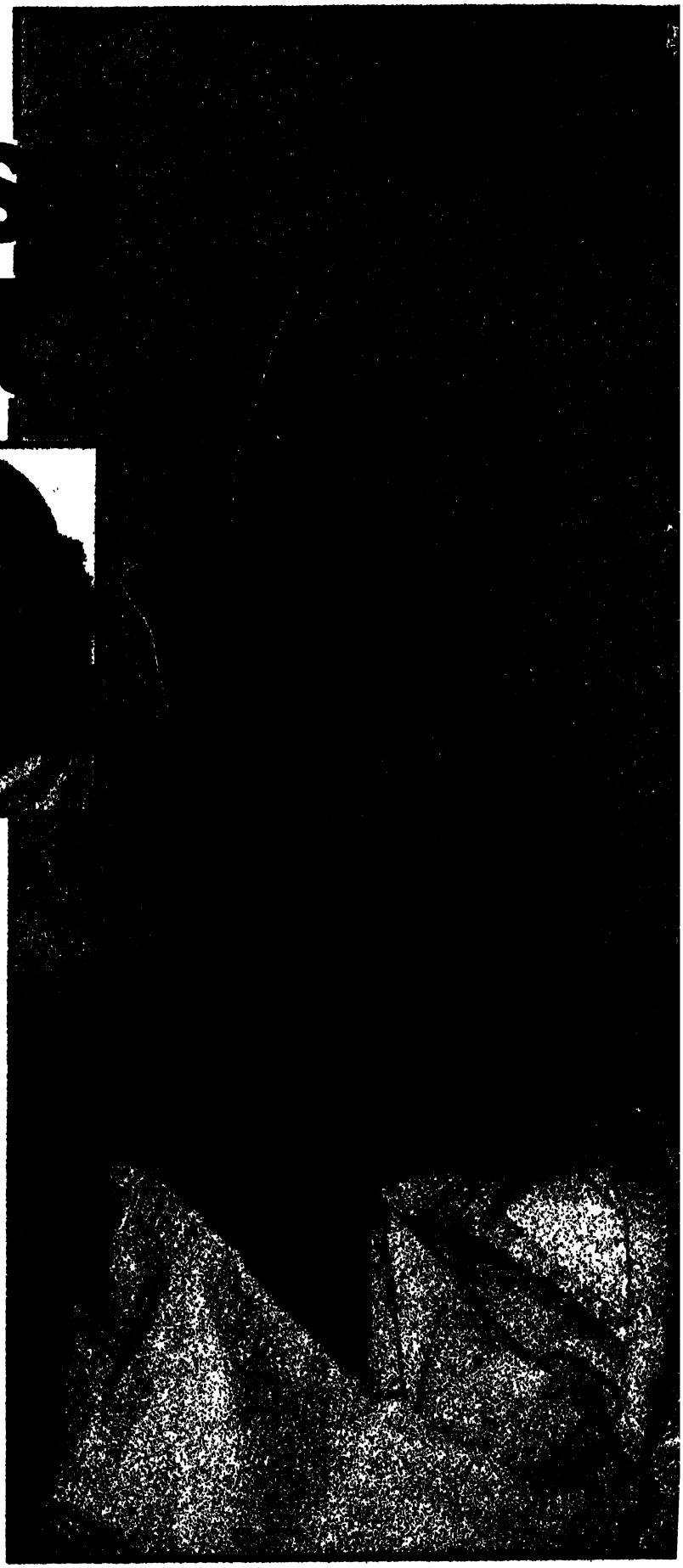
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COVER STORY

Actress or Activist

Shabana Azmi manages to combine both roles with remarkable ease. **Ghazala Wahab** meets a woman of many parts



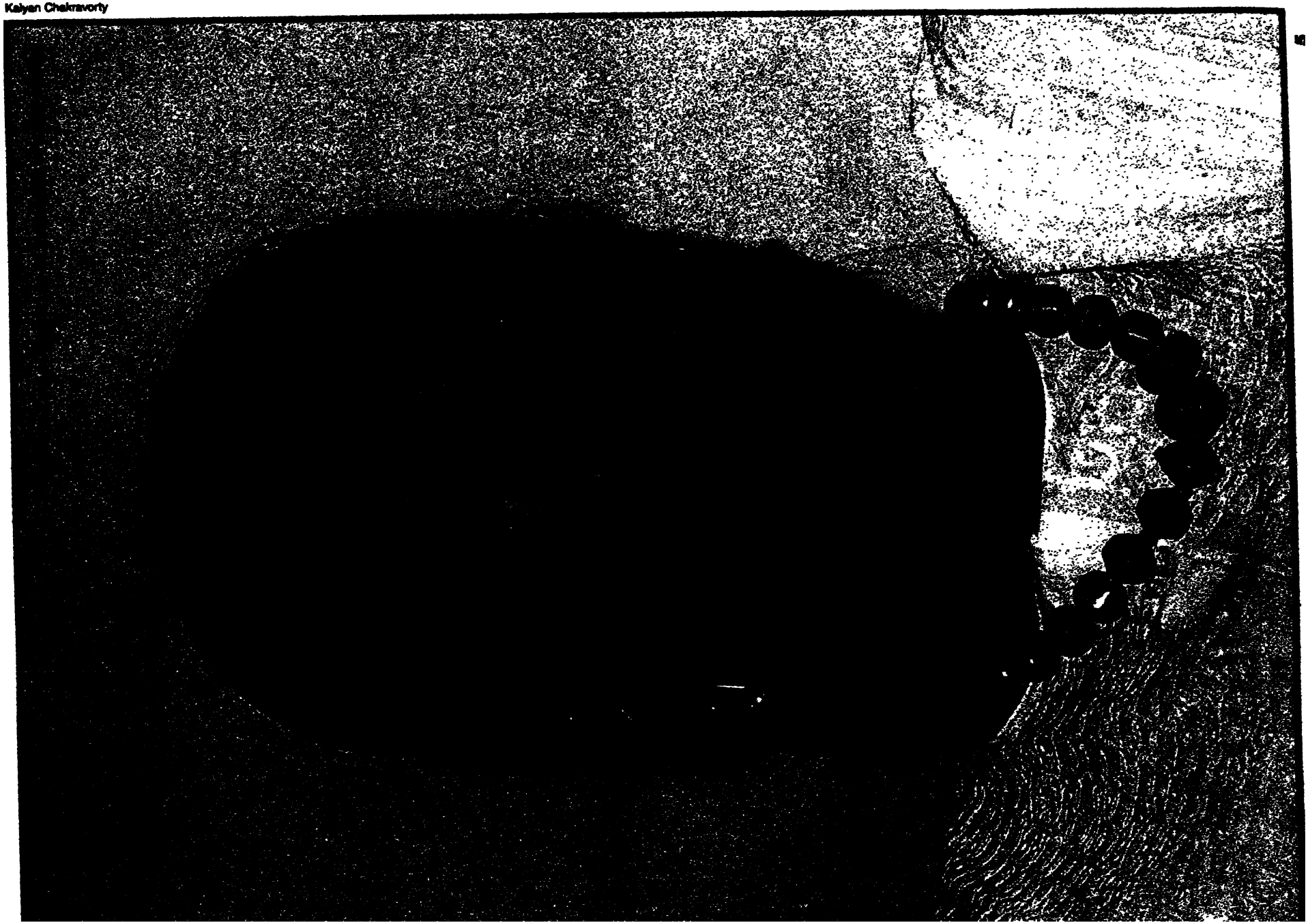


Emotional, short-tempered, compassionate. The self-description of a woman who is many things to many people. Interestingly, Shabana Azmi is many things to herself also. "You know identity is not only one thing," she says. "Identity is many things. If you ask me who I am, then first of all I am a woman, I'm an Indian, I'm a Muslim, I'm an actress, I'm an activist, I'm an daughter, wife, so many things."

All these identities are complete by themselves, with the circumference of one touching the other very tentatively. Never merging, only touching. So that some kind of continuity is maintained, some kind of harmony. But she is careful that one doesn't overtake the other completely.

Some influences are pardonable, and, at times, inevitable. For instance, the influence her upbringing had on her as an actress, the influence actress Shabana had on the social activist, and the influence all these combined had on her political work.

"The work I have been doing for the last 14-15 years is obviously political. But my work is completely free from party politics. Party politics is about putting the fetters on because the party's truth becomes your truth which is necessarily a selective truth. I don't ever want to be





With husband Javed Akhtar : Identity means many things

bound by party."

Azmi's conversion from an actress to an activist did not take place overnight. It was a gradual process and a combination of many things.

First, her childhood. But it turned out to be a case of wrong subject, wrong timing because Azmi got irritated. "I am very bored talking about my childhood. One thing I don't want to talk about is my childhood," she says with exasperation. "The personal angle on me has been done to death. I think what is more important are the things that I say. Whether it is the issue of housing or women's health, slum dwellers' rights, I mean that's what I stand for," she says in a tone which brook no arguments.

But Azmi goes further. The activist in her has to emphasise the role of a journalist. "I feel, in fact, the Press has a duty. I think it is extremely important, specially as a woman journalist, that you realise there are certain women with general perspective and that is the portion that really needs to be highlighted," she says. "Everybody knows how I was born, everybody knows about my celebrated relationship with my parents." Perhaps opinions are important, impressions are not. Perhaps anecdotes and natural reaction to situations are not as much a mirror to one's personality as well-read and well-thought-out point of views.

But journalists are journalists. Even at the cost of appearing repetitive and probably downright dumb, one tries other ways. So, a mere curiosity: was she naughty as a kid?

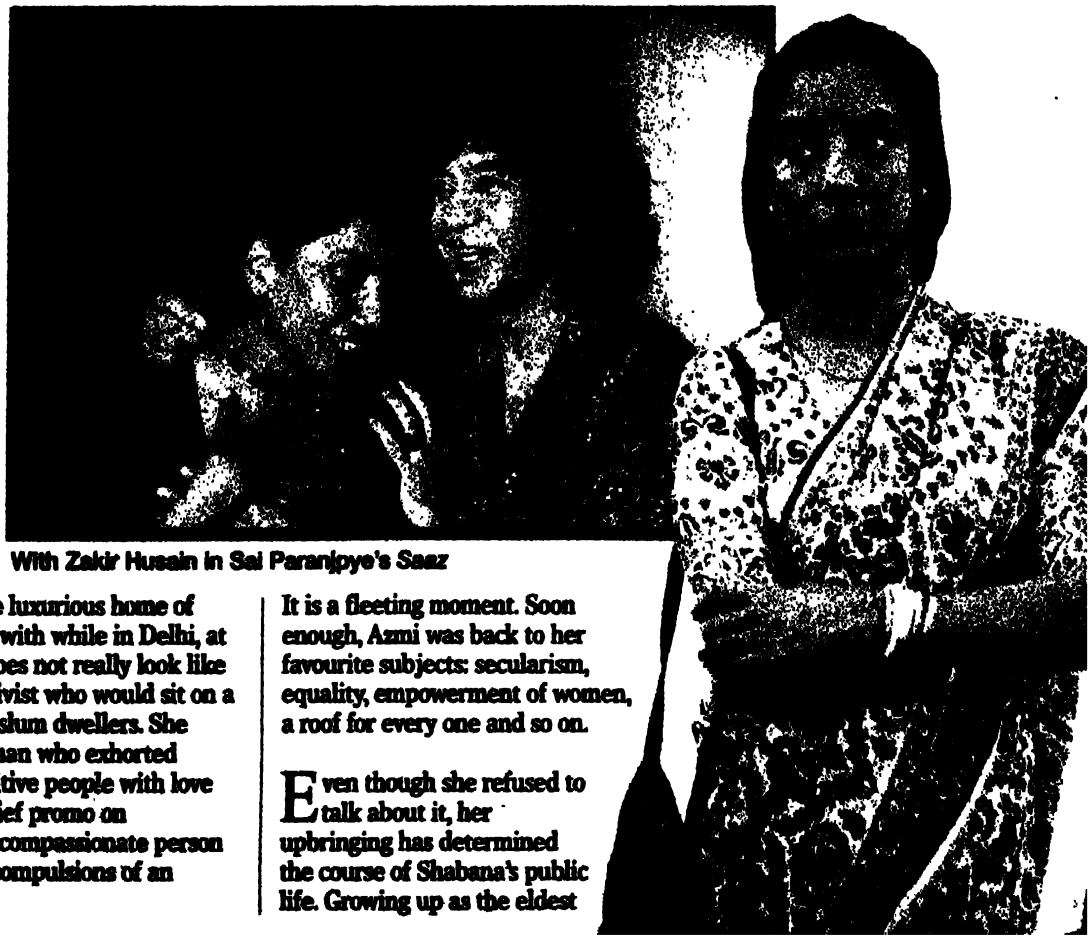
"I won't say I was naughty. In fact, I was good in studies. Besides, I was always acting. And

'I was good in studies. Besides, I was always acting. And most of the time I was playing the male character. Perhaps, because those characters were more aggressive or more hero-like...'



With Marc Robinson in *Bada Din* : Changing moods

most of the time I was playing the male character. Perhaps, because those characters were more aggressive or more hero-like...," she says with a slightly lost, faraway look, unlike her usual focused expression, which often makes it appear that she is addressing unseen multitudes somewhere in the vicinity of your left shoulder.



With Zakir Hussain in Sai Paranjpye's *Saaz*

Dressed in a white salwar-kurta with silver jewellery, sitting on the stairs outside the luxurious home of friends whom she stays with while in Delhi, at the moment Shabana does not really look like the articulate social activist who would sit on a *dharna* for the cause of slum dwellers. She looks more like the woman who exhorted people to treat HIV-positive people with love and compassion on a brief promo on Doordarshan. A simple, compassionate person not burdened with the compulsions of an intellect.

It is a fleeting moment. Soon enough, Azmi was back to her favourite subjects: secularism, equality, empowerment of women, a roof for every one and so on.

Even though she refused to talk about it, her upbringing has determined the course of Shabana's public life. Growing up as the eldest

Make fine lines & wrinkles a thing of the past

Basic to India's philosophy, is the belief that life is a learning curve: as you get older, you get better. True , but as you get older, how do you look better? After all you don't want unsightly lines and wrinkles on your face, no matter how wise you may be.

What causes ageing?

The skin is made of three layers, two of which are responsible for its outward appearance.

The epidermis is the topmost layer of the skin. New cells are produced at its lowest levels and then move up to the surface. According to a natural cycle, cell renewal occurs once in 28 days.

The dermis forms the middle layer of the skin and is made up of a network of connective protein fibres (collagen and elastin). These fibres are responsible for the elasticity and suppleness of the skin.

As time goes by the ageing process results in a decline in cell renewal rates.

This together with the thinning of the epidermis, ageing of the dermis, erosion of the skin texture and elasticity leads to the appearance of fine line and wrinkles.

More often than not, a lifestyle (improper diet, smoking, alcohol etc) can also lead to cell damage. Another major cause of premature ageing is sun damage.

Our awareness of sun damage is often limited to tanning or darkening of the skin. Did you know that unprotected exposure to the sun is also one of the main causes of premature wrinkling ? The UV rays cause the skin to lose its moisture, elasticity and suppleness and it tends to wrinkle. In addition cumulative exposure from childhood to adulthood can cause precancerous conditions which may lead to skin cancer. So sun protection must start at a young age.

What are the visible effects of ageing on our skin?

Some of the most obvious and visible effects of ageing are bags under the eyes, wrinkles, and fine lines. Loss of skin tone, firmness and elasticity of the skin are some of the not so visible effects.

How can I prevent the appearance of wrinkles and other signs of ageing?

There are various ways in which you can slow down or prevent the ageing process. Your diet, regular exercise and of course the right skin care regime.

Exercise promotes blood circulation, which helps the look and feel of the body's largest organ, the skin. Energetic activity brings extra nutrients to the skin's surface, warming it and actually increasing its collagen content so it thickens and becomes more flexible.

Start young with the daily use of a sunscreen. It is also important to remember, that even if you use an anti-ageing product it is essential to apply a sunscreen after applying the anti-ageing product if you are going to spend time outdoors.

Regular facial massages will stimulate blood circulation and the production of collagen in the dermis. And regular facial scrubs will remove dead skin cells and promote cell renewal. There are also a variety of anti-ageing creams available in the market which reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

One of the revolutionary new anti-wrinkle creams that is freely available is Lakmé Skin Revival System. This product does more than just reduce fine lines and wrinkles. It promises visibly younger looking skin because of an advanced Alpha Hydroxy System that revives your skin's natural cell renewal process by gently lifting off dull surface cells to reveal younger fresher skin. So in just two weeks, Lakmé Skin Revival System's comprehensive care also firms up your skin, and most importantly, gives it the radiance of youth.

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The Top Ten

Listing Shabana Azmi's greatest hits — not necessarily at the box-office

***Ankur*:** Shabana's first film and her first national award. She plays an exploited village woman in this Shyam Benegal film. Satyajit Ray wrote in his book, *Our Films Their Films*, "Shabana Azmi, in her very first film, *Ankur*, firmly establishes herself as the finest dramatic actress of the country."

***Shatranj Ke Khiladi*:** When Satyajit Ray made his first Hindi film he could not think of anyone else to play the role of the neglected wife of a nawab in this adaptation of Prem Chand's short story. Though Shabana didn't have much to do in the film, she left her mark nevertheless.

***Arth*:** Mahesh Bhatt's masterpiece about three people caught in an entangled relationship. Shabana plays the betrayed wife who emerges as the winner in the end, in more ways than one. Both Shabana and Smita Patil (who plays the 'other' woman) were nominated for the best actress award. Shabana won. Her second national award.

***Khandhar*:** Shabana plays a person who lives in the past in this Mrinal Sen film. The palatial house where she lives with her mother is in ruins which is symbolic of her life. A sensitive saga of love and betrayal won Shabana her third national award in 1984.

***Paar*:** Goutam Ghose's depiction of abject poverty. Shabana plays the pregnant wife of Naseeruddin Shah who must take a herd of pigs across the river to raise money. They manage to do that but in the bargain Shabana loses her unborn child. Fourth national award for Shabana.

***Mawsam*:** Based on Eric Segal's *Man, Woman and Child*, Shabana plays a contented housewife who is suddenly told by her husband that he had been indiscreet in the past. The consequence: he has a son who will come and live with them as his mother is dead. A Shekhar Kapur film with sensitive portrayals by Shabana and Naseeruddin Shah.

***Madame Sousatzka*:** Shabana plays the ambitious mother of a child prodigy in this John Schlesinger film which also stars Shirley Mclaine. Though Shabana had a comparatively smaller role, it was dramatic enough.

***City of Joy*:** Roland Joffe adapted Dominic Lapierre's *City of Joy* for celluloid amidst a lot of controversy, including threats against the cast which included Om Puri, and Hollywood heart throb, Patrick Swayze. Shabana plays the submissive wife of a rickshaw puller played by Puri.



Shabana Azmi in *Khandhar*

***Sam*:** Sai Paranjpye's saga of sibling rivalry. Unofficially inspired by the Mangeshkar sisters, Lata and Asha, Aruna Irani and Shabana play the singing siblings. While Aruna's character was painted in a darker shade of grey, Shabana plays the carefree, trusting younger sister who gradually and determinedly steps out of her sister's shadow finding her own voice.

***Fire*:** In this first film of Deepa Mehta's trilogy Shabana plays the elder sister-in-law, the younger one played by Nandita Das. Neglected by their husbands, the two women are drawn to each other finding love and fulfillment which their respective marital lives could not provide. The film won her the Best Actress Award at the Chicago Film Festival in 1996 and the Best Actress Award at Los Angeles Outfest in 1997.

Unlike most parents, Shabana's father didn't go to work every morning, didn't wear normal clothes like most fathers and did not allow her to call him papa or daddy but 'abba'

Housing is just a part of her agenda. Other things include women's empowerment. 'But not as a buzzword,' says Shabana. 'You know we are not going to have any decent population policy unless we recognise the urgency of addressing women's health issues'

child of celebrated parents, Kaifi and Shaukat Azmi, must have been quite a burden. Particularly when the parents were not your usual office-going type.

Shabana Azmi once wrote an article on her parents where she said that she always thought her father was a trifle strange. Unlike most parents he didn't go to work every morning, didn't wear normal clothes like most fathers and above all did not allow her to call him papa or daddy but asked to be addressed as 'abba.'

To further add to her confusion and embarrassment he presented her with an Indian doll unlike the blonde ones her friends had. So poor Shabana could not even show off her doll. It was only later when her father painstakingly explained to her the virtues of being an Indian that she was able to bring the doll out of her closet.

It is not just an interesting story. It is a pointer to the kind of upbringing Shabana had and also how it developed her personality. This intellectualisation of the trivial determined to a very great extent the kind of roles she chose as an actress and also the way she enacted them.



The activist Shabana: Protesting the murder of theatre personality, Shafdar Hashmi, at the International Film Festival of India in Delhi while Kabir Bedi and Victor Banerjee look on

Coming back to her conversion as a social activist, Azmi says it was a combination of many factors. "It was the fact that my father is a member of the Communist Party and has always belonged to the school of thought that believed that art must be used as an instrument for social change," she says. So art was a vehicle to bring about social change and she tried to do it through her choice of films. "I don't think it is possible for sensitive artistes to treat art as a nine-to-five job. There is bound to be a residue of the characters one plays."

Living in Mumbai exposed her to the plight of slum dwellers. She used to be deeply concerned that huts were demolished particularly during the monsoon months. But there were two individuals who acted as a catalyst in the process of her conversion. One was Anand Patwardhan, the well-known documentary filmmaker who made a film on Mumbai's slums. The other was Rama, the unknown slum dweller who lived in a shanty town of Naihati.

Before Azmi saw Patwardhan's film *Bombay: Our City*, she, like everyone else, believed that if one didn't demolish the huts Mumbai would burst at the seams. "That," says Shabana, "brought in focus for me that demolition is not the answer. If you want to remove slums you have to do that by upgrading them." Rama was an accident of the positive kind. Azmi was shooting for Goutam Ghose's *Paar* in Naihati where Rama used to frequent the sets. Azmi was using her as a model to observe her mannerisms. "She took me to her house," says Azmi, "and I saw the abject poverty in which she lived. I was amazed that somebody who was living in such poverty would have such generosity, such ability to smile. I felt that if I went back without doing anything to change the situation of people like Rama, it would be a travesty of the trust she had placed in me."

Azmi was now in control of the interview, talking of real issues, concerning real people and her lucidity was evidence enough. "There's a poem written by my father called *Makaan*, and it talks about the irony of the construction worker who by the sweat of his brow has put this fabulous house together and when the building is made he is told by the *chowkidar* that he is not allowed to enter the building he has made by his own hands."

So instead of remaining at the periphery, Shabana jumped right into the midst of action. In 1986, she joined Nivara Hakk, an organistion working for the rights of slum dwellers. And soon enough she found herself sitting on a fast unto death. Azmi now made more news as an activist than as an actress.

So it was a natural consequence that she should be nominated to Rajya Sabha. The nomination did not take Azmi by surprise. She was ready with her agenda.

"I'll try and bring about legislation if I can, based on my experiences at the grassroots level. You know, nations across the world spent two to eight per cent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on housing. We, at Nivara Hakk, say that if we spend even three to three-and-a-half per cent on housing we can provide shelter for all by the year 2020."

But that is not all. Housing is just a part of her agenda. Other things include women's empowerment. "But not as a buzzword," says Shabana. "You know we are not going to have any decent population policy unless we recognise the urgency of addressing women's health issues."

According to Azmi, economic independence does not automatically lead to empowerment. She says that often women who are earning don't have any right to buy what they want to without the permission of their mother-in-law or husband. So, for empowerment it is necessary to change existing mind-sets which include reworking one's approach to education. "Look at the education imparted at schools. It only reinforces gender stereotypes," she says.

But above all it is the secular fabric of the country which she thinks needs to be preserved. "The truth of India is its composite culture," she says. "It's like a mosaic where all the individual pieces stand out contributing to a composite whole rather than a melting pot in which all identities are submerged." She asks that when Muslim fundamentalism and Sikh fundamentalism are regarded as anti-national, then how can Hindu fundamentalism be accepted as national.

But what about her first vocation: films? Isn't the industry on her agenda too? According to Azmi it is part of the constituency she believes she represents which includes the slum dwellers, women and the film industry. Though it is on her agenda, Azmi doesn't have any ready plan for the medium which got her four national awards, national and international recognition plus innumerable awards.

Ironically, despite her illustrious film career spanning 24 years there seems to be a concerted effort on her part to delink her film background from her public life. It seems that she finds herself poised at the beginning of a new career; hence this attempt at dissociation.

Talking of films, a subject reached reluctantly, Shabana says of all her characters none even reached close to what she is. "There have been bits of me in this and that." Among her favourite films which did well commercially are *Avatar, Arth, Masoom*, even *Parvarish*. "*Avatar* talked about the dignity of the older generation, dignity of people who must not always depend on their children. And that is why it did so well."

Like a circle all streams of conversation



With her father, Kaifi Azmi

come back to her pet subjects. This time it is secularism. "You know, I come from an extremely liberal family. As a child I remember celebrating every single festival," she says. "But after the demolition of the Babri Masjid the word Muslim was hurled at me as if it was an accusation. I was appalled. I wasn't even born when Partition happened, so how can you ask me to give proof of my loyalty? This is my country and I don't have to prove to anybody. It was a very, very traumatising experience," she says.

"When I stood up against the Shah Bano judgement, Muslim fundamentalists got up and said 'You know, she is a non-believer, don't listen to her,' so I was written off by them. And now I was being written off by the Hindu fundamentalists. So at least one thing was proved, that I was secular."

And that was one thing nobody needed a proof of. Azmi is a strong personality. You can either praise her with unconcealed admiration or find chinks in her well-built armour. One thing is certain, you cannot remain indifferent, for she is negligent enough to leave behind rough edges on her chosen path. ■

'I come from an extremely liberal family. As a child I remember celebrating every single festival. But after the Babri Masjid demolition the word Muslim was hurled at me as if it was an accusation'



ENVIRONMENT

Price of Good Living

You may have every creature comfort at your disposal. But is that helping or harming you, asks **Ghazala Wahab**

Consider this: lead particles emitting from vehicular fumes settle on the soil in the fields where crops are grown. Parts of it get dissolved in the water and are soaked by the roots. Through the stem, lead particles reach the bulb of the crop, say, wheat. Subsequently, it is ground and reaches our table in form of *chappatis*.

So when we eat *chappatis*, with all their nutritious properties, we are also



More cars, more pollution (left) and working on keyboards can damage the nerves

Photographs by Kalyan Chakravorty

unknowingly taking in lead. Now imagine the same situation with hundreds of vegetables one eats everyday with thousands of myriad chemicals plus different meats with dozens of miscellaneous infections and all because of various human activities aimed at achieving excellence.

Scared already? This is just the beginning!

Now combine the lead-infested vegetables with arsenic-infested water. This is no sci-fi horror story but a possible Indian reality or that of any Third World country. A report by Jonathan Beard in the British science journal *New Scientist* says that ground water in parts of Bangladesh and West Bengal contains large quantities of arsenic, much above the permitted level.

The World Health Organisation's safety limit for arsenic is 10 micrograms per litre, but water in the wells of Bangladesh and West Bengal contains as much as 300 micrograms to 4000 micrograms per litre.

Staggering, isn't it?

Even the life-giving nectar, milk, has not escaped the wrath of the gods, or more to the point, the callousness of humans. According to an annual report of the National Institute of Occupational Health, on an average an Indian consumes a fair amount of Dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT) and Benzene hexachloride (BHC) through milk and vegetable fats. Though the quantity of consumption of these insecticides is below the danger mark set by WHO it is highest in the world. So even as one should not panic immediately there is cause for concern as resistance to these chemicals differs from individual to individual.

And all this because we have this innate urge to invent things to make life comfortable and our muscles redundant. In a consumer society, to feed the burgeoning population one uses various kinds of chemical fertilisers to increase agricultural output. But, as they say, there are no free lunches in life, and a price has to be paid for increasing agricultural output. The fertilisers infect the atmosphere and also the ground water. Then there are insecticides like DDT and BHU which save the crops but harm the body.

But besides this there is a very clear and present danger right in the secure confines of our homes. Says Vidya M.S., a fellow with Vigyan Prasar, an organisation working towards popularising science under the aegis of the Department of Science and Technology, "Every day we are working towards destroying ourselves and our environment. What do you think happens to our daily waste, for instance, soap water with all the chemicals, which flows down the sewerage? It is dumped in either rivers or ponds from where it seeps do wn and poisons the ground water. And, mind you, ground water is the main source of water in summer."

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Human beings, perhaps, never grew out of their nomadic tendencies. Like nomads, they live life here and now, indifferent to the consequences of their activities. They make things and leave a heap of waste behind for posterity to clean. Even modern inventions are done without taking their long-term effects in account. Every scientific achievement, every step forward to make life less tedious comes with baggage: an inherent health hazard.

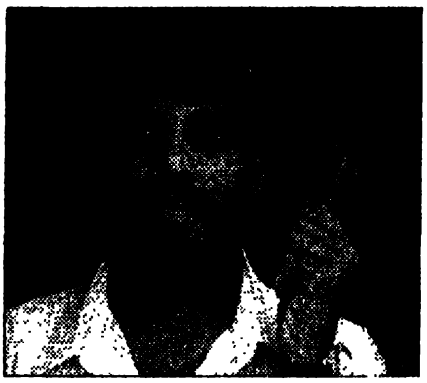
If anything has brought the world closer it is the computer. Even information to write this article at times was sourced with the help of a computer. Millions log in everyday without realising that every minute at the computer leaves a trail of problems. Even if one ignores the long-term effects of radiation from computer screens and the effect it has on our eyes there is a silent menace which has only now come to light. The feather touch keyboards feel great and painless but they cause severe nerve damage in the arm.

Says Bruce Lynn, a neurophysicist in London, "We may be seriously underestimating the number of people who are at risk from upper limb disorders." According to his paper which was published in a recent issue of *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health*, computer users provide the best evidence to date that repetitive strain injury is actually an illness.

Then there are cellular phones which have suddenly become a necessity. Dr Andrew Davidson of Frehmental Hospital of Australia recently said that with the prevalence of cellular phones instances of brain tumour have increased. Though no direct link between cellular phones and brain tumours have been established as yet Dr Davidson has initiated research with the cooperation of telecommunication companies in



Smoke pollution and arsenic infested water will lead to poor vegetation



Cell phones may lead to brain tumours



Radiation from television sets can cause leukemia, anaemia and hair loss

Australia. He will study the effect of cellular phones on people with brain tumour. But apart from the effect on the brain, cellular phones also interfere with the working of pacemakers, making them go awry.

"It is only natural that one electronic device will interfere with the functioning of another," says Vidya M.S., adding, "We have to see how much electronic interference we want in our lives."

Interference is a minor thing, but what about radiation? After all, all electronic devices emit electro-magnetic radiation which harms the human body. Like the television, for instance. Research shows that radiation from television sets can cause leukemia, anaemia, hair loss, and in some cases, even sterility.

Air conditioners, without which surviving the summer in tropical environs becomes impossible, also come with a price. Apart from maintaining the air temperature it also causes havoc not only to the human body but also to the environment.

Fresh air has a balanced mix of nitrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide and a few other gases which is not the case in an air-conditioned room. An air-conditioned room has pollutants like nitrogen oxide and formaldehyde. This further increases the possibility of the formation of a radioactive gas, radon, which can cause cancer. Besides this, the wall paints and other synthetic products in a room add to air pollution leading to suffocation. These are the hazards which exclude the sound factor and its inherent complications.

This is not all. The refrigeration industry which includes refrigerators and air conditioners uses Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) as a coolant. Fortunately, they are extremely light particles and immediately travel upwards without causing any harm to humans, or so the present research states. But on its heavenly journey it causes ruptures in the ozone layer increasing the possibility of skin cancer through exposure to ultra-violet rays.

Rajiv Sharma, a fellow at Vigyan Prasar, says, "The whole process of urbanisation is pollution-oriented. Everything that we do has a side-effect whether is it the building of roads or more houses or power generation. Where does one draw a line?"

That is the most difficult task, drawing a line. After all, one cannot imagine living without any of these things. They are no longer mere luxury.

Perhaps one needs to balance all this with increased physical activity which might increase resistance to various elements. But here again, technology seems to be bent upon making the human body as redundant as possible and consequently more prone to ailments.

A recent survey in Great Britain showed that an average urban person expends about 40 per cent more than his basal metabolic rate (BMR, which means the energy one would expend lying around all day and not eating) as against an African villager who expends about 100 to 120 per cent of their BMR as they do up to three time more physical activity than Westerners. This amounts to a difference of about 500 to 700 kilocalories a day. With everything being power or machine-operated one doesn't even need to wind down the window glass in the car.

The risks this kind of sedentary lifestyle poses are — start counting — joint disorders, back pain, sleep apnoea which can stop breathing at night, sexual dysfunction, loss of cardiac fitness which increases the risk of heart diseases leading to death, and muscle wasting. It seems that it is pay back time now. Poetic justice, they call it. Nature's way of getting its own back for the annihilation it has been suffering at the hands of human beings. Perhaps there is wisdom in the old saying: Ignorance is bliss. But damage is being done, whether you know bout it or you don't, whether you care about it or you don't. ■

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



Ganesha says that influences will be fully manifest this week. You will have much to do with loans and funds, public trusts and money and the consequences should be pleasing. A trip at short notice is very likely. A dash of romance, laughter and colour lends gaiety to your life. Inculcate some discipline.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



The prelude to the financial theme becomes a strong crescendo with the focus firmly on finance, money matters, personal belongings— in fact all trends that affect your pocket, so that you might develop the ability to handle finances. Ganesha warns you not to stagger under the additional burden.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



Entertainment, amusement, games, hobbies, warm interaction with children, love and romance on moonlit nights are in store for you. Alongside this, there is also speculation and trying your hand at the luck of the draw. Don't spend too much on trifles even if you think you have enough money.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



A grand reaching out to people and places through media is indicated. Journey and ceremony are the week's other highlights. There is plenty of love, luck and laughter in store for you. Your health is suspect. Do not take any chances with it. A meeting with old friends is a distinct possibility.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Home,property, renovation and decoration are some of the things that are likely to preoccupy your mind for quite some time. Take care not to get into the bad books of any of your colleagues as this could mean trouble for you on the work front. A distant journey is indicated.

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



A time to love and also a time to shed away old ideas and become absolutely modern. Expenses, trips, ties and secret liaisons are on the cards for you. You will get the attention you deserve and that should make you very happy. Writers, teachers, editors and those in the advertising industry are going to strike it rich.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



Expect friends, visitors, foreigners and almost total strangers to drop in and they will please you. Alternatively, you will be called as a guest and taken very good care of.Many Librans will get engaged or married. Those who are already married are on their way to becoming parents.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Despite a feverish schedule, you are bound to do very well. Expenses will mount but you will also have plenty of opportunities to make money. Your spouse is likely to be extremely supportive of whatever you do and this is going to spur you on to great heights, professionally. Health needs attention.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Finances, food and family form the inevitable trio for you. There will be a sudden urge to be exceptionally daring and different. A long pending work is finished and you will receive plaudits for completing it. Love is very much in the air and the world now seems a wonderful place to live in!

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Avoid overindulgence and overwork as you might be toiling yourself to exhaustion and this is definitely not advisable in the scorching heat. Whether it is leisure or pleasure, it is best to combine both with work, interviews or meets. Do not get bogged down with trivial misunderstandings.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



Be adaptable and amiable and money is sure to pour in. Buying, selling and trading are the trends of the next 21 days. You will enjoy the company of others. You must also learn to let your hair down once in a while. Keep your travel kit ready as you might have to undertake a long journey.

Pisces
February 19 — March 20



An informative and entertaining week ahead. Secret love, alliances and rendezvous are foretold. Caution must be mixed with aggression in the right measure. This is also the time to build and flex your money power. You need not try too hard to please or flatter as sheer hard work will see you through.

BIRTHDAYS

June 14: Moon conjunction Uranus: Ganesha says a fine union for artists, writers and teachers but especially for space scientists, computer whiz kids and models.

June 15: Mercury sextile Saturn: We have here the unique combination of dexterity and mobility (Mercury) with consolidation and stability (Saturn). Health needs attention.

June 16: Moon square Mars-Pluto: You might have to tread between two warring parties. Changes on the work front are guaranteed and all for the better.

June 17: Moon's last quarter: Overvaulting ambition will spur you on to new heights of creativity and achievement. You will have the good sense and intuition to make the right decision. Expect money to smell its way into your pocket.

June 18: Sun- Jupiter square: A step at a time is best. Plan meticulously, but leave a broad margin for delays in a project. Your enthusiasm will be infectious.

June 19: Moon sextile sun: These luminaries in happy placing lead to fortune and a tidal wave of success, no matter what the nature of your job. Children adore you.

June 20: Moon sextile Mercury: Despite tensions and irritations, rest assured that your work will be done and you will be loved in ample measure. You may undertake a journey.

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• And make a wish that's morally and socially acceptable

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TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

DOMESTIC FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DELHI					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
GUWAHATI					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
PATNA					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
RANCHI					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 4 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-771	0615	daily	C 772	1150	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W 512	2125	daily
BOMBAY (MUMBAI)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
MADRAS (CHENNAI)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
MADRAS					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI 682	0825	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
NAGPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
PORT BLAIR					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
RANCHI					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W 512	2125	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
SILCHAR					
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 211	1905	daily
AI-579	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-785	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD 572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

REGIONAL FLIGHTS

AGARTALA					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
GUWAHATI					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
IMPHAL					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SILCHAR					
BG 698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB 105	0925	4
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ 416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • SW Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20 00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9 15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr Tues , Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon , Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr Mon , Thurs., Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon , Tues , Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun , Arr: Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21 10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr Tues , Wed , & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep. Tues , Wed. & Sat, Arr: Tues , Fri & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs..; Arr Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr. Tues.	7-55	1182
Up	**Time**	**Sealdah**	**Time**	**Dn**
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchanjunga Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-15	Gour Express	5-15	3154
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed & Sun.	6-45	3148
5663	20-00	Kalimpur Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr. Except Saturday	21 00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr. Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep. Sunday; Arr.: Sunday	5 15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr. Friday & Monday	13 45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13 45	6323

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL *Strategies*

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your

Q. ***I am a 23-year-old girl from an orthodox family and in the past one year, I have known a 24-year-old man. What initially attracted me to him was his sensitivity, humour and intellect. We have decided to marry next year. A week ago, however, he suddenly revealed that he had been with a number of girls in the past. He repents it and promises to be faithful to me. He tells me that he was only satisfying his 'bodily urge' and none of the relationships were based on love. I am now finding it extremely difficult to accept him with his past. There is a lot of goodness in him and I still love him but I wonder whether he deserves my pure, unadulterated love. Kindly help me make a proper decision.***



A.S, Balasore

A. No relationship is ever truly pure. Hypocrisy, sexuality, carnality — these are all symptoms of the human condition. You say you are from an orthodox family. Perhaps that is what accounts for your extreme reaction to his past. If I was in your place, I would certainly appreciate his effort at beginning the serious relationship of matrimony on a truthful note. Make no mistake about it, nobody 'deserves' another human being's love. Marriage is a continuous process of adjustment and readjustment. Shed your reservations and begin your life together in a positive and trusting way.

Q. ***I am a good-looking 24-year-old married woman doing business. As such, I have got a lot of boyfriends whose company I enjoy. My in-laws are, however, not very happy about my intimacy with my male friends and even my husband sometimes accuses me of adultery. My in-laws choose to ignore the fact that my husband spends half the night with his innumerable girlfriends in discos, pubs and parties. This hypocrisy makes me feel indignant and I have decided to annul my marriage. My female friends also advise me to file for a divorce. Am I right in protesting against the double standards of a male-dominated society?***



D. G, Calcutta

A. You are not the first person to come up against the unscalable wall of double standards in a male-dominated, patriarchal family. I think you are both still very young and brittle in your attitudes. I do not see anything fundamentally wrong in your marriage, apart from the friction arising from the degree of autonomy and independence you should have. I am glad to see that you are putting up a good fight on your end. I, however, do feel very strongly that your female friends are wrong in advising you to file for divorce. It is entirely possible that this ultra-social phase in both your lives may graduate into a more settled one where you find more time for each other.



Q. ***I am a 26-year-old handsome Chartered Accountant looking after my father's jewellery business. My only problem is my hep 22-year-old girlfriend who comes from a rich Punjabi family. My family is reasonably liberal but they will not take kindly to the fact that my girlfriend wears tank tops, mini-skirts and body-hugging outfits. My girlfriend on the other hand, says that in this modern world, she has every right to wear whatever she wants. How do you think I can reach a compromise?***

S. P, Calcutta

A. This is certainly not an insurmountable problem. You need to shed your judgmental

Family opposed to your girlfriend wearing body-hugging outfits? Your family is certainly entitled to their opinion but so is your girlfriend and she has every right to dress or behave in the manner which she wants. Try and explain your family's angle to your girlfriend, it might help decrease some of the friction

attitude towards your girlfriend. Your family is certainly entitled to their opinion but so is your girlfriend and she has every right to dress or behave in the manner which she wants. Try to explain to your family that they must not base their verdict on such a shallow and insignificant foundation. You seem like a reasonable person. Try and explain their angle to your girlfriend, it might help decrease some of the friction.



Q. ***I am a 23-year-old girl working in a government undertaking. I am in love with my colleague and we have a very mature relationship. Both our parents are aware of our feelings. My problem is that I am a degree holder whereas my boyfriend has merely passed H.S. Presently, he is trying to do a professional course but is rather unsure of his success. I always feel a certain complex when I have to present him to relatives who are all highly qualified, including my father who is a surgeon. How should I get rid of this complex?***

B.B, Calcutta

A. The most important point to be noted is that you must not pass on your complexes to your boyfriend. If yours is a mature relationship, try and overcome this feeling of inadequacy that you seem to be carrying and be grateful for being blessed with such a union. If you continue to carry this feeling, you run the risk of passing it on to him which will almost certainly hurt his self-esteem. Instead, support him in his efforts to succeed. Try to help him improve his confidence level through constant encouragement and displaying a faith in his abilities. That would be more constructive than aimless anxiety.



Q. ***I am a 34-year-old married man and am working in a good post. I am reasonably intelligent, imaginative, well-behaved and highly sensitive. A feeling often haunts me that I am not being given due respect and being over-shadowed by others. I am poor at projecting myself and cannot push my way through. I am therefore not given big responsibilities and even if I am, I have that feeling of insecurity that someone will walk off with all the credit. Please help me with your advice.***

Boyfriend less qualified than you? If yours is a mature relationship, try and overcome this feeling of inadequacy that you seem to be carrying and be grateful for being blessed with such a union

Name withheld, Assam

A. You seem to be in the beginning stages of a persecution complex. Try not to feel besieged by the world around you. Try and increase the level of trust and self-confidence in your daily dealings. Outside recognition is not the most important factor, aim to satisfy yourself and you will see that you will be a happier person. If you can reach the goals you set for yourself, the respect and admiration of your colleagues will soon follow.

Q. ***I am a 21-year-old man and an orphan. It is only through sheer hard work and divine grace that I have settled reasonably well in life. I have a girlfriend who is a rape victim and has herself undergone a lot of trauma in life. We are planning to marry this July. Unfortunately, due to the hardships I have had to face in my childhood, I have developed tuberculosis and there is a very thin chance of survival. I came to know about the illness only when it was too late. I want to die a peaceful death. But what do I do about my to-be in-laws who have high expectations from me. I am also worried about my fiancee who will break down completely. How do I handle the whole situation and convince my fiancee to live a normal life after I am no more?***

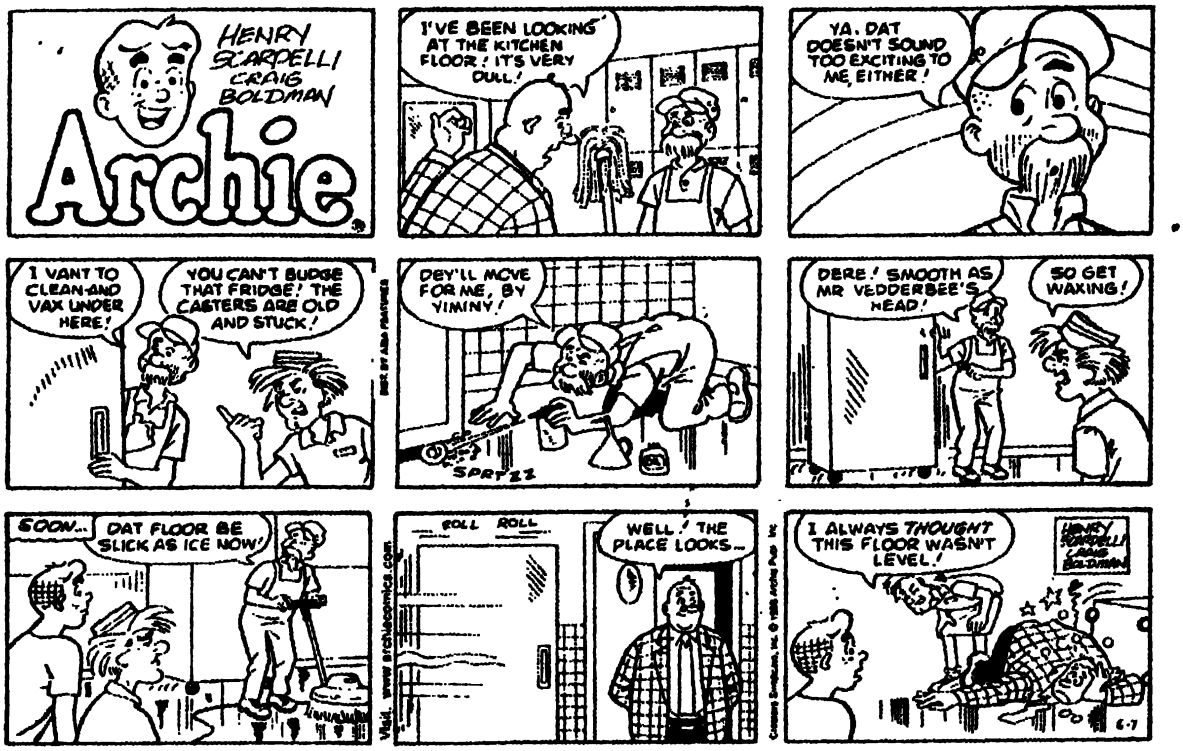


Name and address withheld

A. I am really touched by the degree of sorrow and difficulty that you and your girlfriend have gone through. All suffering teaches us acceptance and I can only counsel you to surrender to god with faith and optimism. I think you should go ahead and get married and snatch as much time from time's tyranny as you can. Sometimes, a few good years together can be worth a lifetime of regret. Besides, I sincerely believe in miracles. I sincerely pray that you may have the happiness you both so surely deserve.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

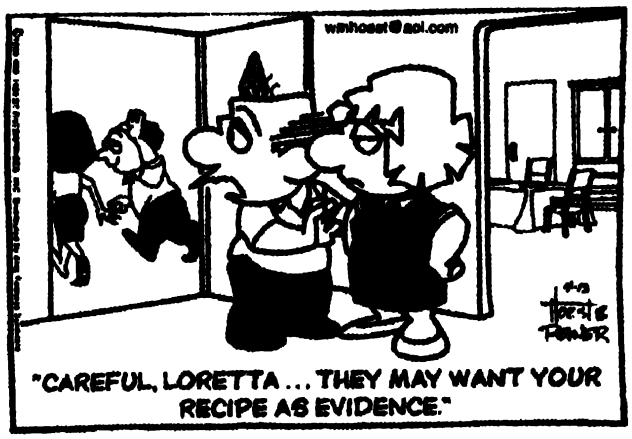
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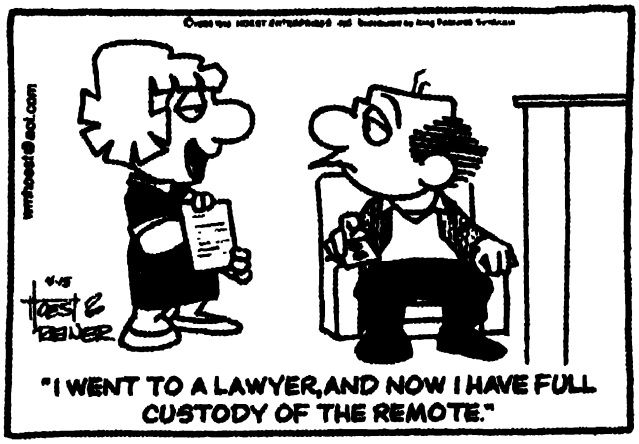
CALVIN AND HOBBES ❋ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS

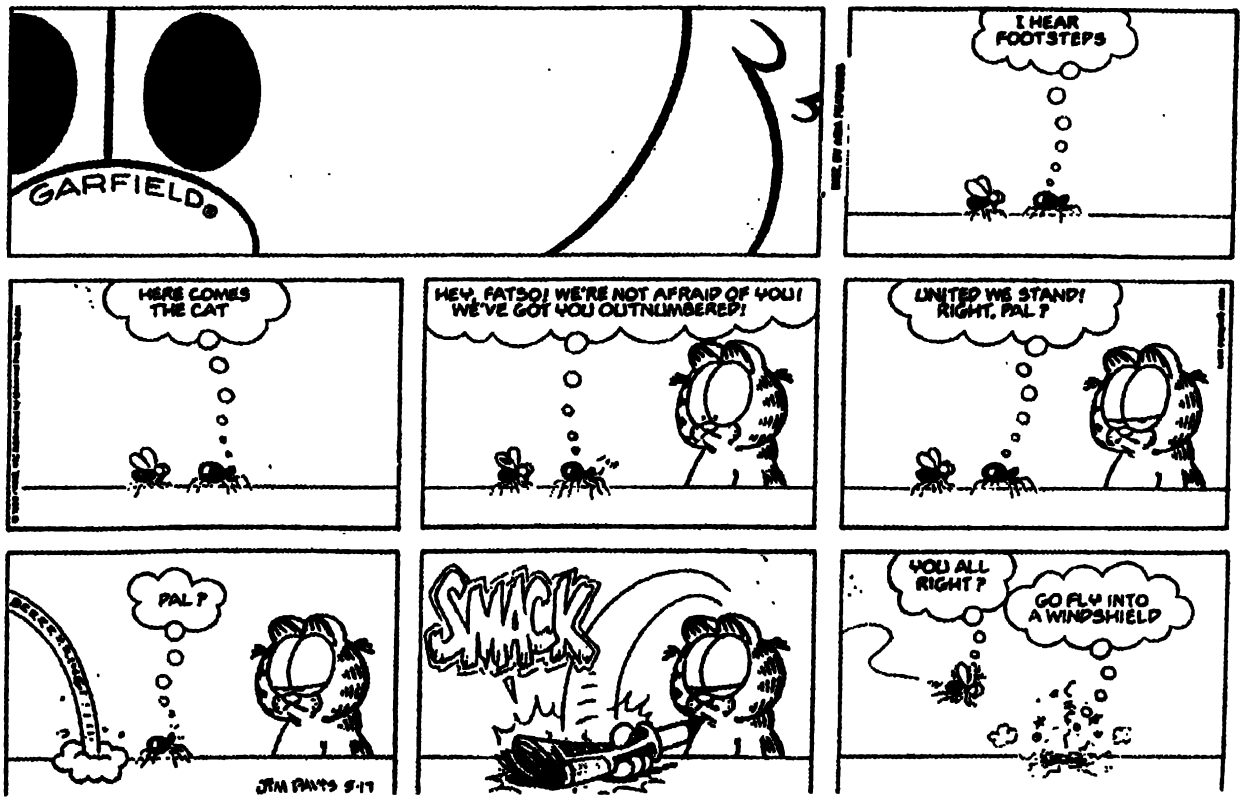




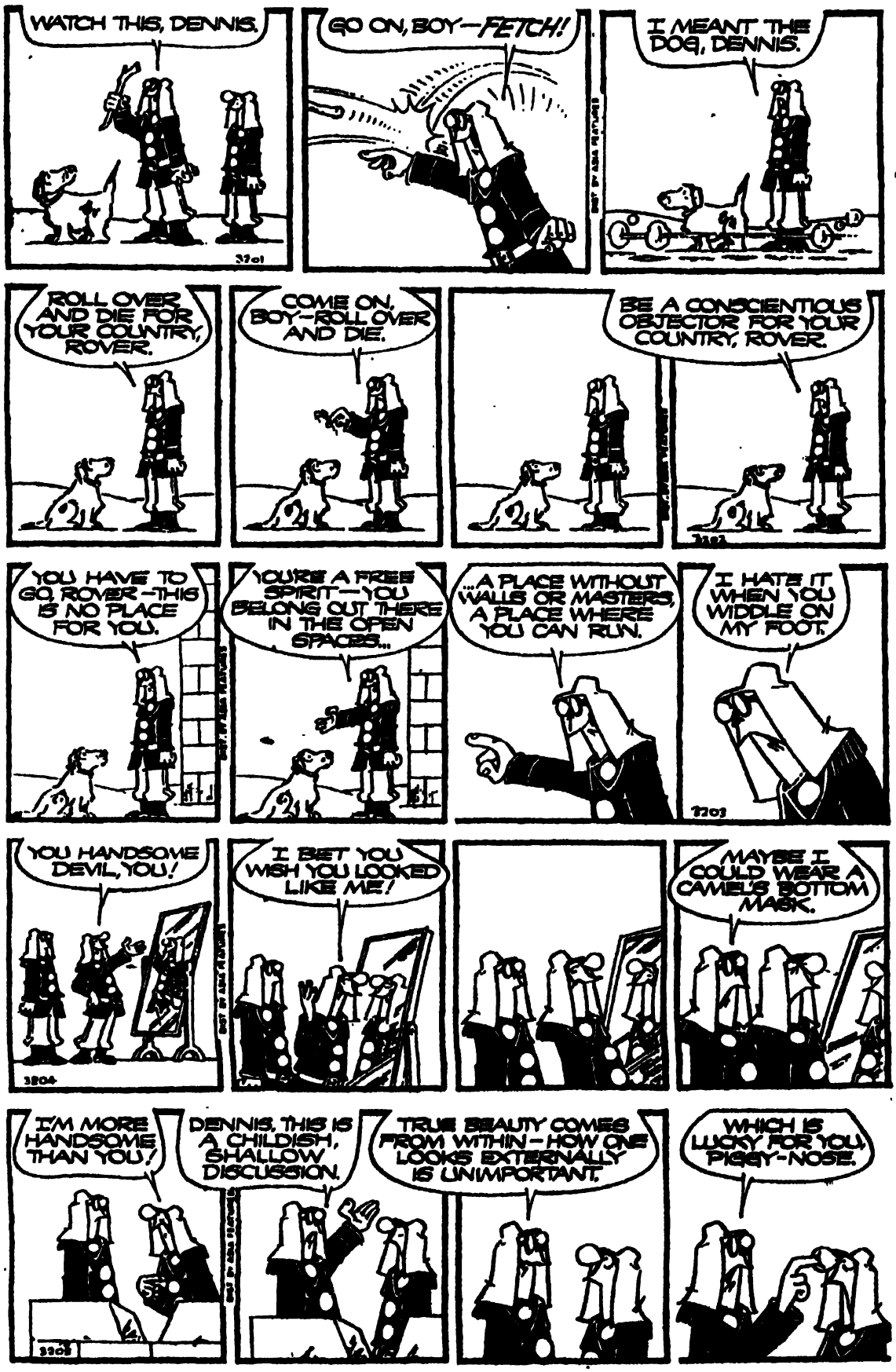




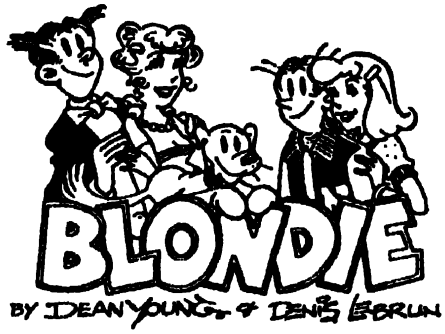
GARFIELD ▩ WATTERSON

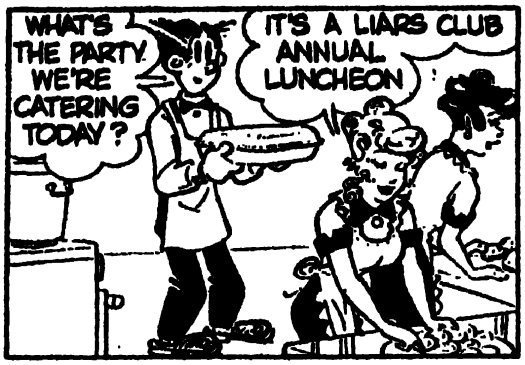


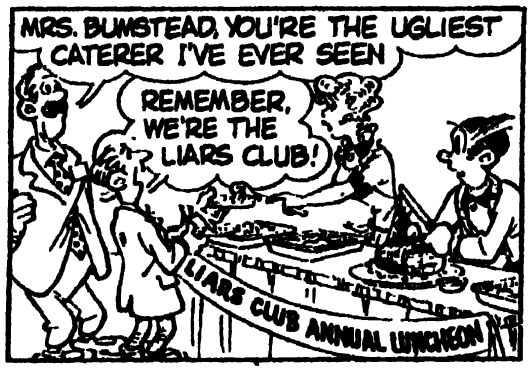
THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE

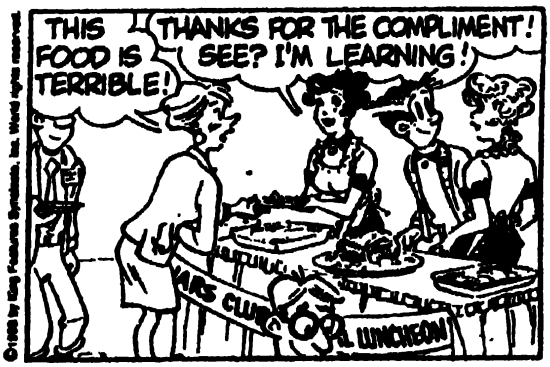


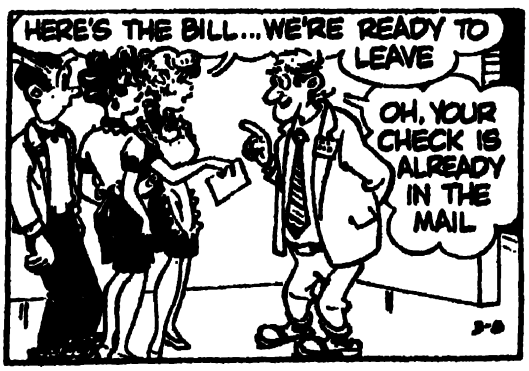














BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q *I am 50-years-old and inspite of being active at this age, I still have an acute problem of varicose veins which stretch like a road map on my lower limbs and get excruciatingly painful when I exert myself. I am not able to walk long distances because of this. Please suggest a remedy which can be administered in the convenience of the home.*
Indiru, Calcutta

A We definitely do not want a gracefully ageing woman of Calcutta looking like the city's guide map! Soak your tired feet in a tub of hot water to which you have added ten drops of nutmeg oil and lemon grass. Also gently massage a pain oil on the legs—like sanjeevini. This is excellent and if done daily, you will find a difference within two weeks of your starting treatment. What is important is that you must be regular and try and get hold of absolutely pure products, even if it means that you may have to pay a little bit more.



Q *I am a working lady and need your advise regarding a problem that I have had for the past two years. I have had white patches on my hands (even my palms have not been spared). Consulting dermatologists and taking Ayurvedic medicines have not helped. Please advise.*
S.K, Berhampur

A It is unfortunate that you have not explained as to what the doctors and the dermatologists have prescribed the problem as. It may be a deficiency in the body or a reaction to something. Unfortunately, without seeing it, I cannot really prescribe a treatment for you to do at home. Are these patches itchy? Are they increasing? There will be so many things to investigate before I can prescribe something.

For treating varicose veins:

■

Soak your feet in a tub of hot water containing lemon grass and nutmeg oil

Q *My daughter is six years old and as a concerned mother, I would like your advise regarding proper skin care, the kind of soap or lotion she should use on her delicate skin. Please help.*
Shobha Akhilani, Calcutta

A It is heartwarming to see that as a young mother, you are so concerned about your daughter's skin. Believe me, she will be ever grateful to you once she grows up and blooms into a young woman. Try to give her an almond oil massage once a week and use this for her hair as well. As far as bathing is concerned, try to avoid soap and make a cleansing scrub with the following—orange peel powder, gramflour, fresh cream, lemon juice and two drops of coconut oil. Make a paste of this and keep in the fridge for about a week. Use while bathing and wash off. This must be powdered very finely as her skin is soft and delicate. You can also use very finely powdered sandlewood as an after bath talcum which is both refreshing and cooling and acts as a natural deodorant.

Q *My skin develops a tan and breaks out in blisters whenever I go out in the sun. Kindly advise me on a way to prepare sunscreen lotion or cream at home as chemicals tend to have an adverse reaction on my skin. I do pamper my skin with tender coconut water. Do I continue doing the same?*
S. Mukherjee, Siliguri



A The sun can be awful on the skin and it is best to protect it with a moisturising sunscreen like any oil which acts as a protective barrier against the strong ultra-violet rays. Take just two drops of either almond oil or sesame seed oil and massage it into the face. Whenever you come back from the sun, always

wipe the skin with cold rose water and apply the following anti-tan pack—sandalwood powder, fuller's earth, lemon juice and grated cucumber. Let it dry and wash off with cold water. Another excellent skin soother in the summer is rose water that has been frozen on an ice tray. Just rub the rose water ice cubes all over the face and let the skin soak up its goodness. Do not wipe off.

Q *I am a 45-year-old working lady. During the hot summer months, I suffer from acute prickly heat. I have tried every possible talc, medicated soap and cologne but to no avail. Kindly suggest a remedy.*
Sumita Bakshi, Calcutta

A Keep your cool. It is tough but not a problem that should have you so worried. Firstly, bathe at least twice or thrice a day and add lemon juice to your bath water. Also wear only cottons, and preferably, loose ones. Synthetic material should be avoided at all costs. We in india believe in cooling and heat generating foods. Among the cool ones, butter milk, *nimbu pani*, bel juice, crushed mint *chutney*, watermelons, cucumber juice—all have a cooling effect on the body. Try and have as much of these as you can. Make a talcum out of the following—sandalwood powder, powdered margosa and powdered alum. Apply all this over the prickly heat. If there is a very severe rash, I would advise you to apply fuller's earth to which you have added sandalwood powder and ice-cold rose water. This will make an immediate difference on the skin and is very soothing on the whole.



Q *I am 50 years old and have developed dark circles under the eyes and on the eyelids as well. I do not suffer from any anxiety or sleep disorders. I also have prominent lines on the eyes and dark pigmentation marks on the cheeks as well. Please advise.*
Madhu Jain.

A What have you been doing with yourself over the years? I am sure that the lines that have become so prominent have not crept up overnight and surely the dark circles and the pigmentation marks on your cheeks are also not too recent. Do you now understand why I keep harping in every column that I write to create one's regular skin care programme? Believe me, it is not really all that difficult—you just have to form a habit of looking after yourself, especially since you are a woman and spend so much of your time looking after everything and every one else. Massage the darkened areas with almond oil and coconut oil mixed together. This must be done daily for a period of at least two months.



Leave on for 20 minutes and apply the juice of half a lemon and one tsp of fresh cream. leave on for 15 minutes and wash off. Check to see whether there is any internal weakness. Eat a healthy diet, relax and do things to make you happy. If you have any daughters or daughters-in-law, advise them to start young and look after their skin the natural way. Believe me, it does make a difference and you will see the results even if you start now.

To treat prickly heat rashes:

- Make a powder of the following: sandalwood, margosa and alum

Q *I am a 24-year-old woman, due to get married next month and would therefore, most benefit from your advise as to how to make yellow teeth sparkling white. Please help.*
Name withheld, Calcutta.

A It is wonderful to know that you are tying the knot but yellow teeth can be both embarrassing and unhygienic . Before I suggest one of my magic recipes, I would suggest that you go to a dentist for cleaning and general check-up of gums.
Use powdered lemon peel, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Gradually, you will see a marked difference and next time, you won't hesitate to laugh openly. Also avoid sugary, soft foods, sweet drinks, cakes and sweets as they all leave a sticky deposit on the teeth and build up bacteria.



Illustrations : Debasish Deb



That's Pakistani actor Zia Mohyeuddin for you. **Geeta Sharma** catches up with this friendly neighbour

The performance was almost half-way through. The packed courtyard that served as the performance site, saw the attentive audience sit in silence as the lone figure before it held forth. But the arrival of a celebrity made heads turn. Hushed whispers followed. The man on the podium immediately fell silent for what seemed like an eternity, till he had the audience's attention back.

"I did that deliberately because for the kind of shows I do, audience attention is a must," explains Pakistani actor Zia Mohyeuddin. "I have been a hard-bitten pro for 45 years and can tell within minutes whether an audience is with me or not," he adds.

The Britain-based actor has been responsible for creating a new kind of awareness about poetry through the one-man reading shows he has held for over 11 years. And it was this vocation — that Zia has now honed to perfection — that brought him to Delhi recently.

Zia gave two performances as part of the three-day multi-media celebrations of Mirza Ghalib's bi-centenary in Delhi recently. While one such reading of Ghalib's selected poems and *ghazals* was held at the poet's *mazaar* near the dargah of Hazrat Nizammudin Auliya, the venue of the other reading was Ghalib's house in Gali Kasim Jaan in Old Delhi.

For Zia, whose voice has often been described as 'dark brown velvet and gravel moving gently in honey,' the experience was indescribable. More so since he has been reading Ghalib's poetry, among others, at his one-man shows these past years. "Ghalib's works are to me what the Gita is to a devout Hindu. And reading him, at the very house where he lived, was a totally different experience. Even as I read, newer inflections came into my voice. The nuances too were different," says Mohyeuddin.

Zia began the readings way back in 1964 when the idea was suggested to him by the famous theatrical agent Milton Goldman. Zia agreed and made a collection called *Love and Lyricism*. He entered into a contract to perform for the next three years over the length and breadth of the U.S. This was followed by performances in Europe. Somewhere along the line, around 1984, Zia decided to dig into his own resources of Urdu "which I adore," for the readings.

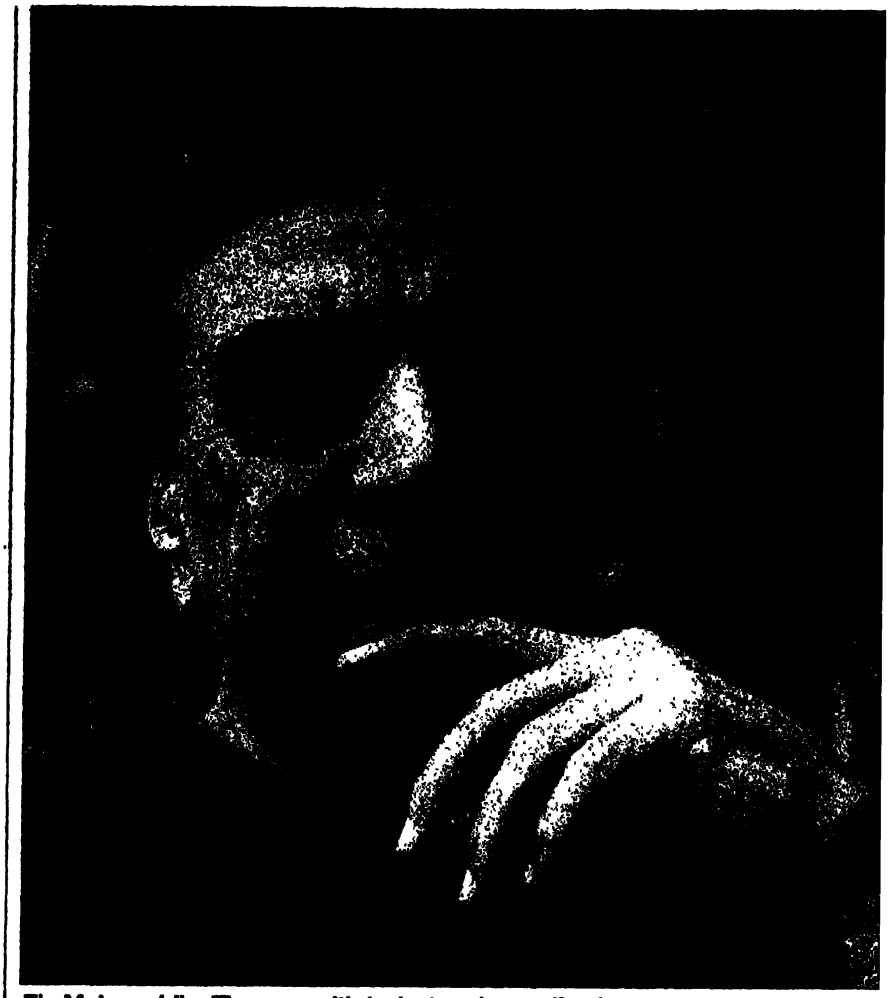
By this time, Zia had already selected and strung together something on Faiz Ahmad Faiz that was brought out as an audio cassette, called *Faiz Sahib ki yaad mein. An evening with Zia Mohyeuddin* by the EMI audio company in Pakistan. About 13 such cassettes have been brought out so far. Zia has since done readings of a whole lot of Urdu poetry from the sub-continent.

Interestingly, he has also just finished work on a soon-to-be released CD on Ghalib. Sponsored by Citi Bank,

it is Zia's personal homage to Ghalib and takes a look at various aspects of the poet's life. "Among these are Ghalib's continuous pre-occupation with his pension which he was never able to receive. He was also constantly short of money and kept borrowing from friends and admirers. There was also Ghalib's bonhomie and conviviality which is reflected in his writings," says Mohyeuddin.

Zia says putting together one piece for his readings takes him three to four months of careful editing. This includes different pages of prose or poetry strung together in a composite piece. This means linking a line in page 23 to another in page 139 of a book of prose or poetry. "That is because what you read and what the eye catches are two different things. So, as long as there is a continuity, one can link the context from different pages," he maintains.

Zia says that all this is necessary if one has to keep the audience attention. "The attention span of an audience is very limited and the moment the people start doing their sums or thinking 'My God! I forgot to pick up my laundry,' or 'Oh! Look at his shoes, they are quite like mine. Why didn't I wear them to the show today!' you know your audience is not with you."



Zia Mohyeuddin: The man with 'velvet and gravel' voice

A dapper man whose trim frame and not-so-grey hair belie his 65+ years, Zia joined the Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation when he was barely 20. He was sent by the Corporation to Australia to do a course in the methods of broadcasting. There, as he himself says, he was bitten by the theatre bug.

Zia has the distinction of being among the first Asians to go to RADA (Royal Academy of Drama and Arts) in the early 1950's. He is also among the first Asians to have his name in the lights at the West End, when he played Dr Aziz in *A Passage to India*. The show went to Broadway in 1962.

In the 1970's Zia became the first chat show host on the Indian sub-continent. Among the guests he featured was Nusrat Bhutto, the wife of the then Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Mrs. Bhutto was so impressed by Zia that she offered him the post of the Director General of Arts in Pakistan.

Zia, who went back to Pakistan for a couple of years, found the lack of professionalism and the lack of funds too much of a constraint and decided to return to Britain. "Besides, I had to make a living and theatre in Pakistan is not so professional as to afford me *tarkari* and *dal*."

Back in Britain, he resumed a film and television career that saw him feature in *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Jewel in the Crown*, *Gangsters* and various British tele-serials. He also went on to move to the other side of the camera, producing Asian Arts programmes for Central and Channel 4. He worked in and helped put together for the latter, Britain's first (and famous) Asian soap opera, *Family Pride*. In the popular soap, Zia played a wealthy Sikh who starts off selling eggs door-to-door and works his way to a million pound import-export business.

His latest endeavour, the one-man shows that take him across the sub-continent, have become much sought after in his own homeland. Zia's annual performances at Lahore, draw dedicated discerning audiences who start calling him up and reminding him about them six to eight months before the event. "And believe me, in the sub-continent where nothing starts on time the show begins sharp at 6.30 and not 6.32!" he says proudly.

Married thrice with three sons from his first two marriages, Zia keeps shuttling between Pakistan, U.K. and the U.S. where he gives his one-man shows. His current wife, Azra, almost half his age, is a textile designer from Karachi and often holds exhibitions of her works in between her travels with Zia. The two met at a common friend's party in Karachi four years ago.

But now Zia says he wants to perform less and less and have more time to do the things he had always wanted to do but never had time for. "I want to write, put down my experiences in a book, read and attend seminars. I only hope I can stick to my resolve," he says wistfully. ■

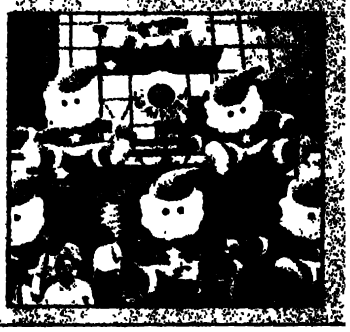


PRITISH NANDY
Media personality:
My favourite getaways are the ones where I have never been to



KIRON KHER
TV anchor:
London and New York are my favourites. As I know these places like the back of my hand. They signify a lot of movies, good theatre, loads of friends and family



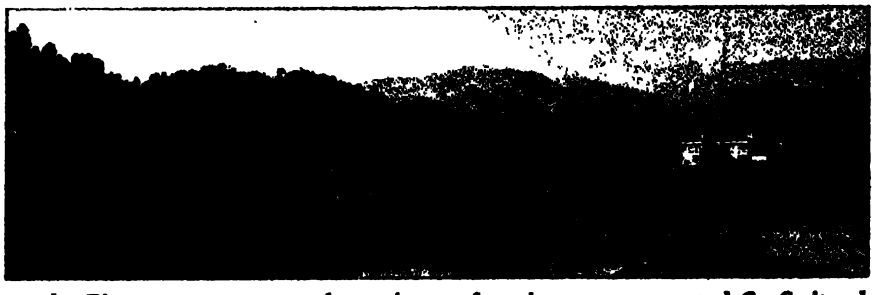


Going Places

Indian travellers are heading for new getaways but prefer to stick to familiar zones, says **Sudipta Basu**

In the past, heading for the 'native place' was the greatest thrill for most Indian vacationers. Spending the summer months with the extended family of cousins, uncles and aunts were the simple childhood pleasures that one looked forward to every year.

But that was a long time ago. Today, both weekend as well as extended holidays need not involve domestic travel to yet another small Indian town in the grimy summer months. Picture-postcard destinations that were the stuff of middle and upper middle-class dreams are today within their reach, thanks to a liberated market economy. Ironically though, the one thing that remains constant in this new found freedom is the traveller's dogged concern to stick to familiar zones.



So, if one were to listen in to sundry conversation on vacation plans at a shopping mall or theatre or an art auction, London, New York and Singapore bounce about with vigorous enthusiasm. Leisure travel consultants, it would seem, have to assume the patience of a saint sometimes to reinvent (read repackage) the same destinations for clients each year.

Anagh Desai, GM and Vice President (West), Cox and Kings, illustrates this point, "If Europe has been hot on our list for the last few years, owing to the glamour of Paris and Switzerland, it falls upon us to introduce small add-ons like Portugal and the lesser-known parts of Italy to our package for the season, hoping that the same people will come back to us and demand more the following year."

A spokesperson for Sita World Travel adds, "Three years ago people did not know much about outward-bound destinations, so it was easier to feed them one. Today they stand educated. So, Switzerland is the most talked-about getaway now because snow is a novelty for us. And we'd rather go to a place where it is guaranteed!"

The fact that theatre personality Kiron Kher heads for London and New York each year, aptly illustrates the point. "I'd much rather be at a place that I am comfortable with, the

sights and sounds of which are familiar zones," she insists.

To stick to familiar zones then, hot sellers for this season are Europe, the US, good old England and the Far East. A typical 14 nights-15 days Europe package would involve a whirlwind tour of London (shopping at Selfridges, Harvey Nichols and Harrods, a stop at The Tower of London and Madam Tussauds), followed by Paris (a walk down Champs Elysees, the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre, the Glass Pyramid and the Lido show in the night — followed by a day at Eurodisney).

From there on to Geneva, Pisa (as in the Leaning Tower) and Florence, to travel on to Rome and towards the northward city of Venice. The sights here include the Bridge of Sighs, Grand Canal, St Marks Square, the Bell Tower and an opportunity to observe the tradition of glass blowing. While in Switzerland, you can head straight for the mountains.

The Rhine Falls is another popular stopover, for the simple reason that this has been the backdrop of many famous Hindi movies. Lots of family photos are a must here. The Rhine cruise from St Goar to Boppard offers full view of the surrounding hillsides dotted with castles of a bygone age. A stop at Brussels (for Belgian chocolates and more shopping at the Flea and Flower market) and then back to London.

The tour package costs approximately US $1,700 per person. "Owing to the popularity of the European sojourn, we have had to introduce a Jain vegetarian cuisine for the Indian traveller," adds Desai. "There is no Shetty Chinese waiting for them here."

The US package involves a run of New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Niagra and back to New York for US $1,200 per person for seven nights and eight days. "The best thing about the US is that everyone has someone they know here. So it is really like holidaying with the family, albeit at a foreign locale," adds Desai.



LESLIE LEWIS

Singer, music composer:

The one destination that I am never tired of heading for is Thailand, simply for its food and extremely friendly people. I have lost count of the number of times I've been here. But when it comes to a quick getaway, it's Bangalore.

Owing to the ready accessibility of the US, Thomas Cook has floated new destinations like the Canadian Rockys and the Alaskan cruise. Says Smita Gaikward, leisure travel consultant with Thomas Cook, "These packages have been crafted for those who have seen it all and have become bolder down the years and are keen to discover something new. They are tired of the cold, and are excited at the prospect of the warmth and cushioned comfort in a floating outer cabin with the juxtposition of the biting cold outside."



But the new destinations have just about taken off and one is yet to see how well they do. The spokesperson for Sita voices her apprehension: "Cruises have been hyped by the Indian travel industry. Seventy per cent of Indians do not like the water and water sports are not a novelty here."

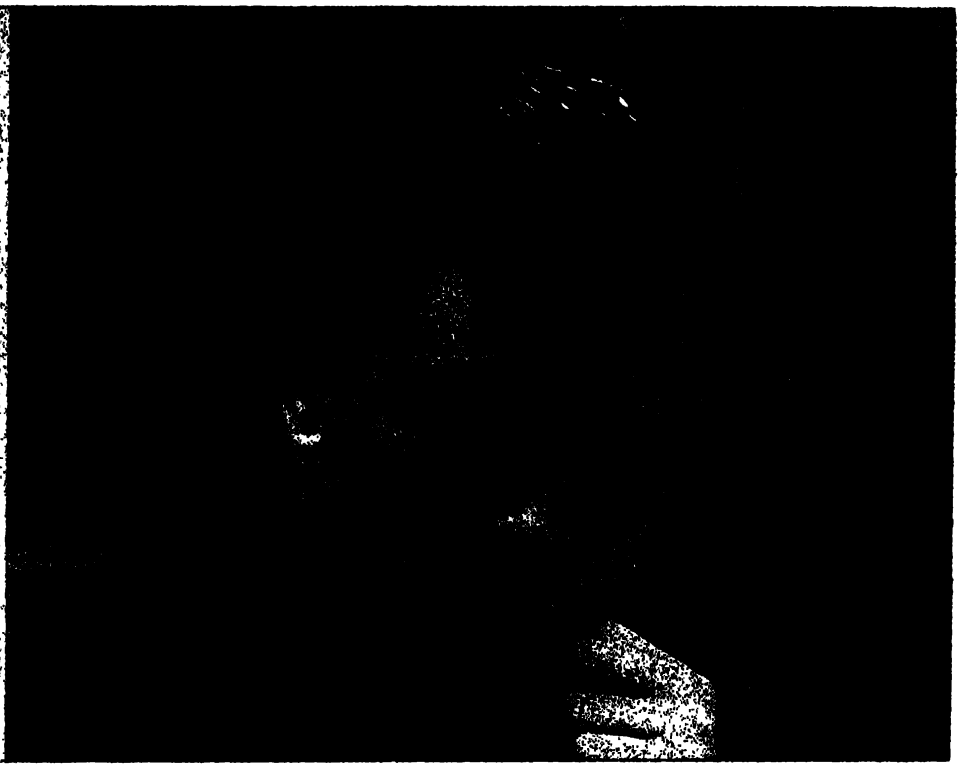
Another much-frequented destination, that proves that most of us are not trend-setters and would much rather follow a trend, is illustrated by the traveller's obsession with the East — Hong Kong and Singapore in particular.

An eight nights-nine days package of the Orient involves a trip to Bangkok, Phuket, Bali and Singapore at US $499 on a twin share basis. The places to soak up are the temples of the Golden and Reclining Buddha and the Marble temple in Bangkok, a boat trip to Pee Pee island in Phuket to see the huge Viking Cave with its ancient wall paintings and shallow nests, followed by the Bali Museum and Werdhi Budhya Art Centre in Bali. Singapore itself offers bargain shopping. Apart from the city tour, the Parliament House, City Hall and Mount Faber are the places to be seen. The Far East is easily accessible now, thanks to the great currency meltdown.

Package tours are reliable and come cheaper. If you thought backpack-bumming around the world was your idea of an ideal holiday, go ahead and do it, because there are not many who go for it. "Less than one per cent," says Desai. "About 70 to 80 per cent of our clients are first-timers."

Otherwise, there are the domestic hot spots that continue to fire people's imagination — Manali, Goa, Darjeeling, Jaipur, Agra...the list is endless. After all, when it comes to places of historic or scenic interest, there's nothing to beat what India has to offer. ■

My Personal Style



Omar Abdullah is fastidious about his wardrobe but steers clear of designerwear

Naturally Natty



TAILOR-MADE ONLY:

I don't shop for clothes very much and only get them tailored here in Delhi. There is this tailor, Diwan Sahib, in Lajpat Nagar whom I go to for my suits and there is another tailor, Siddiqui, in a garage nearby, who does my *kurta pyjamas, sherwanis* and *Pathani* suits.

My style of dressing is mixed. Being a politician, one must attend to one's style of dressing. The other day I was in Parliament and was dressed in a suit and tie. An MP walked up to me and told me, "For God's sake, please don't dress like this. What will the rest of us do!" So the next day, I went dressed in a *kurta pyjama* and a waist coat!

I don't believe in wearing something because it is in fashion or a certain designer has designed it. I don't own very many designer labels or clothes nor do I aspire to have any. I am not the sort of person who will go through a magazine and say : "Wow! look at this designer stuff. I must have it even if I have to spend a fortune."

I am easy-going and like to dress in T-shirts and shirts. I am as comfortable in a suit as in a *kurta pyjama*. I can carry off both well. It is not like if you make me wear a *bandhgalla*, I would look like I am having a miserable time. I enjoy dressing well and am fastidious about my clothes. I hate my sleeves to have marks or trousers to have double creases. You will never find me wearing a navy blue suit with black socks. Some people may call me conventional. Maybe I am.

I don't intend to mimic anyone's way of dressing. So when I campaigned for elections I did what I thought was the right way for the people to see me as I am. I did not wear an *achkan* or a traditional hat, but jeans, shirt and a coat because that is what I am. I am not going to use my clothes to convey what I am not. Yes, in summers, if the situation demands, I would wear a *Pathani* suit because the weather requires it and not because it fits my image as a politician. I would love to walk into Parliament one day in my jeans but I don't really see it happening quite yet.

I don't shop for clothes very much and only get them tailored here in Delhi. There is this tailor, Diwan Sahib, in Lajpat Nagar whom I go to for my suits and there is another tailor, Siddiqui, in a garage nearby, who does my *kurta pyjamas, sherwanis* and *Pathani* suits. My wife and I shop together for clothes. I don't go to stores where designer clothes sell. As far as casual outfits are concerned, I pick them from anywhere. I don't go out to shop with something specific in mind. If something catches my eye, I just pick it up.

I have only three designer accessories . A sweatshirt and a raincoat by Timberland. The other is a cashmere wool Christian Dior scarf I was gifted way back in 1987.

■ As told to Geeta Sharma



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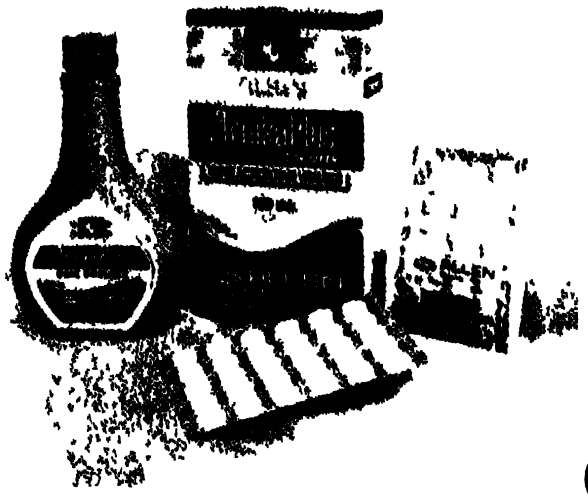
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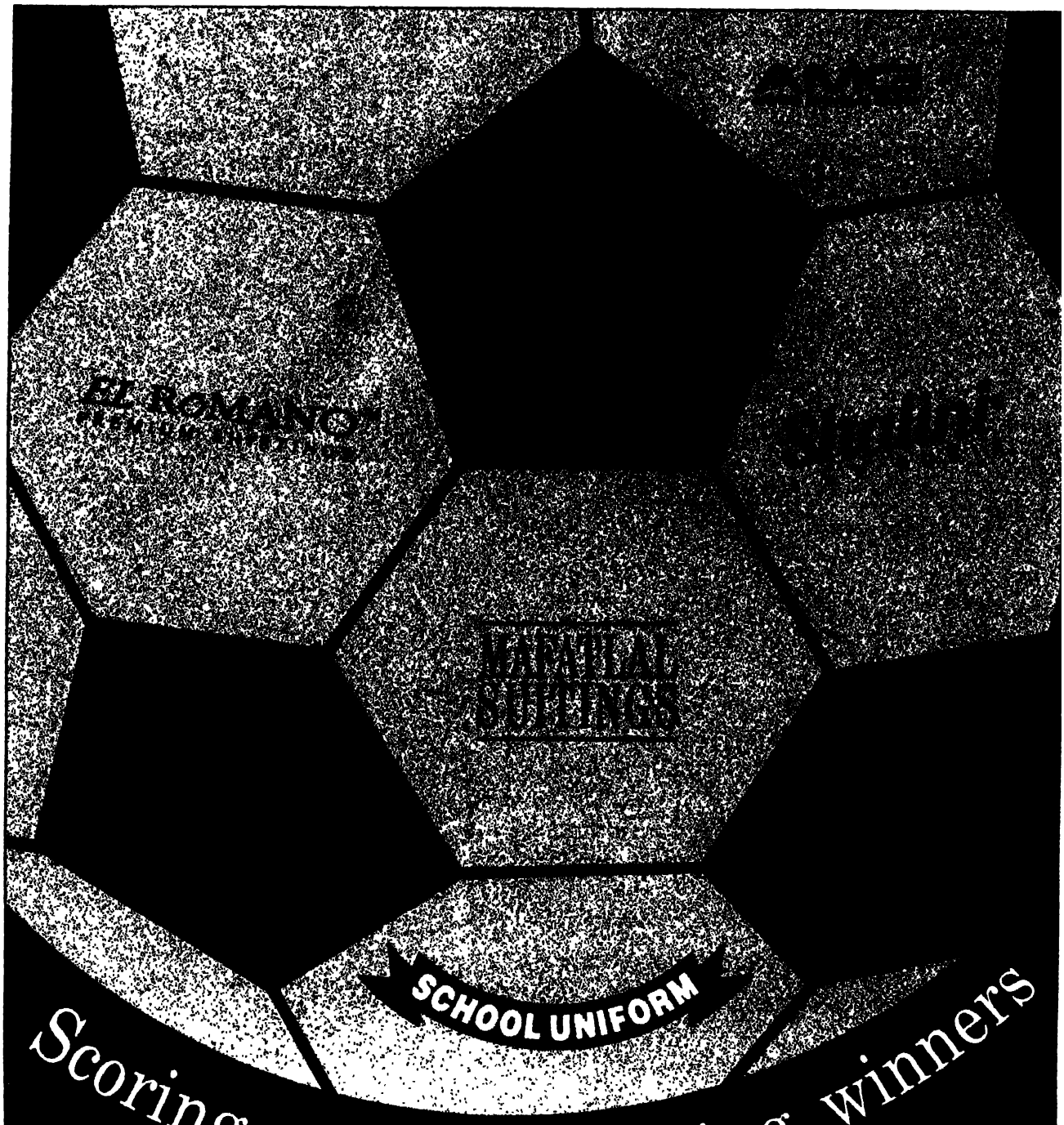
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POST MORTEM

Like Father, Like Sons

Tradition and individual talent always co-existed in harmony in the world of Indian classical music and the seventh generation Bangash family are merely continuing the existing tradition ('Brothers in Music', May 17). Amaan and Ayaan Ali Bangash have a long way to go before they come anywhere near their legendary grandfather, Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan, and father, Amjad Ali. But coming from a family so richly imbued in the tradition of *guru-shishya parampara*, they should have no problem in fusing their individual talent with musical heritage.

Kallol Das, Jamshedpur



If the Bangash brothers continue to remain under the imposing shadow of their great father, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, they would find it difficult to emerge from his influence. It's important that they evolve their own style of music in order to grow.

Debashis Sen, Calcutta

While I do not want to, in any way, underscore the achievements of Ayaan and Amaan Ali Bangash, I feel they have managed to get all the media attention essentially due to their father's artistry rather than their own. India can lay claim to being the land of many a talented artiste, largely unsung, waiting to be discovered.

Meena Sharma, Calcutta

Smart and Savvy

It's a fact that all rich people cannot be hospitable, but all hospitable Annapurnas mentioned in your cover story ('Breaking Bread', May 10) must be rich with a dash of glamour and media-savvy as well in order to deserve coverage in the national newspapers and glossies. Can you ignore or wish away this vital factor that enables them to be there?

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

Top Gear

It was indeed an exhilarating experience reading about the latest cars on the Indian road today ('In the Fast Lane', May 10). However, with the recent budget, prices are bound to shoot up and each new dream-come-true on wheels will be dearer now.

Ramesh Pillai, Asansol

Colour, Please

I am a regular reader of your magazine. I shall be very glad if you kindly publish Blondie in colour.

Rittika Sarkar, Calcutta

Fashionable Concern

It's sad to know that in a country like India where 1 5 million babies die of diarrhoea, ('Wealth is Health', May 17), the glitterati is busy pursuing media hyped diseases like AIDS. But at least the disease has atttracted a lot of foreign aid. The next step should be to shift the focus to the apparently common but killer diseases like malaria or Hepatitis B. The media should play an active role in pointing out the lapses in public health care services.

Hemali Deb, Calcutta

The Telegraph

28 JUNE 1998



PAGE 4

Mother Act

Supriya Chowdhury, the glamorous actress of the '60s, is now the most sought after mother in Tollywood

PAGE 26

Legal Alien

Meet the *half-firang* Helen Brodie. She's got the looks and the talent to make it big in Mumbai. But will she?

PAGE 28

Unchained Verses

Poetry had given him his best and worst moments.A conversation with the noted Pakistani poet, Ahmad Faraz

PAGE 24

Beauty: The Natural Way

PAGE 30

My Personal Style

Poet Sardar Ali Jaffri is fond of home cooked food, specially *daal* dishes

Cover : Arko





Amal Kundu

Mother Act

Supriya Chowdhury is now Tollywood's most-wanted mom. The one time prima donna of the Bengali screen talks to Susmita Banerjee about her career, her life, and her love



She is all of 65. And still as busy as ever shooting for eight-nine hours at a stretch sometimes. Nor has she tired of putting on the greasepaint, or sitting patiently before the mirror while the coiffeur fixes her wig (mostly white these days) and the make-up man does her face.

There is no sense of boredom either as she rehearses scenes with her junior colleagues. But when they fumble in recalling lines from the script, she is quick to reprimand them with an affectionate smack.

Save for the occasional protests of feeling "slightly unwell" because of a protracted outdoor stint in the scorching summer heat, she is in no mood yet to call it a day. On the contrary, she is greatly enjoying her new status in Tollywood: playing the archetypal self-effacing mother or the vengeful mother-in-law. She would like to keep her white saree and grey wig on till maybe Fate has other designs for her.

Supriya Chowdhury (or Bemudi as she is fondly known in industry circles) is

Supriya Chowdhury and Moon Moon Sen in the Bengali television serial, *Ogo Priyotama*, (top) and Supriya in the film, *Sister* (right)

"Isn't it obvious that I will be asked to play mother or grandmother now?"



all this and much more. Much more because she is one actress who has never ceased to spawn delightful gossip for the glossies — whether it is shocking the prudish sensibilities of Bengali society by 'living' with her co-star, or her attempted suicide. Ask her about her reaction to these 'stories' and she turns livid. She is apprehensive, she says, of the ways of pesky scribes who publish unconfirmed, imaginative gossips. Neither does she have faith in critics, some of whom have only tried to dig out scandals from her cupboards and blemish her public and professional image.

"One critic in particular, has now got so tired of cooking up scandals about me that he has turned to the *ranisahibas* (queens) of yore. I think scandal hunting is his pet subject," she says, her voice laced with bitterness and anger. Obviously, the media is a touchy subject and so we move on to a safer area : films. Unlike Suchitra Sen who chose never to face the cameras since the days of *Datta* and *Debi Chaudhurani* (which was more than two decades ago) and prefers to live in a world of self-imposed exile, Supriya Chowdhury has always had the spotlight on her — whether it's in films, theatre or *jatra*. And with the passing years she has metamorphosed into Bengali screen's most glamorous grand, old lady. Any regrets? "Isn't it obvious that I will be asked to play mother or grandmother now? I cannot make a laughing stock of myself by demanding that I want to play the pretty heroine," is the matter-of-fact response.

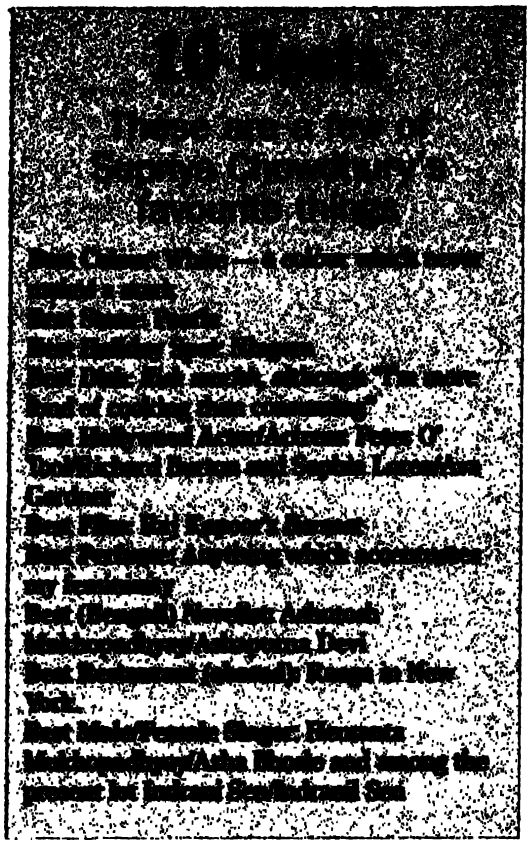
And come to terms with her age she has; for she is now one of Tollywood's most wanted mothers. So much so that she cannot keep pace with her dates. If she is shooting for Raja Sen one day it's Anjan Chowdhury the next. She could be playing Mithun Chakraborty's mother (in *Parakrami*, to be released soon) or shooting for teleserials like *Ogo Priyotama*, *Kusha Jakhan* and *Abar Janani*.

When *Janani* — a slightly maudlin' 200-plus episode Bengali soap — was being telecast, so well did she capture the imagination of the Bengali middle class with her role of a widowed but authoritative mother that she is being cast again in the second part of the serial, *Abar Janani*. This explores the experiences of an ageing mother,which she gathers while living with each of her sons.

Never mind if the white wigs and the loud make-up she is made to wear make her look more like a *jatra* star, the serials are a mega hit and run into as many as 260-plus episodes. And Supriya is known to command a price of Rs 5,000 per episode.



Supriya Chowdhury and Uttam Kumar : Her reel and real life love



It's a very hot day in May and Supriya is memorising her dialogues before the shoot of *Abar Janani* in a sprawling flat on Moore Avenue. During interludes she is willing to talk about herself and her career. Although a bit hesitant at first, she warms up soon after and instantly you fall for her charm and hospitality.

Looking back at her career, the one-time prima donna of the Bengali screen wonders why film makers like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen or Tapan Sinha did not deem it fit to work with her. "It's really my misfortune," she says with a wry smile. "But many years ago at the time of the making of *Pather Panchali* Satyajit Ray had told me that if he ever made the film *Ghare Baire* he would take me as Bimala but when he finally made the film he chose Swatilekha Chatterjee," she says.

There is no bitterness but an unconcealed sense of loss for she has always wanted to be identified as a "good actress". "In our times there was nothing called a star. You had to be a good performer. And I consider myself to be basically an actress," she explains.

Anyone who saw her in Ritwik Ghatak's *Meghe Dhaka Tara* will recall that she put in an impeccable performance and her soulful cry of "*Dada ami banchte chai* (dada I want to live)" still rings in the ears.

Even when it came to recognition, although she has been showered with awards — from Filmfare (for *Sister*) to umpteen BFJA (Bengal Film Journalists Association) awards — the National Award has eluded her. Why? "It's my misfortune again," comes the reply.



From the cigarette-puffing *femme fatale* to the hip-swinging village belle, from the tormented wife of a husband who spends his nights with a nautch girl to the missionary nun, Supriya has played them all to perfection. Her long neck, often accentuated with multi-stringed pearl chokers complemented with an hour-glass like figure draped in diaphanous folds, Supriya looked pretty much like the Hollywood icons of the 60s. No wonder she was dubbed the Sophia Loren of Tollywood.

"I don't know why people alluded to her. I saw a couple of her films like *Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* and *Sunflower* and found her in no way resembling me except for our figures," she reflects. "But Rekha, yes — she does look like me to some extent when I was young."

When it came to romantic pairing, however, there was none to beat the Uttam Kumar-Suchitra Sen team. Film theatres in Bengal still have the cash registers ringing each time they

I consciously avoided Suchitra's films for fear that I may imbibe some of her style and then people would tell me I was imitating Suchitra'

screen either *Pathe Holo Deri* or *Agniparikshu*, starring the two Bengali superstars.

But how did Supriya view Suchitra Sen as an actress — her biggest competitor on the Bengali screen? "Ramadi?" she lobs the question back. Is she senior to her? "I think so. About her I wish to say only this that she is much respected by me." Supriya claims she never saw any films of Suchitra for 12-14 years and would not like to make any remarks about her as an actress. Why? Is it jealousy? Rivalry? Would it be fair to make such inferences? Supriya remains unruffled. "Well, let me say that there was a time when we were all deliriously in love with the beautiful Suchitra. And when you see someone like her on the big screen there is every possibility that you can get influenced by her. I was scared of that. I consciously avoided her films for fear that I may imbibe some of her style and then people would tell me I was imitating Suchitra. I did not want that to happen."



When Supriya Chowdhury joined films Suchitra Sen was yet to make her debut. It was after *Basu Paribar* released that Suchitra made her maiden appearance in *Share Chuattar*. Thereafter followed the golden period of Bengali cinema when she and Uttam Kumar gave some of the biggest hits on the Bengali screen. Even today they are Tollywood's most cherished and successful romantic twosome.

"Suchitra Sen may have been my contemporary but she came to be known after me," insists Supriya Chowdhury. She continues, "Suchitra and I are still in touch and I consider her to be more my sister but that we keep in touch is a closely-guarded secret. There is no reason for this secrecy but we prefer it that way."

There is much in common between these two charismatic Tollywood heroines — they are both products of 'troubled' marriages, mothers of one daughter each, and while Suchitra's daughter Moon Moon chose to step into her mother's shoes, Supriya's daughter Shoma made a couple of films but did not take it up as a career.

"She is a good actress but she has no interest in films," says Supriya of her daughter who is now living in Calcutta after her divorce from her first husband in Zurich. She is married to an actor now and has three children.

Again, both Suchitra and Supriya peaked in their careers starring opposite the one and only Bengali matinee idol, Uttam Kumar.

Uttam Kumar is one subject Supriya Chowdhury never tires of talking about. Ask her anything about this actor and it takes her a couple of seconds to reel off years, dates and months to recall anecdotes associated with him.

You express surprise at her flawless memory and she breaks into a smile : "When you love someone very deeply you remember all those little, little details associated with him."

Which means she remembers the year she met him and the years she went on a holiday with him, the dates when they returned from their foreign sojourns. As if to prove her point she mentions: "I met him first in 1945, then again in 1951 and then in 1960. That year we both starred in *Shuno Baranari*. We were both married then."

Supriya loves recalling their various rendezvous abroad. In the 70s Uttam Kumar and Satyajit Ray were invited to the Berlin Film Festival for the screening of *Nayak*. Supriya Chowdhury did not accompany them but joined the actor in London. From there they went on a private holiday to New York, Boston, Washington, Los Angeles, Canada, and then back to New York. "It was a short trip. We left for the States in 1979, August 15 to be precise, and returned on September 26 or 27."

Even after 16 years of the actor's death, Uttam Kumar appears to be as much a part of her living self as he was when he was alive. All conversation finally veers around her "second husband". What he liked to eat, where he liked to go for a vacation, the gifts he showered on her. "He loved the sea and we would make short trips to Puri or Gopalpur. The Topchachi lake bungalow was also our favourite haunt," she reminisces with a pensive look.

The very mention of Uttam Kumar seems to open, as it were, the floodgates of her bitter-sweet memories. She plucks some intimate moments from the secret reserves of her mind and starts musing ... "There were so many beautiful moments of togetherness. We both wanted a home and when we bought a flat in Mumbai I found him buying innumerable kitchen items for me. An electric kettle, an oven. When I expressed surprise he said they were all for my cooking pleasure. He loved food

'Uttam loved the sea and we would make short trips to Puri or Gopalpur. The Topchachi lake bungalow was also our favourite haunt'

and asked me to make some delicious dishes for him."

In the serialised chapters of her memoirs, *My Life, My Uttam*, (published in *Sananda*) she makes copious references to their life together in Mumbai and Calcutta, of moments of crisis in their relationship, periods of ecstacy, agony and her personal loss at his untimely demise.

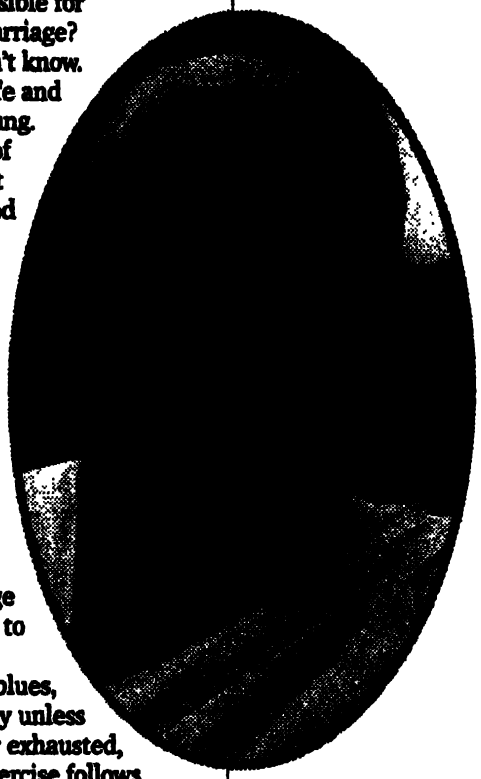
Supriya says she and the actor tied the nuptial knot in 1963. "It was a religious function and not a legal one and we kept it under wraps for fear that he could be charged with bigamy." The actor, apparently, "left his wife" and came to her in 1960 when his son was only 10.

It was she, says Supriya, who made the necessary adjustments so that their relationship could carry on without hurting anyone. Later, Gauri Debi, the icon's wife, was even a visitor to their flat and since the tension had eased out, even savoured dishes prepared by Supriya. There were occasions, too, says Supriya, when she "nursed the two".

"We three had a very good relationship as I was very accommodating and I did not want to hurt anyone." But why did the actor's son, Gautam, turn so violent towards her after his father's death, throwing them out of their flat and even disclaiming Shoma's adoption by Uttam Kumar?

She shrugs, "I really do not know the cause of his anger. But these days most youngsters are disrespectful towards their parents. There was a time when he used to spend time in our flat and attended our parties. I have photographs to prove my claim". Could it have been latent anger, suppressed over the years, because he held her responsible for breaking up his parents' marriage?

She shrugs again, "I don't know. But when Uttam left his wife and came to me he was very young. There was never any show of anger. And I always felt that the father and son were good friends. We made it a point not to bring Gautam into our relationship."



The make-up man holds aloft the hand mirror while Supriya carefully surveys her visage before the next shoot of *Abar Janani* and her thoughts fade into the heap of bygone memories. There was a time, she says, when she used to take refuge in brandy and sleeping pills to douse her agony.

But despite middle-age blues, she starts her day quite early unless a late night shoot leaves her exhausted, then a bout of free-hand exercise follows and after a light meal she is all ready to take up the day. "At night I prefer not to eat anything since his death. Maybe just a glass of milk," she announces.

Life has come a full circle for this actress — from wife, mother, screen goddess, to the other woman and now screen mom. Regrets she has none, for as a "simple person I have followed the dictates of my heart".

Is she lonely now that Uttam Kumar is not there by her side? When there are three sprightly grandchildren at home and so much shooting to complete where is the time to be lonely, the actress smiles. ■

Unforgettable 10

Some of Supriya Chowdhury's memorable films

Basu Parivar : Her first release, in which she played Uttam Kumar's sister.

Meghe Dhaka Tara : The story of a dispossessed family from East Pakistan.

Chirodiner : Supriya tries to make a star out of Uttam Kumar who is a very good singer.

Kaal Tumi Aaleya : Supriya and Uttam start off as foes in office but end up falling in love.

Mon Niye : Here she plays a double role of two sisters — one quiet and demure, the other aggressive.

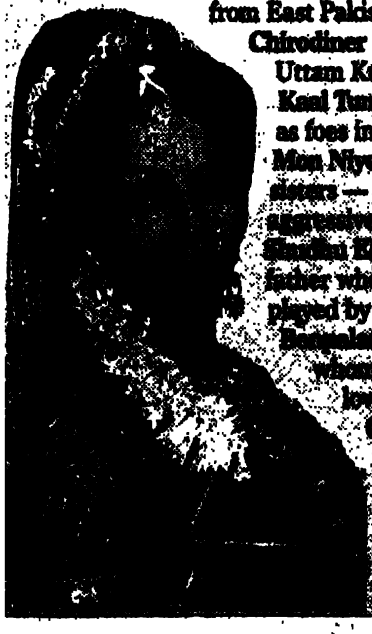
Sindur Khuti Bachchar : The spoilt girl of a rich father who gets suitably tamed by her husband played by Uttam Kumar.

Banglaldesher Padabali : She plays a rustic belle whom the married Uttam Kumar is much in love with.

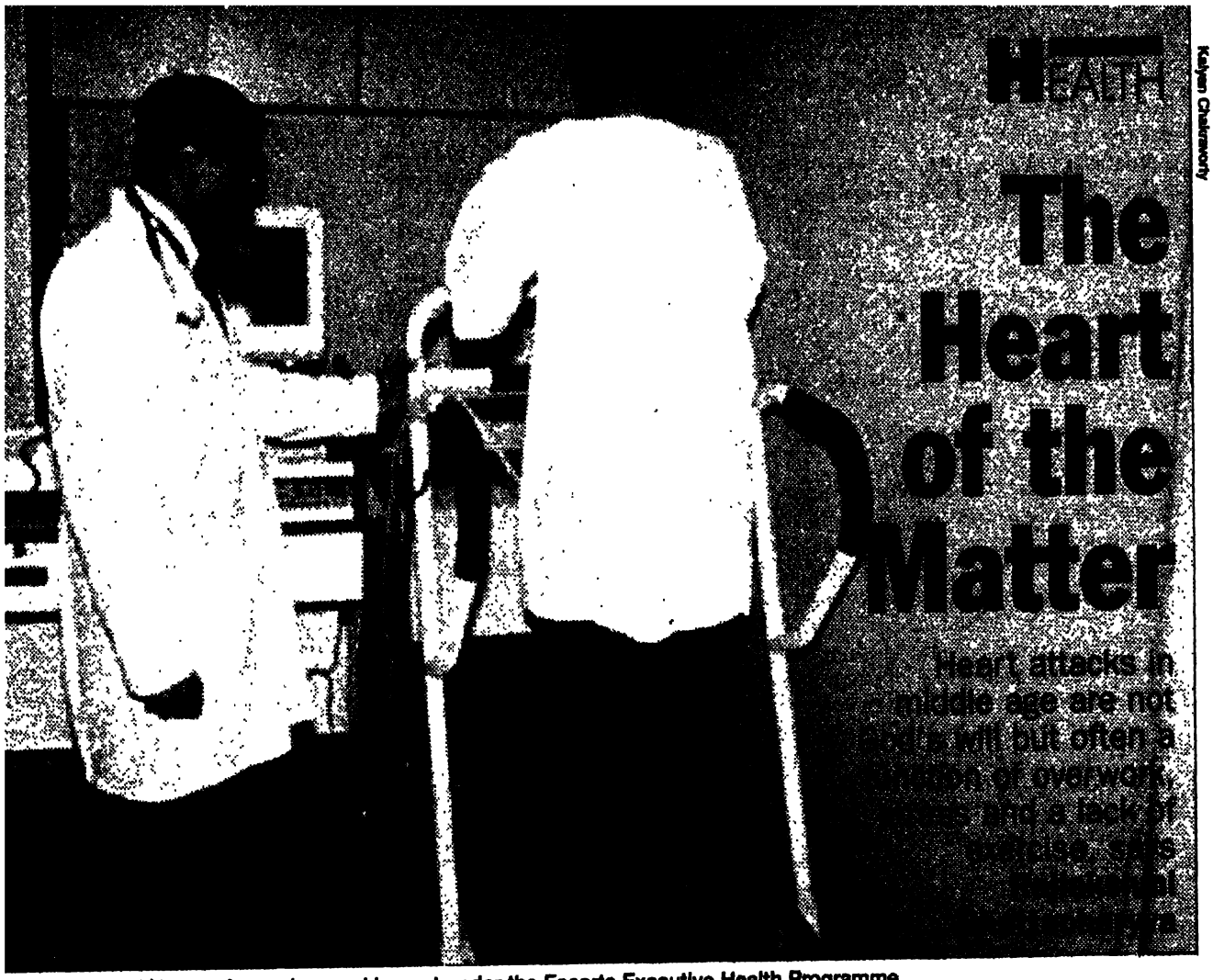
Chowringhee : Plays a high society glamorous hostess.

Sanyasi Raja : Supriya plays the neglected wife of a zamindar.

Kalankini Kankabati : Plays the mother of Mithun Chakraborty.



Uttam, his wife and I had a very good relationship as I was very accommodating and I did not want to hurt anyone'



Kalyan Chakravorty

The Heart of the Matter

Heart attacks in middle age are not fatal but often a symptom of overwork, stress and a lack of exercise. Here's how to avoid it

Hale and Hearty: A member working out under the Escorts Executive Health Programme

The incident shocked the young executives who arrived at work that morning. Their colleague Manoj Bose (33), vice president (finance), was no more. Manoj, a go-getter and self-confessed workaholic, had few interests apart from plodding through piles of paperwork. His wife and children had long given up on him when entreaties to spend more time with them fell on deaf ears.

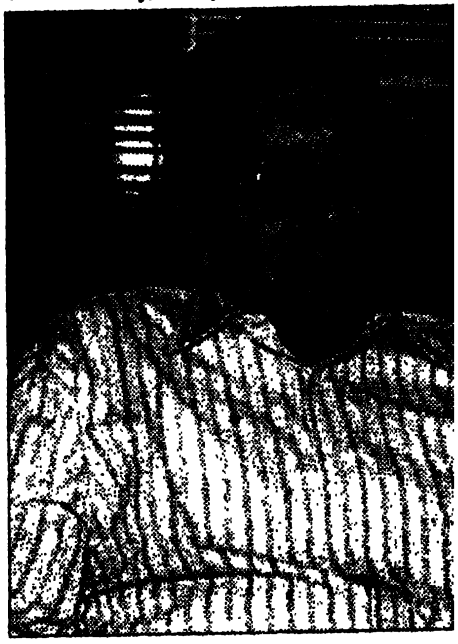
Manoj had recently been feeling fatigued, and wanted to take a few days off. But the horror of accumulating a backlog convinced him to drop the idea till that fateful day when he collapsed at the workplace. By the time he was hospitalised, doctors pronounced him dead. It was a silent heart attack, they said.

Manoj's case exemplifies the short and sweet tenure of success, and the price that 30 to 40-year-old men in highflying corporate jobs are increasingly paying. In most cases, the achievers do not care to analyse their haphazard lifestyle nor their ability to handle stress. The need of the hour is to do "a self-audit on a day-to-day basis," says J.C. Jhuraney, vice president, personnel and HRD, of JCT Electronics. But few people, if any, follow this advice.

In most cases, the pressures to perform in an organisation are compulsive. Confesses Anil Kaul (32), general manager, Omam Consultants, "I have to put in 15 hours of work which leaves me with little time to do justice to my family." He says that cut-throat competition has fostered a feeling of insecurity among today's executives. "A person's steady performance over the last five years is no guarantee for success if he fails to live up to the expectations of the management in the last three months. One has to be a performer even on the last day," he says.

Added to this is personal ambition. The demands of modern-day living have heightened people's desire to procure a surfeit of everything in the shortest possible time. "Now people

J.C. Jhuraney, vice-president, HRD, JCT El



need to have a house, a huge bank balance plus all of life's comforts by the time they are 35," says Kaul.

It is important to understand, in layman's terms, what causes a heart attack. Explains Dr R.R. Kasliwal, senior consultant and head of the department of non-invasive cardiology heart station at the Escorts Heart Institute and Research Centre, "Narrowing of the coronary arteries occurs due to atherosclerosis which simply means deposition or formation of a (fatty) plaque in one or more coronary artery where an increase in the plaque may partially or completely block the coronary artery. A partially blocked artery will not be able to keep up with the demands of the heart at higher workloads and cause clinical angina pectoris — a cry of the heart for more oxygen — while a fully blocked artery causes myocardial infarction or what we call a heart attack."

The caveats for a heart attack have long been sounded by doctors. Ask any successful 40-year-old and he will ramble on....high blood cholesterol, smoking, high blood pressure, obesity and now, without his knowing, an add-on—diabetes mellitus.

Hypertension, popularly known as as high blood pressure, is more important as an index of a stressful life and remains one of the most important factors predisposing men to heart attack and strokes. Says Dr Naresh Trehan, executive director of Escorts and among the foremost cardiac surgeons in the country, "High blood pressure tends to damage the inner delicate lining of the coronary arteries which allows cholesterol to creep inside and gradually cause narrowing of the arteries." If one is hypertensive, one is four times more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke.

He further identifies a tendency among the younger generation to develop sedentary and Western lifestyles, which accompanied by an increase in the consumption of calories, is a major factor resulting in abdominal obesity. About 40 per cent of executives are estimated to be overweight, due to which the risk of mortality goes up, as it causes high blood pressure, high triglycerides, and a low count of high density lipoprotein(HDL) which otherwise helps prevent heart disease.

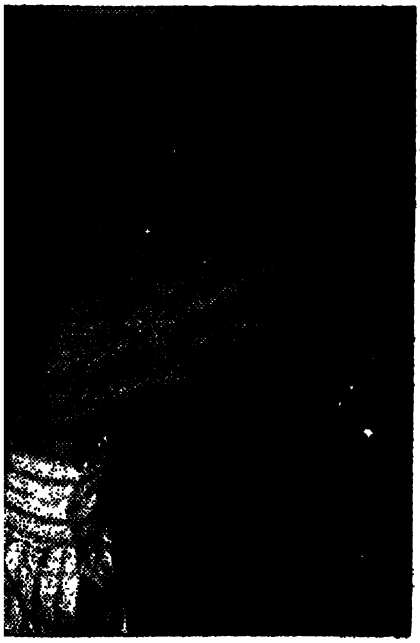
Efforts should be made to get one's weight within 20 per cent of the expected normal weight. Atherosclerotic artery diseases, according to Dr Trehan, "may also be caused due to the body lipids, specially the Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL), Very Low Density Lipoprotein (VLDL), Lipoprotein (a) {Lp (a)} and Apolipoprotein B which are emerging as the new risk factors for aggravating atherosclerotic plaques. They are much more effective markers for Indians prone to heart disease."



Kalyan Chakravarty

Little time for the family: Anil Kaul, General Manger, Omam Consultants

: Stressing on a lenient work culture



Kalyan Chakravarty

Those who have been through the worst feel that this experience changes their lives completely. A.K. Pandey, a career diplomat in his early forties, who came close to having a heart attack recently, points out that "one tends to become more conscious of one's mortality." He recalls his days prior to the 'crisis' when he went round the office meeting multiple deadlines as he though he had a "Damocles' sword" over his head.

His body protested, at first through minor ailments, which was his system's way of telling him to take it easy. Pandey did not pay heed. He says of the aftermath that "once you have had a heart attack, it is a big emotional scar, like living under the threat of a nuclear bomb which would drop you off the precipice any moment."

Realising that there is a lot at stake, some corporate houses are finally waking up to the importance of ensuring executive good health for the well-being of the organisation. To ensure early detection and modification of risk factors, companies are beginning to recommend yearly medical check-ups for their executives, often through packages like the one Escorts has in its Executive Health Programme.This not only evaluates the person's health but offers counselling by cardiologists, nutritionists and psychologists. The endeavour is to change the emphasis from disease consciousness to health consciousness.

The organisation's culture should also play a vital role in altering the executive's attitude. "It should be transformational not transactional where performance should be coupled with mutual understanding, teamwork and empathy," says Jhuraney.

He adds that company targets may not have as much to do with ill health as with a person's neglect of self. The executive has to find time for his

family, barring which, he may start feeling guilty which ultimately contributes to stress. It is also necessary to cultivate an interest in spiritual development (such as yoga, meditation and religious discourses). "A balanced approach towards physical, spiritual and personal development will ward off diseases," says Jhuraney.

According to Dr Hans Selye, the best way to fight stress is to seek variety—to avoid sinking into a rut. One should also reduce problems to size and not allow minor frustrations such as parking problems, or one's spouse forgetting one's birthday, to affect one's composure. It is significant to be prepared for the unexpected, not by worrying but by preparing for contingencies.

Matters related to work pressure can be discussed with any confidante, be it the spouse, a friend or family member to help let off steam. With many people, the evenings are hectic as well and tensions are carried to bed and finally into sleep. People must learn to reduce work in the evenings and relax after sunset. They must know when to detach themselves from contentious issues.

For smokers who have developed high blood pressure or who have a family history of heart attacks, quitting can bring about a significant diminution of the prospect of having a sudden heart attack. "Cessation of smoking reduces coronary risk to 50 per cent in the first year and to zilch within two to ten years," says Dr Trehan.

Some Killing Facts

☆ Heart disease, the number one killer in Western countries, is ranked third in India. Among executives, 25 per cent of all heart attacks are before, during or after a foreign trip. Flights from East to West are less tough than from West to East.

☆ Twenty per cent of heart attacks are silent, that is, they come without warning.

☆ In India, Coronary Artery Disease (CAD) in the young is increasing in frequency and is reported to be as high as 12 per cent.

☆ Asian Indians are known to develop CAD five to ten years earlier than any other known population. The occurrence of the first Myocardial Infarction in Indians before the age of 40 years is known to be five to ten folds higher.

☆ They also have the highest rates of CAD of any ethnic group studied, despite the fact that nearly half of this group are lifelong vegetarians.

To achieve total holistic health, one must consider nutrition and physical exercise as partners in establishing and maintaining a healthy body. Vigorous sport often renders laxative medicine quite unnecessary. A long brisk walk in the evening may help to induce more sleep than any medicine, drink or television show. Most high-fliers love to brag about their membership of health clubs but are often no more than spectators of sports, seldom expanding their activity beyond that of getting in and out of cars, trains or planes. Most doctors recommend a return to the use of their legs.

The high prevalence of high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes among the jet-setting yuppie may largely be due to his dietary habits. He loves his fast food which contains large amounts of salt, preservatives, fat and less of protective elements like potassium, vitamins and fibre. A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, nuts, fish and vitamins, specially vitamin E and C and folic acid, is helpful in prevention of atherosclerotic heart disease.

"Food for the heart would comprise a balanced diet containing high fibre, complex carbohydrates like tubers, roots, regular exercises and a relaxed mind. This is the tripod of longevity," notes Dr H.S. Wasir in his book, *Heart Care: Lifestyle and Longevity.*

While a vegetarian diet does not give permanent immunity from heart attacks, consuming meat in moderation, specially white meat and fish, along with the usual quota of vegetables and fruits is beneficial for health in general and the heart in particular. If uric acid and blood cholesterol levels are normal, the mixed non-vegetarian and vegetarian diet (omnivorous habit) is better for a healthy heart.

Finally, while it may not be possible to prevent the onset of heart disease, there are ways to delay or even reduce complications related to coronary diseases. Nothing can be worse than a lack of awareness. When Paul Dudley White, the noted cardiologist from America had said, "Heart disease before the age of 80 is not God's will but due to our own faults", he was addressing people for whom health is a priority only in times of an emergency.

Dr Naresh Trehan: Educating people on the advantages of a healthy lifestyle



Kalpen Chaturvedy

INNER EYE

BEJAN DARUWALLA

Aries
March 21 - April 20



The sun has changed sign, emphasising buying, selling, trading and borrowing for you. People who hve separated will get together, thanks to your ceaseless efforts. Travel stars are in the ascent due to Mercury. You will impress those who really matter because of a charming influence of Venus.

Taurus
April 21 — May 20



Try to meet deadlines. If in for a job, prepare for the interview or test. A chance to travel should be taken up. People will complain and coax you for their selfish ends, therefore, judge the situation critically. Love could be intense and sudden. A hobby can be converted into a vocation.

Gemini
May 21 — June 20



A promotion due to you should come through easily. Those in production and sales do well. Love tugs at your heart and will not be denied. Forms, designs, chemicals and food will edge you forward in your life for the next ten days. At the same time, expenses will be heavy. Try and save for rainy days.

Cancer
June 21 — July 20



You will excel in work and play and thus feel happy and confident. You can now pull out all stops and make things really happen for you, according to your own sweet desire. You could even be a little adventurous, that is taking risks and winning. Cancerians are in for major success in their work.

Leo
July 21 — August 21



Time for healing, uniting and coming to terms with yourself and others. There will be mutual satisfaction as your life and that of others revolve around one another. Sex appeal and originality will distinguish you. Addition to your wardrobe will also enhance your image..

Virgo
August 22 — September 22



You will be straining every nerve and sinew to advance. Passion too will dominate you. Property matters, renovation and decoration will also figure for Virgos. Collaborations, publicity and travel are the major spin-offs. Health safeguards will help you. You may come into contact with interesting people.

Libra
September 23 — October 22



A perfect time to renew relationships. You will re-unite with people. Perfect your work techniques and streamline your procedures, if in sales, management, teaching, trading and most certainly management corporations. You may get confidential information that may help you.

Scorpio
October 23 — November 22



Loans and funds, finances and employment will take up practically all your time. Partnerships are also highlighted. Love could be placed on a pedestral but finally you will hve to face reality. Poets, psychics, writers, editors and teachers do a great job. The next few days could be exciting in terms of a new job.

Sagittarius
November 23 — December 20



Its a toss up between your own creative talents and your family to see which gives you greater joy and satisfaction and fulfilment and to which you will devote more time. Your income will move upwards in accordance with the demands on it, so you should not face a financial problem or a cash crunch.

Capricorn
December 21 — January 19



Problems are now sorted out, your worries and anxieties ease. Deeds and documents, legal papers, contract and such will be signed. These will have a tremendous bearing on the immediate present and the future. So be careful about written words. It is time also for entertaining and hospitality.

Aquarius
January 20 — February 18



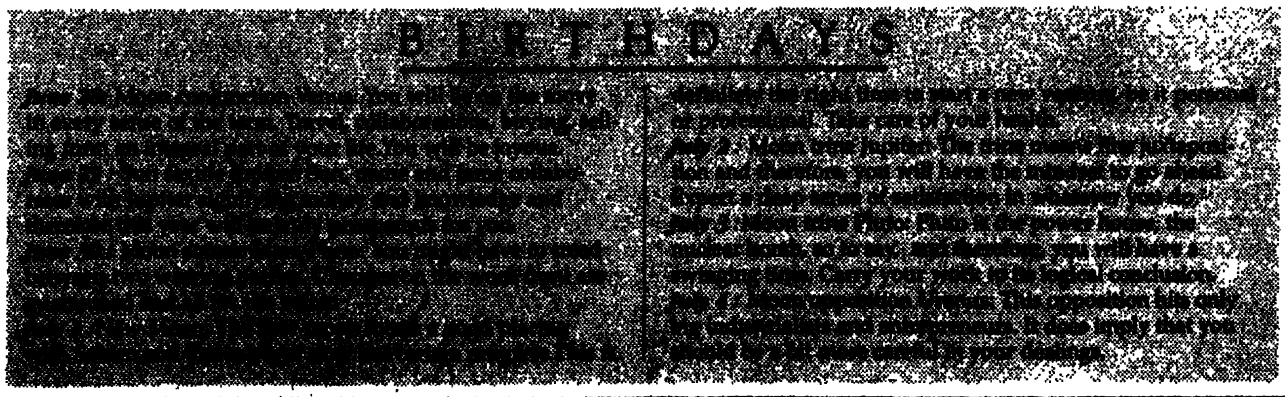
You rise to the occasion splendidly and invest all that you do with much grace, style and class. You enjoy a bit of extravagance, do up your own home and even overhaul your own wardrobe. A time to let your hair down and enjoy life. You will also be entertaining a great deal this week. You may also shop till you drop.

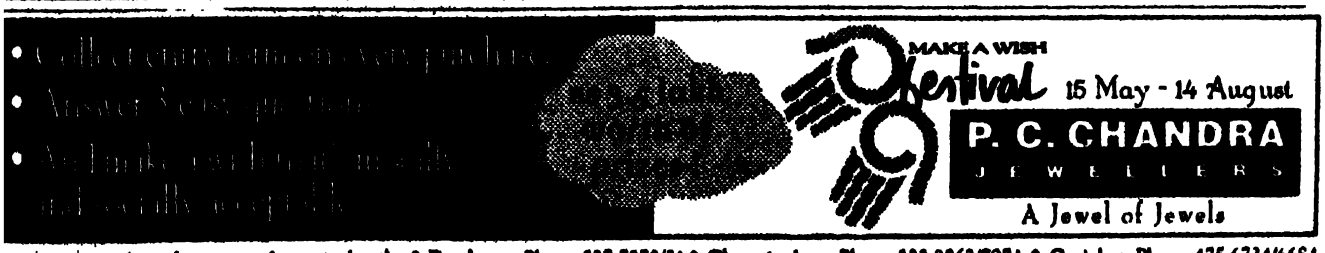
Pisces
February 19 — March 20



Interactions and relationships will become wider and also more personalised. They will now extend to include not just family but also someone special who finds a place in your heart. Love and romance are there but there can also be other bonds. You have many and varied interests.

BIRTHDAYS





op in at one of our showrooms for more details. ◆ Bowbazar Phone 227 7272/21◆ Chowringhee Phone 223 8062/7974 ◆ Gariahat Phone 475 6734/6684

The Kitchen Cabinet

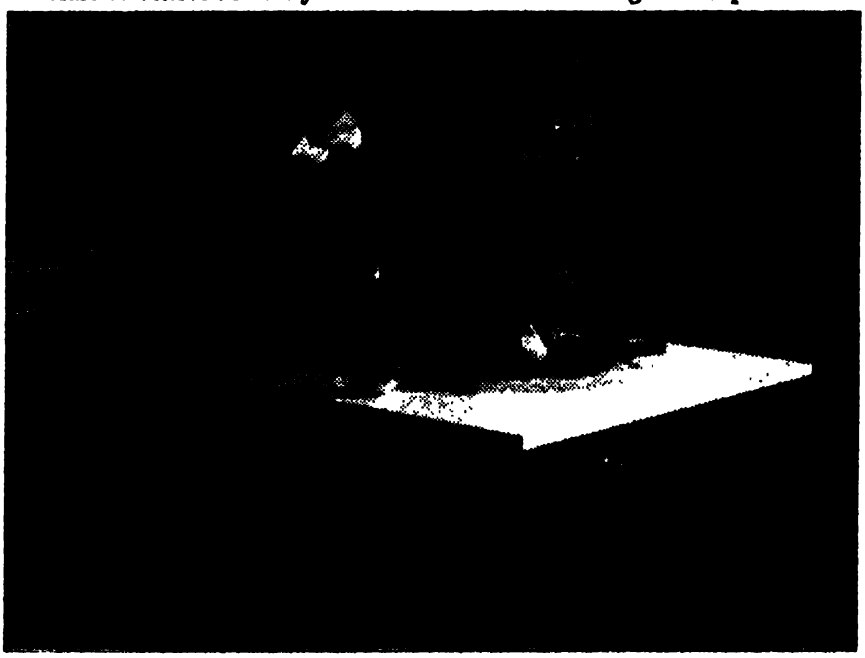
Now comes pre-fabricated, made-to-measure, and at a hefty price. **Samita Bhatia** reports

The heart of a household, they call it. A room that's pegged to play many roles: a place for the kids to snack, a gourmet workshop, an elegant dining room where guests can hang around sipping wine and nibbling cheese. A room that functions round the clock and must look as good as the rest of the house.

Hard to believe that it's your kitchen that's being talked about? Today a good-looking and ultra-efficient kitchen could demand design (maybe even designer) skills, the finest materials, precision construction techniques, and some fine custom-built cabinetry. "Remember," says Gogi Sodhi, who along with his Canada-based partners, has brought Laurentide Kitchens to India, "people don't hide their kitchens anymore."

Hide, they certainly don't. Embellish and enhance, yes. Explains Sodhi, "You begin by communicating the look, the feel and the practical requirement of your kitchen." Then his consultants take over, guiding your selection in styles and materials and helping you work out a budget. "People are drawn to your kitchen and it shouldn't be just the promise of food that should lure them there," says Sodhi.

Sodhi's job is not an easy one. It could take as long as a couple of months for the lady of the house to decide on the little details : like the final positioning of the electronic gadgets in the kitchen, or the location of the chopping board which, of course, must afford a view of the television kept in the family room. "We've been meeting with a client for the past two months and the final lay-out is yet to be worked out," rues Sodhi.



Kitchen designs from Laurentide Fine Custom Cabinetry

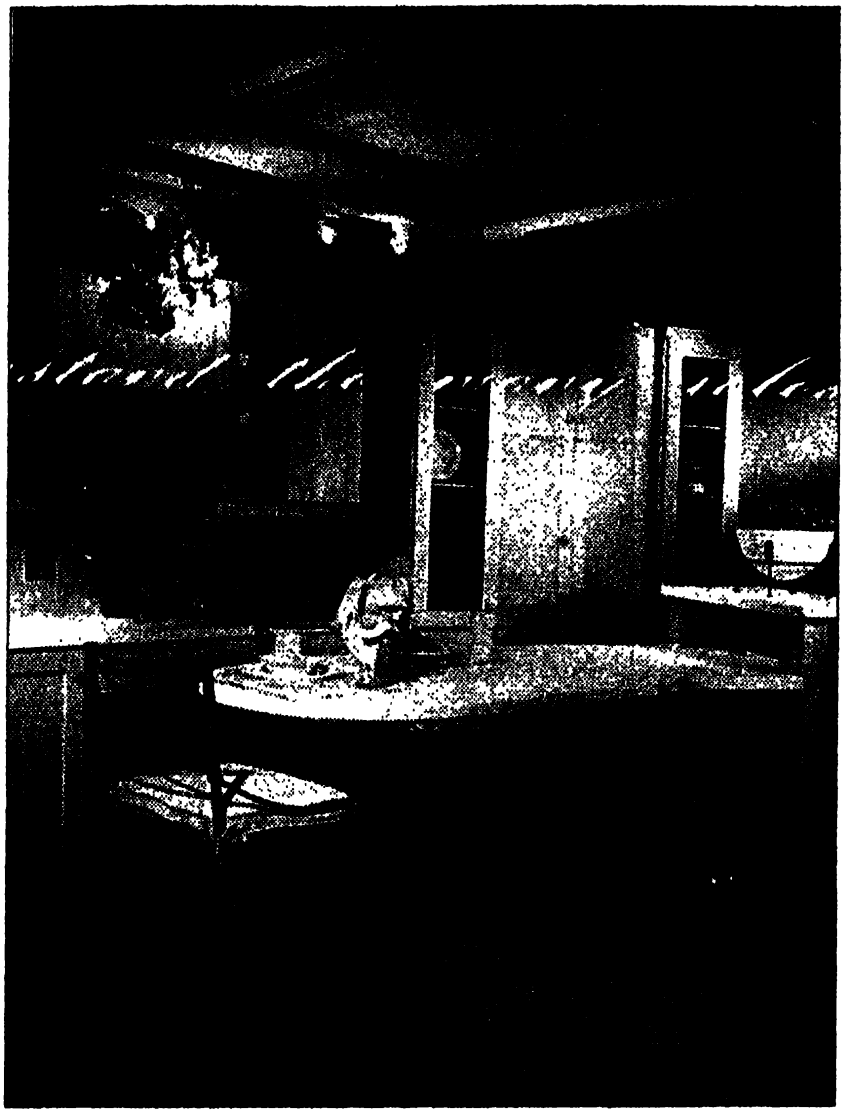
Then comes the tedious task of taking the measurements which are precise to the last millimetre. Laurentide also offers you convenient storage options — as many as 500 different permutations and combinations — that you can make your selection from.

Get a load of this: a chef's pantry that organises a month's worth of dry groceries. It's easy cleaning, while the innumerable chrome-plated baskets can be smoothly clicked into place, with shelves and baskets that are completely adjustable. There's also a bar cabinet with a pull-out chopping block, utensil and glassware storage and adjustable bottle partitions.

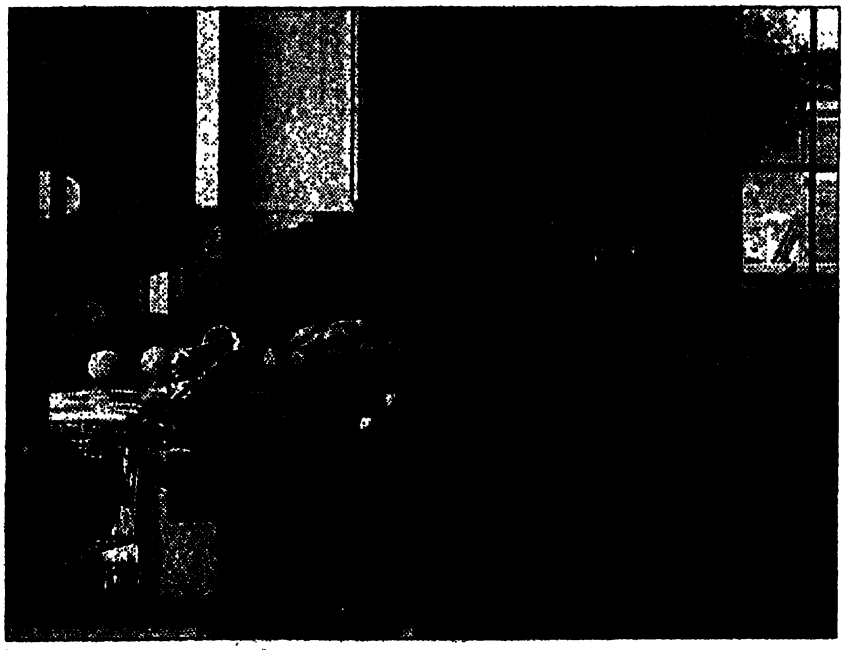
There are drawer dividers that maximise drawer interior space, dead corner shelves, curved door cabinets, rotating shelves and a pull-out pantry. You can pick from an array of racks — wine racks, spice racks, tea racks and the more intricate swing-out spice cabinets. There are pull-out tables that extend to 34 inches and can be rolled easily into the cabinet and out of sight.

The melamine interiors of the cabinets come fitted with self-closing shutters and spring loaded racks which can be widened or narrowed according to the size of the dishes to be placed. The drawers respond to feather touch. If a telescopic roll out means that the drawer can be pulled out to its entire depth, a heavier roll out is provided for drawers that are meant to store heavier utensils. The choice of material includes a solid-wood finish (which would be the most expensive), Poly-Vinyl Coated (PVC) Medium Density Fibre (MDF) which is the marginally cheaper option available. The added advantage is that the material is scratch-proof and water-resistant.

Measurements taken, the plans are put on paper and though estimates are given for each preliminary design they are changed with each revision made.



New kitchen ideas and styles from Laurentide



When the final design has been hit upon, a firm price is fixed. The final plans are thereafter dispatched to a sophisticated manufacturing plant in Mississauga where your kitchen is fabricated for you.

But that's after you have signed an equally detailed contract and paid a hefty 50 per cent of the estimate given to you. Another 40 per cent of the payment must be made before the installation takes place and the balance 10 per cent after the job is done. Prices can range from Rs 1.5 lakh to 15 lakhs.

Is the high price a deterrent? "Yes and no. Yes, the price content has to yet seep into the market. And no, we don't think we'll lose ground." And going by the fact that Sodhi has sold 11 kitchens ranging between Rs 3 lakhs to 12 lakhs since they opened shop in May is a healthy indication.

Once the order has been placed you can expect your kitchen to be fitted three months later. "It's the transportation of the ready-to-fit cabinets from Canada, customs clearance and in-land delivery from Mumbai that takes so long. It takes just a day to put up the cabinets in the kitchen," explains Sodhi.

Sodhi is convinced that his kitchens are quite different from those sold by his rival companies. He'll tell you how, "At Laurentide we segregate the kitchen clearly into dry and wet areas and provide the fixtures accordingly. Besides there are no standard sizes that we adhere to. We can give the size that the client wants, can mix and match the designs and give the client exactly what they have in mind."

The little details make all the difference. Like your microwave which will be placed at face-level close to the fridge; or the sink which might just be positioned at a window. "So the person doing the dishes has a better view than a blank wall."

But for those who wouldn't dream of spending a small fortune on a kitchen there's some good news in store from the company. Next on the anvil is the Basic or Builder's Line that comes cheaper so as to target a wider clientele. So our swelling middle-class need not fret. Meanwhile, the luxury kitchen is fast catching on as the new gourmet workshop. ■

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
IC 741	1240	3, 5 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1 2 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4 7
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1 2, 3 5
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1340	daily	9W-512	2125	daily
IC-966	1015	2 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-966	1015	2 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
# IC-765A	1750	1, 3, 5	IC-766A	2250	1, 3, 5
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-701	1100	1, 3 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
9W-511	1340	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2125	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
IC 715	1620	3 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
IC-201/203	0715	1 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0950	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-308	1930	5	AI-305	1905	3
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

IC-765A/766A till July 10

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
SU-536	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun. Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun., Arr: Tues. & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr Tues., Fri. & Sat	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr. Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5859	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5860
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1161	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1162

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Toofan-Torna Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-15	Gour Express	5-15	3154
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	6-45	3148
5663	20-00	Kalimpur Express	4-15	5664
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SBC Loop	12-30	3134
3109	18-20	Bhagmati (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5286	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-26	5288

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6 55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep: Sunday; Arr.: Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2209545-54 for in-coming trains; 2209536-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2209460-3600 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1361 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (8 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 8 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2209460 (manual enquiry).



SURVIVAL Strategies

Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

Q. *I am a 22-year-old man. I have been going around with a girl for the past five years and I love her very much. The only problem is that she lives far away from my house and I don't get to see her that often. Recently, however, I got introduced to a girl who has become a good friend. Now, the problem is that she seriously loves me. Unless I meet her, she refuses to eat or sleep. All this is creating a great deal of mental tension for me. I cannot decide what to do. Please advise.*



Narayan Munshi, Calcutta

A. The eternal triangle always causes pain, heartache and tension. Any girl who refuses to eat or sleep unless she is with you is obviously an extremely emotional person. To lightly pass her off as a 'friend' who does not in any way interfere with your earlier commitment to your other girlfriend is being less than honest with yourself. I think it is time you seriously examined your feelings towards both these girls — are you really in love with your first girlfriend? Are you perhaps just a little bit in love with the idea of love itself? Look at the situation with a pinch of humour, become a little detached, give yourself a little time to grow up before you set all three of your hearts aflame, with useless ideas of romance!

Q. *I am a 32-year-old man and I am bisexual by nature. I am attracted towards older men who are handsome and well-built. I have recently got married and I have quite a satisfying relationship with my wife, although she is rather uncaring and immature. Recently, during a seminar, I met a 38-year-old engineer, who started taunting and teasing me. I could not take it any more and started writing passionate letters to him and he seemed to reciprocate my feelings. I told him to take me in his company and being sure that he would oblige me, I quit my job. This did not happen, however. I do not understand why he treated me like this as he seemed quite passionate about me as well. Due to this, I cannot sleep properly at night and am very disturbed. Please help.*



S. K, Calcutta

A. It is always easier to counsel people from a distance than to accept the responsibility for one's own internal compulsions. I am not being moralistic about your bisexuality, yet I find it strange how you describe your wife as being "uncaring and immature" while letting yourself off the hook for your foolish and irresponsible behaviour.

The first thing you must do is to insulate your professional life from your emotional one. You must immediately start searching for another job and send out some feelers to see if you can get your job back. The object of your adorations seems a moody and malicious person who gets a kick from entrapping and then spurning the attentions of his own sex. While I reserve being judgmental about homosexual and bisexual love, I do feel strongly about the need for trust and nurturing in either scenario. You must invest in your marriage, your wife, your job, your own life, and firmly turn your back on self-destructive situations such as the one you have described.

Bisexual by nature and attracted to an elderly male? While I reserve being judgmental about homosexual and bisexual love, I do feel strongly about the need for trust and nurturing. You must invest in your marriage, your wife, your job and your own life

Q. *I am a 20-year-old girl and I am very close to a 32-year-old man whom I treat like an elder brother. He also treats me like a younger sister and we confide in each other. The only problem is that his wife is very suspicious and behaves violently with him because of his closeness to me. Her husband also does not compromise on this issue as there is nothing sinful in our relationship. However, I am very disturbed. I do not want to lose his friendship, but I also want his married life to be peaceful. What should I do? Please advise.*



Name withheld, Calcutta

A. A jealous nature will always find some cause or object for their suspicions. I do not think that you should react at all to her feelings, for after all you are doing nothing to hurt her or justify her suspicions. All humans, after all, need to interact with the rest of the human race. You are just 20 years old. Soon you may get into a romantic relationship yourself, or get married and this will allay the fears of your friend's wife.

Q. ***I am a 29-year-old man. I had fallen in love with my maternal cousin sister five years back. After one year, I opted out of the relationship because I felt that it was immoral. My cousin, however, refused to break off the relationship. To take revenge for my ditching her, she forced me to have a physical relationship with her and after a month, said that she was pregnant. My cousin, later, told me that she had undergone an abortion but again, a few days later told me that this measure was inadequate. Do you think she is trying to blackmail me and make my life miserable? What should I do? What legal action can be taken against me if she commits suicide, leaving a note behind that I am responsible for her suicide?***



T.G, Calcutta

A. This incestuous and convoluted relationship sounds most unhealthy to me. It was obviously a sound decision to break out of it, and one that you should still stick to. You know the saying, "Men cannot be raped!" Even if your cousin pressured you into a sexual relationship, it was always possible for you to resist. A pregnancy would only compound the confusion further. You must decisively break with her to prevent this obsession from destroying your life. I would go so far as to suggest that you let her mother or parents get an inkling of what has happened so they can exert family pressure on her. Move out of town, even if only for a while, and resolve to begin your life anew.

Q. ***I am 22 and have been in love with a girl for the last three years. I intend to marry her some day. We do not see each other too often but manage to exchange letters. My problem is that over the past two months, I feel intense sexual urge towards her. I am a bit surprised about this and am not feeling good about the change in the nature of my once pure love. Is this wrong? Should I tell my girlfriend about this? Please guide me.***

Cousin sister blackmailing you into having a physical relationship with her? You must decisively break with her to prevent this obsession from destroying your life. I would go so far as to suggest that you let her mother or parents get an inkling of what has happened so they can exert family pressure on her

Name and address, withheld



A. I am surprised that you are surprised about feeling a sexual urge towards a girl you intend to marry. What is pure love? No human emotion is ever entirely pure, everything has its inbuilt falsehood and hypocrisies. The point is that we must all be sincere and well-meaning in our intention. In this context I really cannot understand your question, though I have tried to reply to it nevertheless. Have a long cold bath and rethink your life into a simpler easier mould. I am convinced you do not have a problem at all.

Q. ***I belong to a lower middle-class family. We are five members in all. In the past, we were a close knit family and with our business flourishing, financially we were secure. The problem is really with my father. He has a nasty temper and thinks that he is the supreme authority in the house. He ill-treats my mother and abuses us, often physically. I feel that it is impossible to live in this kind of atmosphere. I am however, just 14. What can I do?***

Name and address withheld

A. Although you are just 14 you are old enough to coldly observe the ground realities operating in your family set-up and you are certainly old enough to resolve to resist these parental tyrannies and not allow them to break your spirit. Bide your time and do not waste your emotions on unnecessary and fruitless revolt. Attend to your studies and build up a support system of friends and relatives who will help you when the time comes to break out of the family situation and take your life in your own hands.





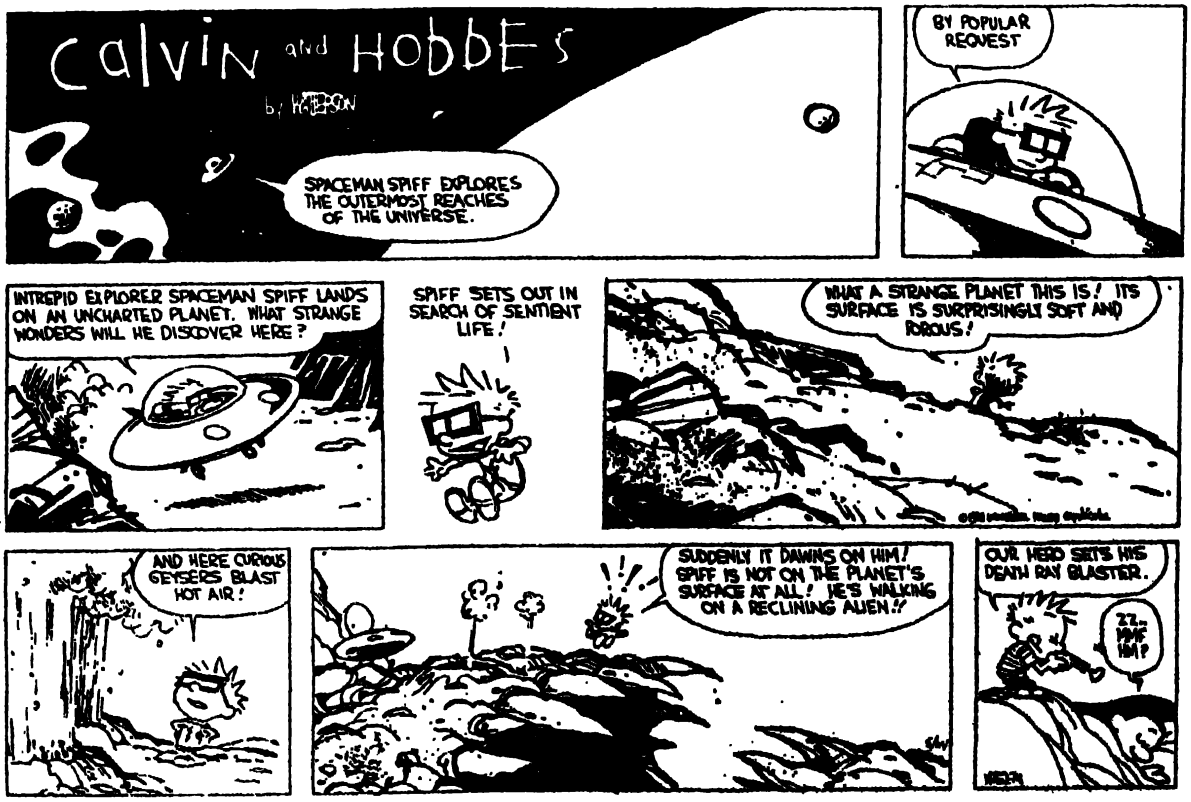
A dysfunctional family is a terrible thing that can destroy the primary attitude of trust that we need to successfully cope with our world and environment. Half the battle is always won if you can see things as they are. I can predict with total confidence that a mature, life awaits you. Good luck!

Illustrations : Debasish Deb

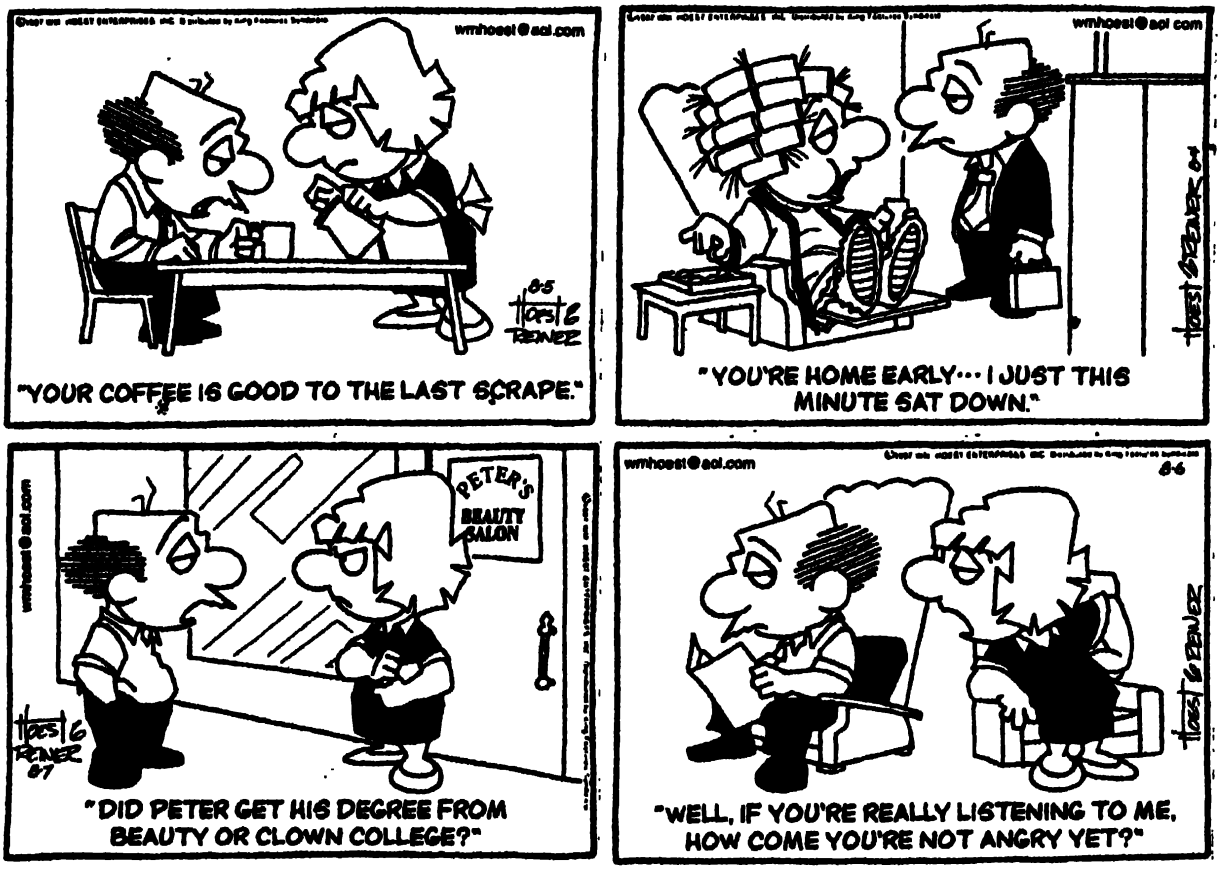
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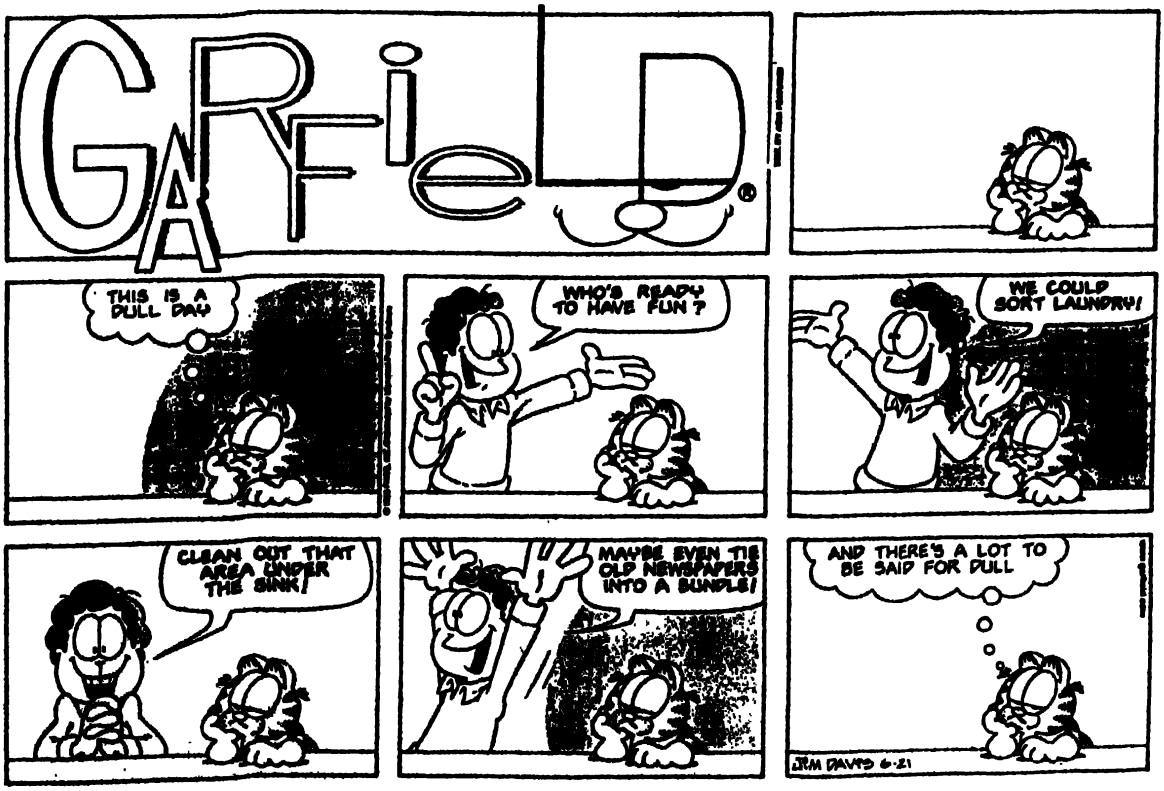
CALVIN AND HOBBES ▒ WATTERSON



THE LOCKHORNS



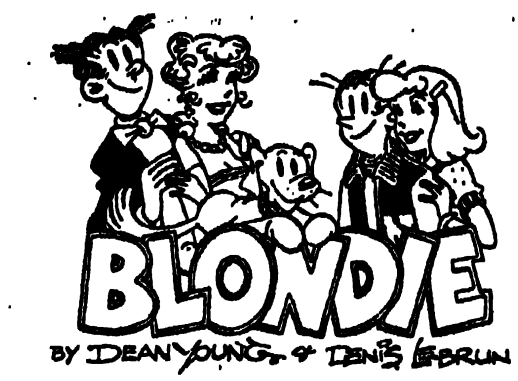
GARFIELD ▩ WATTERSON



THE ADVENTURES OF LEGIONNAIRE BEAUPEEP



BLONDIE ■ DEAN YOUNG & STAN DRAKE







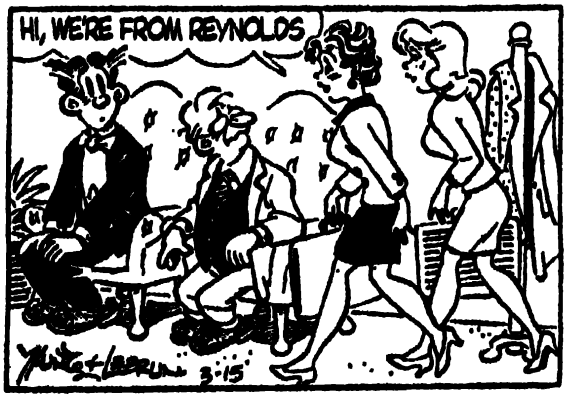








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BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

Q ***I am 40 years old and a regular visitor to a local beauty parlour. Every time I go there, the beauty parlour girls suggest that my complexion will glow if I go for a facial cum bleaching session. I have tried it once or twice but I have noticed that within three to four days, my skin goes back to normal and the glow acquired due to the facial and bleach disappears. How can I prolong the glow on my face? I also wish to know whether bleaching is harmful for the skin in any way?***
Mandira, Calcutta

A Bleaching is very bad for the skin and there is nothing known as a good, gentle imported bleach. All chemical bleaches have ammonia that does give a lightening effect but harms the skin in more ways than one. Avoid bleaching and do not be taken in by your parlour girls. It is quite obvious that they are not aware of the damage caused by chemicals. Having a professional to do facial is good for the skin as it not only cleans, tones and moisturises your face but also tightens the skin. It is also quite obvious that you are dependent on your parlour visits and do not do much at home towards a regular skin care programme. A facial is an excellent way to relax and improve the skin condition but following it up at home is also essential. Cleanse, tone and moisturise your skin. There are various face packs that can be made at home that have both tightening and absorbing qualities in them. You can mix honey and egg white and apply it all over your face and neck. Leave on till totally dry and then wash off with milk. Beauty is a daily routine and has to be a process. If you think that the beautician has a magic wand, you are mistaken. You can in fact do magic to your skin with a little bit of pampering and care.



Usefulness of facials:

- It cleanses, tones, moisturises and tightens your skin

Q ***I have a very oily face with a lot of acne and pigmentation marks. I drink a lot of water and eat fresh vegetables but to no avail. I am about to get married soon. Is there any way that I can make my skin less shiny?***
Amitabh Sinha, Calcutta

A It is not only as a result of having a balanced diet and drinking lots of water that one can make the skin glow but also the time you spent in eking out a regular skin care programme. So start right away. I do not know why people start worrying about their skin before important events like interviews, marriages ,etc. After all, isn't good skin something to be looked after and worked at all the time? Wouldn't you rather have a glowing skin every time you look in the mirror? Ideally, you should have started worrying much earlier. Anyhow, better late than never. Take up a regular skin care programme. Wipe your face with cold rose water several times a day to reduce oiliness. Also apply the following face pack cum scrub—ground *masoor dal*, the juice of a potato, lemon juice, *chokker* or oatmeal, fuller's earth and five powdered cloves. Apply this face pack cum scrub all over your face and leave on till dry. Dab with milk when dry and scrub off in a rotating manner. Continue eating healthy and take adequate rest.

Q ***I am a regular reader of your column and would be grateful if you advise me for the problem of dark circles. I also have a sleep problem and find myself sleeping very late in spite of retiring to bed pretty early. What should I do?***
Sagarika Nandy, Howrah.

A It is important for you to figure out exactly why you are not getting enough sleep. Is it because of exhaustion or due to some tension. Many times, the subconscious plays havoc with us and it makes matters worse when you cannot find the reason for your problem. Try and relax. Before you retire, take a warm water bath and listen to some soothing music. You



can also have a cup of warm milk and try and ease out the tensions of the day. Try muscle relaxation therapy by lying down with your eyes closed and concentrate on each muscle in your body starting from the toes. Just let your body go. As for the dark circles, if it is a sleep problem, it will go as soon as you treat the sleep problem. You can apply the following soothing pack to the eyes. This will not only fade the dark circles, but also tone up the delicate muscles in the eye area. Take the white of an egg and mix it with grated potato, grated cucumber, lemon juice and thick whipped cream. Apply all over the eye area after keeping in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes. Leave on for at least half an hour and then wash off with a cold milk compressions. You will see your eyes looking far more lustrous than ever before.

Q *I am 18-years-old and my height is 5ft' 4". I want to increase my height by at least two inches or so. Can you suggest any type of exercise routine and diet that I should follow so that I may grow a trifle taller? I am quite desperate.*

Madhushree Chatterjee, Asansol



A I am afraid that there are no wonder exercises or food to make you grow taller at this age. Certain exercises like toe-touching and skipping might help you to a certain extent. Games like basketball, volleyball and tennis will also benefit you to a some extent but I do wish that you had started all this a trifle earlier. A healthy diet with a substantial amount of diary products, fresh fruits and vegetables will help to a certain extent only.

Q *I have a normal skin which turns oily in summers. I am a 32-year-old working woman. What should be my summer make-up specially when going to work in the morning and on occasions, evening parties?*

Gargee Ghosh, Calcutta.

A You have not mentioned your skin tone, your face shape and your positive features. I believe that every woman has positive features which can be highlighted with make-up and negative features that can be camouflaged. Try and avoid using any foundation and keep your summer make-up light and natural. A light lipstick and eye-liner will do wonders to your skin. For the evenings, you could be a little more dramatic with mascara, a light blusher and some eye-shadow. What colours to use, what blending to do can only be told once the face is shown to a professional and unfortunately, there don't seem to be very many of them around.



To treat shoe bites:

- Scrub with a pumice stone or with a *loofah*

Q *I am an 18-year-old girl. I have black marks on my feet. I think it is because of my school shoes. I do not wear them now as I have completed school. I want a way to get rid of the marks. Please suggest a way out.*

Smeeta Choudhury, Bolpur

A I do wish that you had got rid of the shoes earlier or found a pair that was more comfortable. It must have been awfully painful to have ill-fitting shoes. Invest in a pumice and a natural *loofah*. Whenever bathing, start to scrub with a pumice stone in a rotating manner and then with the *loofah* in circular motion until the grains have cleansed the skin. Wash the face first with milk and then water. This must be done as a daily routine for about two weeks for best results.

Q *I am a 30-year-old bearded Sikh. My problem is that the hair on my forehead (on all sides) is receding considerably. Can you suggest a natural remedy to make it grow again?*

Shyamolie Basu, Cuttack.



A I have seen this problem with many Sikh friends that I have. You must be sure to dry your hair completely before tying your turban. Damp hair tied can lead to dandruff and hence hair loss.

Also a good regular oil massage with warm coconut or castor oil is a must at least twice a week. I hope that you are taking a nutritious diet with lots of dairy products, raw foods and lots of fruits. If you could henna your hair, it would be very good as it is known to promote hair growth as well as conditions your hair.

Illustrations : Debasish Deb



Legal Alien

Helen Brodie's foreign looks have helped her conquer the Mumbai fashion world, says **Sudipta Basu**

There's nothing Mumbai's celebrity-making machine loves more than the *firang*. Perhaps, that's why Helen Brodie, the half Scot-half Mangalorean Londoner, has found it so easy to secure a place under the scorching Mumbai sun. In fact, the model-actress has enough work on her hands to hang on at her fourth-floor apartment in the tony neighbourhood of Altamount Road for some years yet.

But the long-limbed (5 feet 7 inches in bare feet), well-toned model understands the here-today-gone-tomorrow nature of the beauty business all too well. So, she's sure about one thing: the moment she finds herself digging into her savings to pay the rent she will move on.

"It doesn't take much to make it big in Mumbai," says Brodie in a true-blue Brit accent. "Every second person is a celebrity here. It would be something else totally, though, if the same were to happen for me abroad. This fascination for a mish mash of India-abroad is only a fad. It will be gone before you know it."

And since the fad has swamped the mercurial fashion and film industry, most models and models-in-the-make use the ramp to lunge for bigger breaks on the silver screen. For Helen, though, it has worked the other way round. She was 'spotted' during the making of her maiden film *Monsoon*.



To delve into her past a little, before arriving in India, Helen had finished an honours degree in fashion marketing from the University of London, following which she enrolled for an Asian supermodel competition

that was being organised by Zee TV, London. She won it and the doors of the fashion industry seemed to open up for her. A stint on the BBC's Clothes Show followed, as did ramp modelling for Asian fashion shows.

It was around this time that Jug Mundhra, the director of *Monsoon*, happened to see her and offered her a screen test. She won this as well and was asked to report to Goa in precisely a week's time for the shooting. For Helen, at the time, it was like a free holiday for which she was also getting paid. With the benefit of hindsight today, she thinks it was also a good experience. "I don't regret doing the film, even though I knew that I was not turning out an Oscar-winning performance," says she.

But one positive outcome that emerged from the Goa sojourn, was an assignment for an ad film that landed on her lap a few days after she came to Mumbai. The Yamaha campaign was to take her to Mauritius for a shoot soon after. "Gosh, another paid holiday? Mumbai, I love you and I am here to stay, I told myself," says Helen.

And stay on, she did. And the work hasn't stopped flowing in, either. The Yamaha campaign was followed by Tata tea, Bausch and Lomb, Lakme, Johnson and Johnson and Brylcream among others, even as she strode the ramp, strutting the stuff of such fashion designers as Rohit Bal and Rina Dhaka. Brodie was also spotted at the annual NIFT show and the recently concluded World Gold Council jewellery show in Mumbai.

Although finding a place for herself in the booming modelling industry was easy for Helen, being a rather shy and withdrawn person, she found it difficult to break through with people here. "I am just about stepping in," says she. "The ramp world here is so different from what we were used to in England. It is certainly more complicated and stressful. One has to work a lot harder here."

She is, however, taken aback by how so many Indians are so susceptible to western influences, whereas Indians like herself who grow up abroad (she believes she is more Indian than Brit because she was brought up by her mother mostly, her father being a deep sea diver who was away from the household for long gaps) cluster together to hang on to their deep-seated values.

"At one point of time, my mother even thought that we must move to a neighbourhood closer to Southall. I am glad we didn't and my mother was wiser in giving us a loose rope. She thought better of alienating us from either of the two cultures that we belonged to," she says. "Consequently, I might just about have one *saree* in my wardrobe (she learnt how to drape it correctly only recently after doing a campaign for a textile company), but I don't smoke or drink or do drugs. I know many people here who do drugs because it is fashionable, unlike those abroad who still sneek the stuff into their rooms or huddle together inside public toilets."



It would seem that she is also the odd one out in the family. While she is in showbiz, her two brothers and sister are training to become either doctors or engineers. "But my mother had an inkling that it was coming. She says I was a great poser as a kid, and today I can see it in all my baby pictures," she laughs. These days her mother, who wielded the iron rod in the past, can be seen nudging her neighbours at shows where her daughter figures when she is in town.

Having made her mark on the ramp, the next step is logically Bollywood, and Helen is quite open to the idea. What she cannot accept, though, is playing a doll. She has been offered some nine films and had to turn them down because all of them wanted to cast her either as a model or an NRI. "These characters are just people without any story to tell. That will not do for me," says she.

If *Monsoon*, woven around the theme of reincarnation, was a "good enough experience" (apart from being a paid holiday as well), the *Janam Samjha Karo* flick with Asha Bhosle was the right thing to do. "Apart from the fact that the song will remain an all-time favourite, the video was also so sensitively rendered that it actually worked as a prop for Bhosle's rendition," says Brodie.

She has recently done another video with Leslie Lewis which was just as inspiring, she says. "I can't see myself appearing in a deluge of videos, the novelty wears out after a while. Similarly with films, I am content to wait and watch. It's not in my nature to do the chasing," she says. *Bhaji on the Beach* is her all-time favourite, and it is films like these that she can see herself easily slipping into.

While on the job, Helen hopes to pack in as much travelling as possible. If her visits to India in the past were confined to visiting her family in the south, she is rectifying that right now by literally combing the north. A recent visit to Rajasthan has spurred in her a feeling to scale greater heights. So, next on the agenda is a trekking trip to the Himalayas. "The most fascinating aspect of travel is to experience the tempo of the lives of several people," she says.

For the moment though, she is content with the pace of Mumbai, and the ever-pragmatic streak in her will keep the hype and hot air of the industry from invading her better sense.

CULTURE

Unchain

Pakistani poet Ahmad Faraz combines both the romantic and the revolutionary in his poetry, says **Ghazala Wahab**



Faraz Ahmad: For people-to-people communication

Ahmad Faraz is a poet. But he is also a storyteller. So the best way to write a story on him is to source it from the stories he tells. There is an interesting one on his visit to Afghanistan which reflects the hate-hate relationship Pakistan, his country of birth, shares with Afghanistan.

Faraz was introduced to a person as minister of railways in Afghanistan. Perplexed, he wondered aloud as to why Afghanistan has a minister when there is no railway. The Afghan minister of railways retorted: "But even Pakistan has a minister of law."

Urge him as much as you want but he won't say whether the story is true or made up. But that doesn't really matter. What matters is Ahmad Faraz's ability to translate ground realities into humorous anecdotes, or poetic expressions.

Pakistan is not the only recipient of his attention. India too has been a victim of his candid and satirical observations. But then, for him both countries are the same, with India being a little better than Pakistan. "But not any longer," he says referring to the BJP government's decision to go nuclear.

He relates another story. He was having dinner at a friend's house in a posh south Delhi colony. The power went off for a couple of hours forcing them to have a candlelight dinner in sweltering heat. "You can't provide power, what are you making the bomb for?" he jokes, half-seriously. "Are you going to put it on a rickshaw for transportation?"

But he is a poet, why is he involving himself with the politics of the land? Does this cultural diplomacy have any significance at all?

Faraz doesn't like the term cultural diplomacy. "You know, in the absence of meaningful political dialogue it is very important to continue with cultural landscaping," says Faraz. "The people, on both sides of the border, have same culture, same language, same aspirations. I feel one should leave politicians to their bickering and continue working at people-to-people level. After all, this is as important as political settlement of disputes."

"The role of a poet or any creative person," he continues, "becomes more crucial in trying times. On a larger scale it helps shape public opinion, on a smaller one it gives voice to dissent among people."

Faraz should know. He has seen, and very closely, the effects of poetry on people and on the state. When Zia-ul-Haq came to power after deposing the democratically-elected government of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Faraz wrote *Muhasora* (The Siege). He lambasted the government and mocked its efforts to gag freedom of expression. The consequence: he was sentenced to solitary confinement for about two months. "Though it wasn't a long peri-

od but to me solitary confinement seemed almost like a lifetime," says Faraz.

After his release he recited *Muhasara* at a *mushaira* in Karachi. The result: he was debarred from entering Karachi. Faraz left the country and went to London. "Those were difficult years financially, as I did not ask for asylum. I was on my own," he reminisces. "But intellectually, very stimulating. I came in touch with a lot of writers and poets from the Third World. Most of us had similar experiences back home and had a lot in common."

This was the time when he travelled a lot, wrote a lot and recited a lot. Connoisseurs of Urdu poetry started hailing him as one of the greatest poets of the 20th century, placing him next only to Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

During his exiled years he once went to Middle East for some *mushairas*. An Arab publisher chanced upon a couple of his books and expressed a desire to publish them. "I thought, in any case, I don't have any money so maybe this way I'll earn something," says Faraz barely concealing his glee. "They did a nice job and said that the proceeds from the sale would go to the poet. Each set was priced at $75 and in one evening about 1,000 sets were sold. A day later I returned to London and deposited the amount at the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI). Two days later the bank collapsed. The money went as easily as it came."

In Faraz's life whatever came easily went easily. Only that remained which was nurtured with his lifeblood. Like poetry. "Poetry," says Faraz, "has given me my best and my worst moments. I suffered incarceration because of poetry and I received all this love because of it."

Born in 1931, Ahmad Faraz started as a romantic poet whose sensitivity and intensity did not diminish with age. There is a story related to his very popular romantic ghazal *Ranjish hi sahi*. Apparently, Faraz was deeply involved with a woman who for some reason did not want to continue the relationship and they mutually decided to part company. The ghazal was written in the heat of the moment.

"Yes," says Faraz with a lost kind of a smile. "I was intensely involved. But you see, romance is not necessary for me or for poetry or for anyone. It is necessary for life itself. It makes you more sensitive to your own self, your own emotions."

Though Faraz wanted to be a pilot, fortunately for poetry lovers, he could not make it and sought an academic career as a second option. He did his masters in Urdu and later in Persian. "I also taught for a few years," he says. Political instability cut his academic career short and he turned full-time to poetry.

After Zia-ul-Haq's death his political rehabilitation began in earnest. From the Academy of Letters to the National Book Foundation, Faraz is no longer an outcast. Though age and ailment (he underwent an angioplasty last year) has taken its toll on the body, the spirit remains unrestrained, the poetry remains unchained. Stubbing his nth cigarette he says, "What is angioplasty, just cleansing of a couple of drainpipes."

His relationship with religion is equally irreverent. "I feel people should just keep away the Quran and the Hadith for sometime," he says with a shrug. "If they must, they should only concentrate on the last sermon of the Prophet. In that sermon he shattered the myth of the divine and spoke of equality in society and all things that we need today."

He relates another story. He and friend-actor Zia Mohyeuddin were invited to Rotary Club, New Delhi, for lunch. There he was urged to recite something. In his typical style he said, "I had heard of people having to sing for their supper, but it seems I am really badly off as I have to sing for my lunch also."



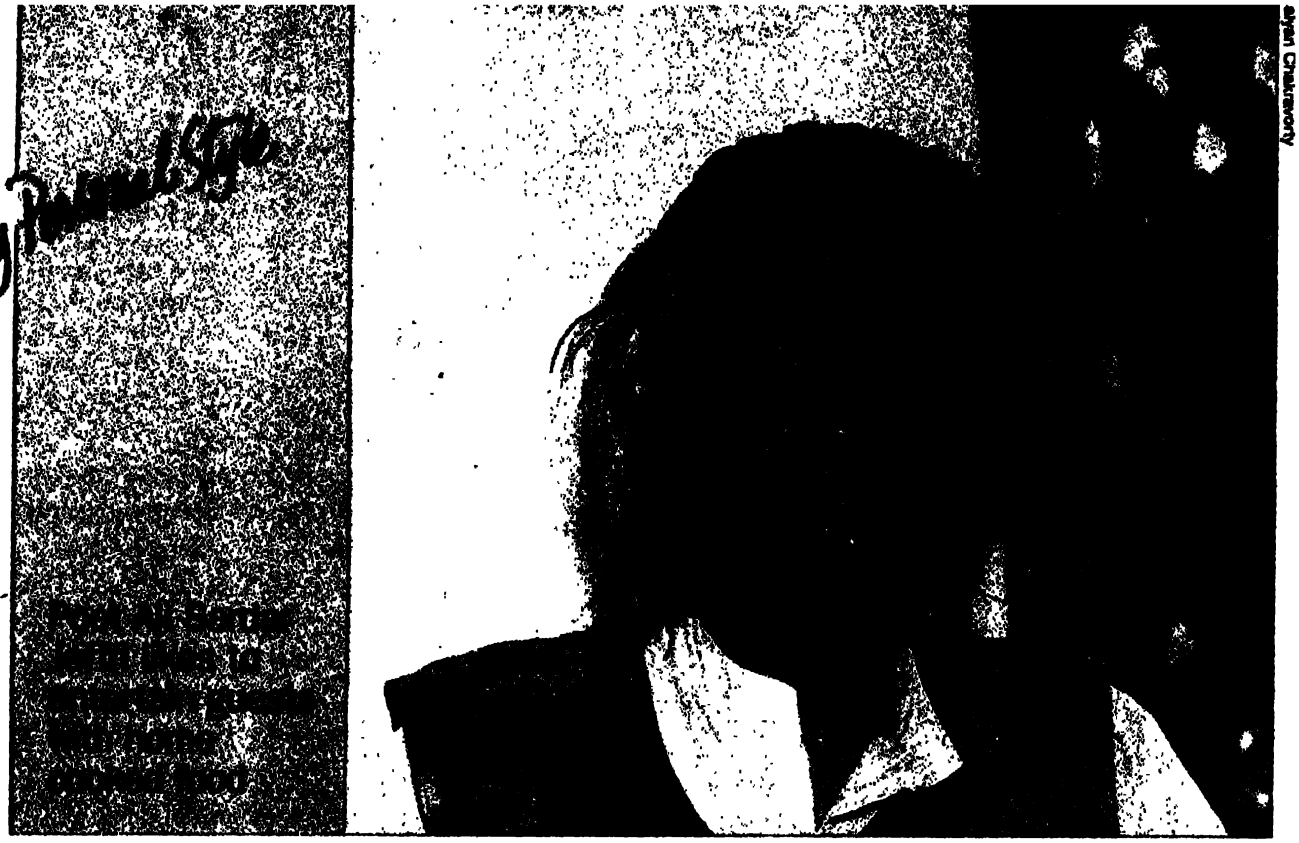
Faraz Ahmad with Zia Mohyeuddin (left) and (right) Javed Akhtar

After the recital an enthusiastic admirer went to congratulate him, and asked, "So, you wrote the poems as well?" "No, Zia Moyeuddin wrote it," said Faraz with a straight face.

The second story, claims Faraz, is true. But he is not too distressed at the response to poetry. What worries him more is the quality of poetry. "There aren't any good poets left," he says. "In India there are none. At least, in this respect Pakistan is slightly better off."

But on this visit to India, (he had come for some work in Patna when he was also roped in for Mirza Ghalib's bicentenary celebrations) Faraz's concern was not poetic. He was more concerned about the deteriorating relations between India and Pakistan. "Ideally, we should be like USA and Canada," he says. "If we can't live like brothers then we should live like good neighbours at least."

In this nuclear summer, however, it is unlikely that anyone will pay heed to that bit of advice. ■



Kalyan Chakravorty

Home Bred



Kalyan Chakravorty

DAAL OFFERINGS :

Nowadays, I feel that most people have forgotten how to make *daal* properly. Even at hotels, the *daals* you get are called *kali daal, maa ki daal* and so on. The names of these *daals*, leave alone their taste, are so harsh on the ears. In our days, these *daal* dishes would be known by their original names — *arhar ki daal, chana daal, masur daal, peela* and *kali masur daal*— each cooked in a different style with different *masalas*.

I don't know where to begin because there are various categories of people that I entertain and so it all really depends on the kind of people I have over. There are people who come over for some work, there are poet friends and then there are friends from my school and college days with whom I am lucky enough to still keep in touch.

The people who come over for work are the kind with whom it's a formal kind of a meeting over tea and some snacks. One often wants them to go off early, so one has to be very tactful and polite. With my poet friends, long poetry recitation sessions and discussions go on till late at night (even at my age!). With my old friends, the discussion usually veers around our days of yore and the fun we had in our youth.

I am not very fond of eating outside. Therefore, we almost always serve home made food. My wife, who is also very fond of meeting people, does quite a bit of cooking. Our favourite serving is *pulao* and *kebabs*. When we have vegetarian friends, we obviously serve vegetarian food. The dishes include *subzi, daal* and vegetables. Nowadays, I feel that most people have forgotten how to make *daal* properly. Even at hotels, the *daals* you get are called *kali daal, maa ki daal* and so on. The names of these *daals*— leave alone their taste— are very harsh on the ears.

In our days, these *daal* dishes would be known by their original names — *arhar ki daal, chana daal, masur daal, peela* and *kali masur daal*— each cooked in a different style with different *masalas*.

Arhar daal, for instance, is boiled to a point where the grains cannot be separated from water and vice versa and then a *tarka of ghee* and garlic is added to it. But what most people do is to add onions to it, totally spoiling the taste. Similarly, *maa dhuli* (white *daal*) tastes delicious when cooked with milk instead of water. But not many people know this.

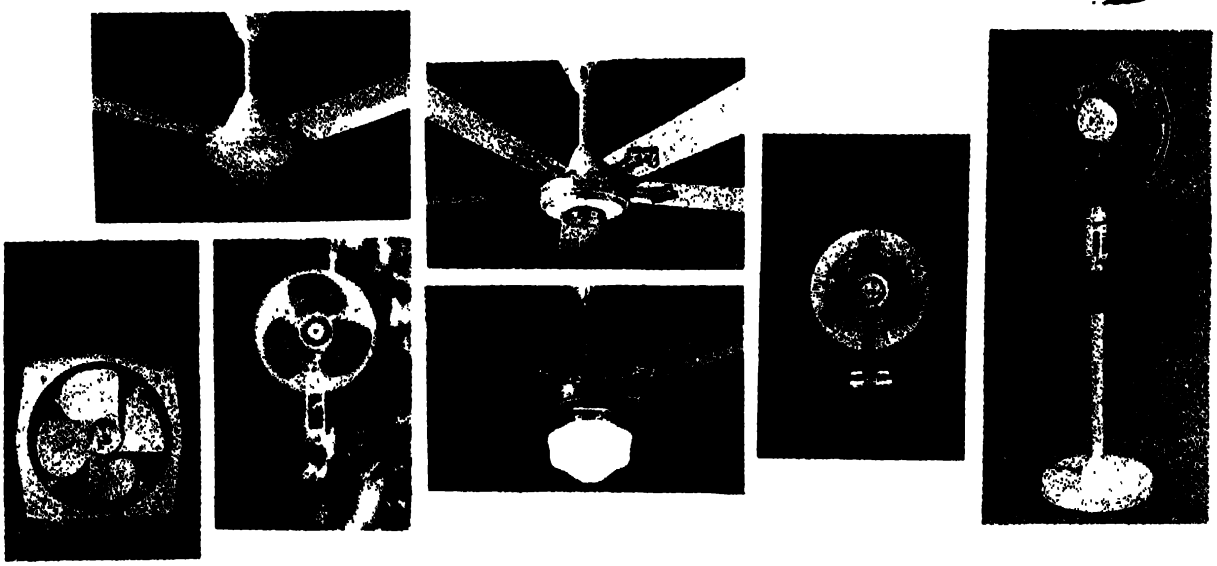
Some day, I plan to write a book on cooking because I think I am quite adept at it. I learnt cooking when I was in jail during the freedom movement. As political prisoners, we were given the facility to manage our own kitchens. There were 200 of us in the Nashik jail and we would take turns to cook. I had got the recipes from my wife and would cook Mughlai food which was appreciated by all!

■ As told to Geeta Sharma



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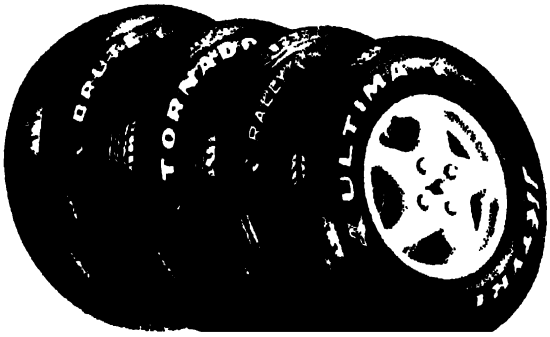
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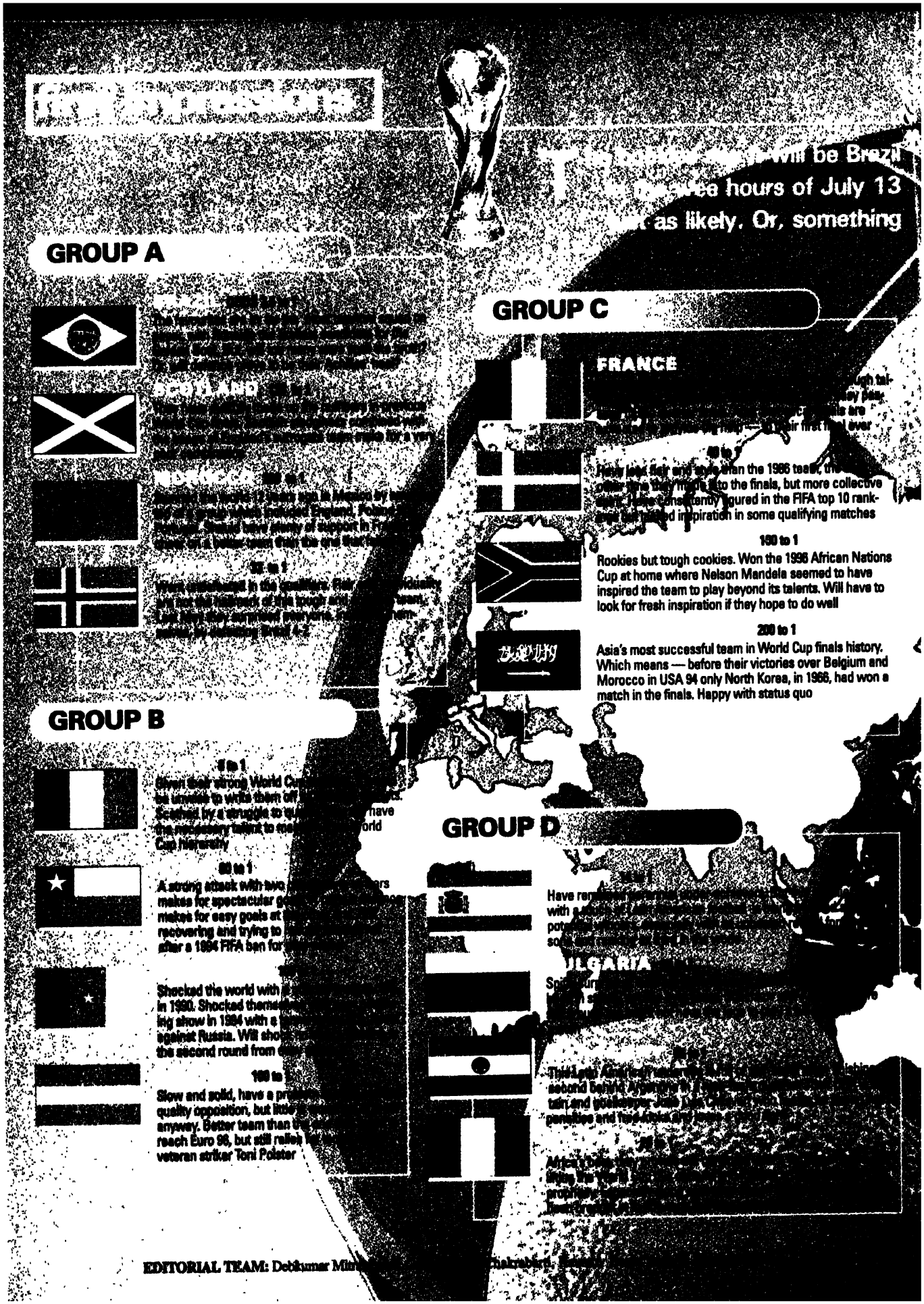
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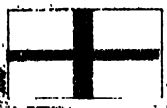
ENTRY FORM

A

B


Will be Brazil
hours of July 13
as likely. Or, something
GROUP A
GROUP B
GROUP C
FRANCE
GROUP D
BULGARIA

GROUP G



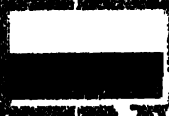
8 to 1

If you go by the hype, England are world-beaters. Since Englishmen like to think that only Brazil stand between them and World Cup glory. They are wrong. The Romanians and Colombians are itching to prove that the



40 to 1

Arguably the weakest of the eight seeds, [illegible] made for an easy passage to the finals. But Shearer [illegible] with a deadly left foot and perhaps [illegible] English



COLOM[illegible]

[illegible] to 1

[illegible] in 1994 but because [illegible] them play [illegible] star-turn



TU[illegible]

250

[illegible] organised to co[illegible] record of the Afri[illegible] Nigeria, England [illegible] down in th[illegible]

GROUP E



HOLLAND [illegible]

[illegible] they [illegible] deceive. Their [illegible] is their [illegible] defence



[illegible]

[illegible] 1994 [illegible] they [illegible]



100 to 1

[illegible] from a low-quality group has given the [illegible] false sense of strength. Three coaches in [illegible] four years will [illegible] on the performance of [illegible] in one of the tougher



SOUTH KOREA [illegible] to 1

[illegible] Cup finals but

GROUP H



[illegible]RGENTINA

Winn[illegible] and are [illegible] has no[illegible]



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JAMAICA

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GROUP F



GERMANY



YUGOSLAVIA



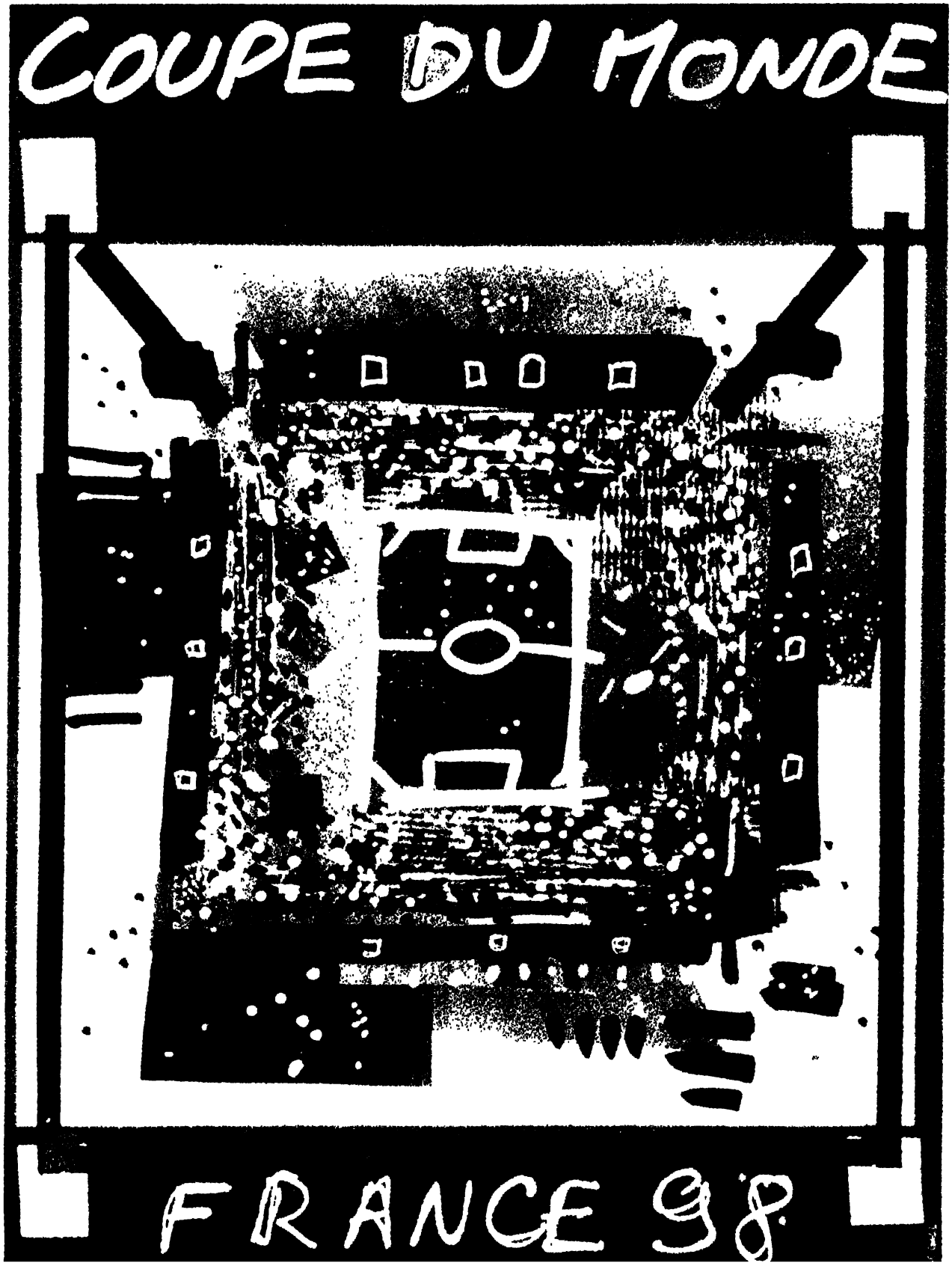
UNITED STATES



IRAN

comment

Will the last World Cup of this century offer what Pele once



called 'the beautiful game'? asks DAVID MILLWARD

READY FOR THE MAGIC

At last, after an eternal round of qualifying matches, bickering about tickets and years of over the top marketing hype, the World Cup is finally with us. In Paris Wednesday night, Brazil start their defence of the trophy they won four years ago in America with a match against Scotland. The organisers could not have chosen a better fixture to kick off the tournament

Matches between the teams have been high scoring on the field and a good-natured, albeit slightly drunken, party off it. In one part of the ground there will be thousands of Scots, many of whom will be wearing kilts, singing "Flower of Scotland"; at the other the Brazilian fans will be pounding out a samba beat on massive drums — hoping to inspire their players.

Brazil could win the tournament, Scotland are quite capable of beating them and then losing to rank outsiders the next match. Whatever happens it will be a colourful occasion as will the tournament itself, especially off the pitch where fans will paint their faces and coaches will strut up and down the touchline, waving their arms in a desperate and often fruitless attempt to influence events.

But will we be treated to what Pele once called "the beautiful game?" Or will football fans be subjected to hours of tedium as coaches try to stifle flair, hoping to compensate their players' lack of ability with almost military-style organisation?

Even worse, will the game itself become a sideshow because of violence in the stands? Already in Europe there have been some apocalyptic warnings of what might be in store, especially from the less savoury elements among England's travelling support.

But before a ball is kicked, the marketing men have been busy. Fifa, the game's governing body, has been raking in the cash from the corporate giants who are willing pay huge sums for the status of tournament sponsor. A sizeable chunk of the companies have little or nothing to do with the game itself. Nevertheless, Coca Cola and Mastercard, the credit card company, have both already shelled out $40 million each for the privilege of having their names associated with the football. Add to that about 250 "marketing partners" who, for a lesser sum, can stick the official World Cup logo onto anything from sunglasses to notebooks to keyfobs.

Of course the most interested companies are the kit manufacturers. If, for example, England's David Beckham scores the winning goal in the World Cup final, two sets of sportswear executives will be very happy bunnies indeed. Umbro, the manufacturers of the England shirt, will look forward to selling millions upon millions of overpriced replica shirts. Adidas, who sponsor his boots, will hope thousands of young Beckhams will literally want to be in his shoes. It would be a shame if he scores with a header.

Throwing corporate money not only gives the companies publicity but, more controversially, the right to a decent number of seats in the ground. In fact, at any given game sponsors and their guests will have 20 per cent of the tickets, supporters of the teams involved a paltry eight per cent each.

This has already given rise to the first major row of the tournament, months before ball was kicked. The French organisers of the tournament have come under attack over their refusal to make more tickets available to the fans of the competing teams. Nearly half the seats are only being sold in France.

By the time the dignitaries and sponsors are taken into account, the ordinary supporter does not appear to have been given a look in. In fact, the organisers could face a series of massive fines. The European Commission in Brussels has already started legal proceedings over the ticketing arrangements, further action is also expected in the European Court of Human Rights.

The whiff of controversy is certain to intensify once the game finally starts, thanks to the directives handed down to the referees by Fifa.

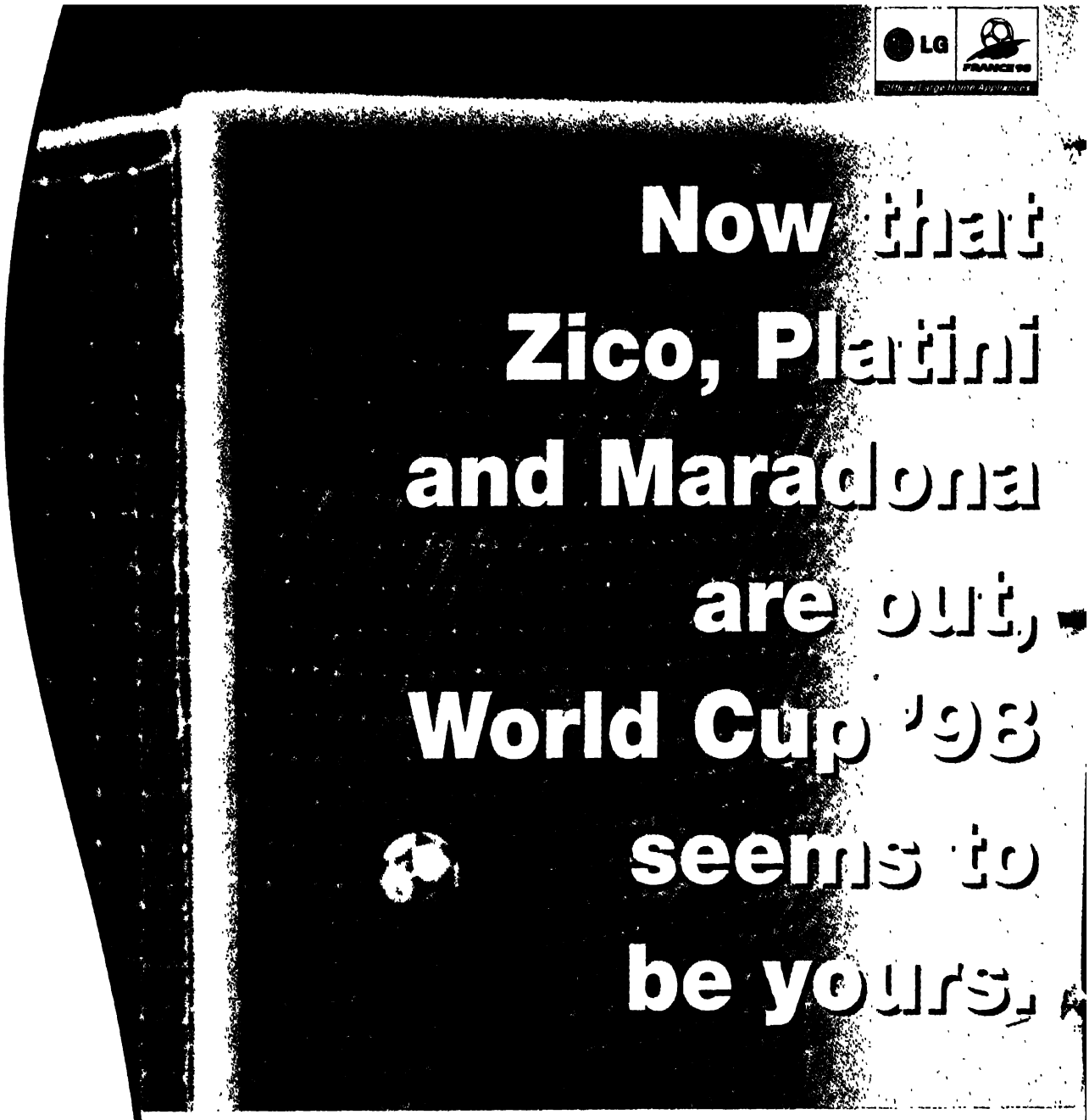
Determined to promote skilful play they have outlawed the tackle from behind. Once allowed, then punished by a yellow card, this summer perpetrators face instant dismissal. Referees who show leniency and fail to show the mandatory red card, themselves face an early trip home.

Hopefully this edict could prevent a repetition of some tournaments where defenders got away with kicking lumps out of opposing forwards. One of the sadder memories of 1966 was the sight of Pele limping off the field after being subjected to sustained assault by players who were not fit to lace his boots.

But there are also fears that this could be a crackdown too far. In the United States referees started implementing the new directive in the country's new professional league. The result was chaos with bemused defenders trooping to the dressing room after what appeared to be innocuous tackles.

If teams fail to get the hang of the new rules, prepare to





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Group III	Semi-Finals	5	17.6.98	18.6.98
Group IV	Finals	5	22.6.98	23.6.98

LG TEAM UP TO WIN

watch a lot of ten – or even nine – a side matches!

Theoretically, at least, the beneficiaries should be the "flair teams" like Brazil, whose forwards should be able to avoid the kicking that happened in some previous tournaments. For that reason alone the Brazilians, who in Ronaldo have the game's most exciting striker, must be ranked among the tournament favourites. But at the same time, they don't always travel well. In 1966 they were an immense disappointment and in 1974, when the World Cup was played in Germany, they tried to play a more physical European game – with dire results.



This time round the South American challenge could be led by Argentina who looked rather useful when they beat Ireland in a recent friendly. But watch out for Chile and in particular Salas who has an ability to conjure goals out of nothing – as England found to their cost a few months ago.

France, the hosts, are expected to do well. But few see them as likely winners. Jacquet, the manager, has come under constant attack from fans in his home country who accuse him of stifling the natural flair with which the French have been associated. David Ginola, who has had an outstanding year in England despite playing for a dreadful Tottenham Hotspur side, will spend the tournament as a pundit on British television rather than injecting some inspiration into what appears to be a rather colourless French team.

The smart money, as ever, is being put on Germany. But there are injury doubts about Matthias Sammer and Jurgen Klinsmann, one of the most deadly marksmen in international football, is showing signs of becoming a spent force.

I have a hunch that England, losing semi-finalists in the 1996 European championships, could go a long way. In Alan Shearer they have a forward of truly international class, the defence is sound with an inspirational goalkeeper in David Seaman. But much will depend on the temperamental genius of Pual Gascoigne. He is England's only outstanding midfield player. But he has been injury prone and his volatility always makes dismissal and suspension a serious risk. So England may lack the strength in depth to emerge as winners.

Most European soccer fans would admit that the Croatians have more outstanding footballers than perhaps any other team in the tournament. Bilic, who admittedly had dire year with Everton, is normally an outstanding defender. Davor Suker, currently playing for Real Madrid, is a delight to watch. Elegant, he makes the impossible look simple.

But for all their ability the Croatians have a tendency to self-destruct. In the Euro '96 tournament they could and should have beaten the Germans but, for reasons which escape me, they decided to try to kick them off the park rather than rely on their natural ability. They duly and deservedly lost.

The Dutch, like the Croatians, have the ability to win the tournament. Bergkamp has been superb for Arsenal in the English premiership this season. Japp Stam, who has just signed for Manchester United, is considered the best defender in Europe.

Patrick Kluivert, however, has been in dire form in Italy, which suggests that he will not be the goalscoring threat of a few years ago.

This leaves the Italians, who I think will emerge as the winners. Fortunate to scrape into the finals at all, they have that streak of luck which successful sides rely on. Solid defensively and blessed with a number of useful forwards, they probably have the strength in depth for the month-long marathon.

Question marks remain. Cesare Maldini, the manager, does not seem sure what his best team is. As a Chelsea fan I hoped that Gianfranco Zola will be there. At his best he is a magician with the ball, but injury and loss of form has cost him his place in the squad.

Vieri, another forward, looks awesome at the moment and Inzaghi will pose a threat with his skill and physical presence.

However, some of the most exciting players and vibrant teams will probably not feature in the latter stages. Tore Andre Flo of Norway, a gangling beanpole with astonishing balance and pace, will upset a lot of defences; great things are also expected of the Dane, Brian Laudrup.

«Determined to promote skilful play, Fifa has outlawed the tackle from behind»

But this tournament, with 32 finalists, will underline how soccer has become the world game. The United States, which was once rather sniffy about the sport, has made it to the finals for the third tournament running – though acting as hosts last time round guaranteed their qualification last time round. The increasing popularity of the sport in Asia and the Middle East will be reflected by the presence of Japan, Iran and Saudi Arabia. At least one African country is likely to do well – probably Nigeria.

Watch out also for footballers from countries once better associated with cricket. South Africa is there as are the Jamaican "reggae boys" who will add a sense of fun to the tournament.

Some games will be great, others will be dire. But if in doubt, just enjoy the party.

team talk

History shows that if Brazil fails to ignite, the World Cup suffers. This time, expect more of the pragmatic play that won them the Cup in 1994 rather than the beautiful game Brazilian stars are known for. But even their pragmatic play has the silken magical touch which can only be provided by the boys from Brazil

Still on top, but there is this fear of falling

COACH

●**Mario Zagallo**: Only person to have won four World Cups, two as player and two as coach; efficiency is his watchword

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Claudio Taffarel**(age 31) Zagallo's faith keeps the 1994 hero going



●**Carlos Germano**(27) Consistent performance for Vasco ●**Dida**(24) Plays for Cruzeiro



DEFENDERS ●**Roberto Carlos**(25) Curling free kicks notwithstanding, he is too attacking to be a dependable defender **Cafu**(27) Zagallo has no one to substitute his first-choice right back ●**Aldair**(32) May be past his prime ●**Junior Baiano**(28) Too short-tempered and goal-hungry for his own good ●**Goncalves**(31) A centre-back who won the Rio championship last year ●**Zé Roberto**(23) The Real Madrid left-back is likely to be a bench warmer ●**Andre Alves Cruz**(30) Milan's central defender with powerful shot

MIDFIELDERS ●**Leonardo**(28) Leader of the midfield and a thinking gamemaker ●**Dunga**(34) A captain who leads from the front ●**Caesar Sampaio** Plays for Yokohama Flugels in Japan's J-league ●**Flavio Conceicao**(23) Has a powerful and accurate shot ●**Rivaldo**(26) Left-footed free-



kick specialist ●**Denilson**(20) Fleet-footed left winger joining Real Betis on record money ●**Dorlva**(25) Entrusted with the donkey's job in the midfield ●**Giovanni** Replaced fancied Juninho

FORWARDS

●**Ronaldo**(21) Said to be the "perfect blend" of Pele and Maradona, is expected to live up to his nickname 'The Phenomenon' ●**Romario**(31) Stocky, small, infinitely guileful, the USA 94 player of the tournament is still a matchwinner ●**Edmundo**(26) Deadly striker who can be a perfect foil for Romario but called 'The Animal' because of his behaviour on and off the field. Coach Zagallo thinks he needs psychiatric treatment ●**Bebeto**(35) The nickname should be 'Ageless' as he has still not lost his touch



Romario takes charge

COACHSPEAK **« I would rather play ugly football and win than play pretty football and lose »**

SWOT ANALYSIS

●**Strength** The world's highest priced footballers are Brazilian and there are at least seven such players in Brazil's $150-million side who can change the course of a match. More adventurous and entertaining than the team which won in 1994, there have not been so many stars in the Brazilian side after 1970. Their attacking riches are so limitless, so extravagant that even an accomplished player like Juninho could not find a place in the squad. ●**Weakness** Brazil's defence is somewhat suspect. There is no obvious goalkeeper. Again, Roberto Carlos is a hugely exciting attacking left-back but less of a defender while the central positions continue to pose problems. The weakness showed in their friendly against Argentina which they lost by a goal. Also, coach Zagallo is notorious for not doing his homework on the opposition ●**Opportunity** The squad and other persons associated with the team will divide around $8 million in premiums for a successful World Cup defence, each player earning a bonus of $150,000 if Brazil captures a record fifth title. Aged Scotland and Norway and inexperienced Morocco make Brazil's task in the opening round rather easy ●**Threat** Brazil will again be their own worst enemy if, as in the past, in France too they give in to the temptations of yielding to crowd pressure and play attractive football allowing goals against them, underestimating the opposition, and [illegible]



Ronaldo is the biggest star in a team jam-packed with stars

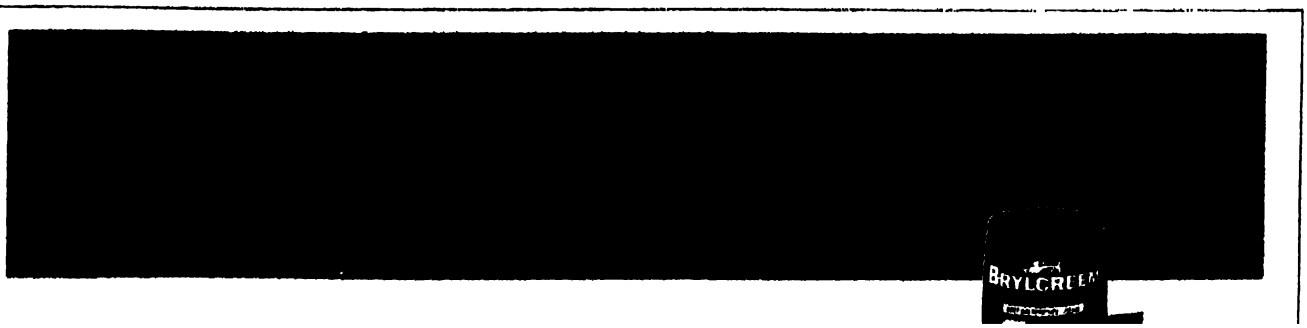
Side show

Which football star has had a village named after him?

Bulgaria's Hristo Stoichkov. Inhabitants of the small village he was born in, Ysno Pole, have voted to change its name to Stoichkovo

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**All Time** 1930, '34, '38, '50, [illegible], '62, '66, '72, '78, [illegible], '90, '[illegible] **Best performance** Winners 1958, '62, '70, '94 **Best in qualification** [illegible]



norway

Norway may have a reputation for being boring on the field but they can be very effective

Scandinavian surprise in store

COACH

Egil Olsen Transformed Norway from nobodies to respected opponents in the seven years under his guidance



THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Frode Grodas**(age 33) Norway's captain during the qualifiers ●**Thomas Myhre**(24) Has impressed fans of Everton, England



DEFENDERS ●**Henning Berg**(28) Strong on the left and has a powerful shot ●**Dan Eggen**(28) Was a surprise inclusion in USA 94 ●**Gunnar Halle**(32) On the recovery path after multiplo injuries ●**Alf Inge Haaland**(25) Comfortable as centre-back or medio ●**Ronnie Johnsen**(28) Suffering a knee injury ●**Steinar Nilsen**(26) A fitness fanatic ●**Roger Nilsen**(28) Sheffield United player

MIDFIELDERS ●**Lars Bohinen**(28) His $ 2.4 million move from Blackburn to Derby indicates his class ●**Jostein Flo**(33) The tall, elder Flo is good in air but his technique is far from convinving ●**Jahn Ivar Jakobsen**(32) Mini is a joker on the pitch, good showing this season ●**Oyvind Leonhardsen**(27) Olsen's pet is a tireless runner ●**Eric Mykland**(27) The Mosquito is famous for defence-splitting passes ●**Kjetil Rekdal**(29) Experienced medio with a powerful shot, nursing a broken leg since January ●**Petter Rudi**(24) Accurate passer and playmaker

FORWARDS ●**Ole Gunnar Solskjaer**(25) Has tremendous ball control ●**Frank Strandli**(26) Is a good header ●**Havard Flo**(28) Cousin of the famous Flo, fringe player ●**Tore Andre Flo**(25) The real star of the team, can shoot and control the ball with both feet

COACHSPEAK « **The Brazilian defence is as organised as garbage** »

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Three finals** 1938, '94, '98 ●**Road to France** Topped Group 3 in the European section

morocco

This Moroccan team should do better than the one which failed to win a single game at the last Cup

A win over France will be good enough

COACH

Henri Michel Wants Morocco to beat the French in any round because France dismissed him as manager in 1988

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Abdelkader El Brazi**(age 33) A disappointing African Nations Cup will cost him his place ●**Driss Asmar**(22) Made his international debut in January ●**Driss Benzerki**(27) Only five caps since his first international match in 1995

MIDFIELDERS ●**Rachid Azzouzi**(27) Anchor and defensive medio ●**Mourad Bounoua**(25) A late entrant to the side ●**Said Chiba**(27) Elegant player but lacks match practice ●**Youssef Chippo**(24) A classy player improving with every match ●**Mustapha Hadji**(26) Made in France boxer-turned-footballer who refused France and preferred Morocco even after France wanted to cap him at 21 ●**Abdellatif Jrindou**(23) Tall and well-built medio



FORWARDS ●**Ahmed Bahja**(27) Plays club soccer in Saudi Arabia, has terrific skill ●**Salaheddine Bassir**(25) Has scored 12 goals in 24 matches ●**Ali El Khattabi**(21) A Netherlands-born striker ●**Youssef Fertout**(27) His poor form worries Michel ●**Abdeljalil Hadda**(27) Had a poor African Nations Cup finals ●**Abderrahim Oukili**(27) His Bundesliga performance earned him a place in the squad

COACHSPEAK « **My information really comes from television and newspapers** »

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Four finals** 1970, '86, '94, '98 ●**Best performance** 2nd round, 1986 ●**Road to France** Topped Group 5 in African section

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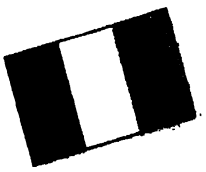
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italy

Regular finalists Italy have to contend with dangerous natural expectations every time they make it to the World Cup finals, especially when the battlefield is in Europe

Waiting for history to repeat itself



COACH



● **Cesare Maldini** Believes in Italy's traditional defence-based catenaccio approach

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **Angelo Peruzzi**(age 28) First-choice keeper, did not concede a goal during the first 285 minutes this season for Juventus ● **Gianluca Pagliuca**(31) Lost his place to Peruzzi, still has lightning reflexes and is a penalty expert ● **Gianluigi Buffon**(20) This Parma keeper is being hailed as the most promising by Dino Zoff **DEFENDERS** ● **Alessandro Costacurta**(32) Dependable central defender and man marker ● **Fabio Cannavaro**(24) Hard tackler who came into the limelight in Tournoi de France in June 1997 ● **Paolo Maldini**(29) Arguably the most dependable left-back in the world, the heart-throb of millions of girls is the son of coach Cesare Maldini ● **Moreno Torricelli**(28) Plays for Juventus ● **Guiseppe Bergomi**(34) Former skipper, a surprise inclusion ● **Alessandro Nesta**(22) A team man and a classic central defender **MIDFIELDERS** ● **Dino Baggio**(26) First choice on the left, defensive in approach ● **Demetrio Albertini**(26) All fearsome counterattacks start with him ● **Angelo Di Livio**(31) A late starter, a regular for Juventus ● **Sandro Cois** Plays for Fiorentina ● **Roberto Di Matteo**(28) Right wing medio, can be a link between attack and defence



● **Luigi Di Biagio**(26) Plays for AS Roma ● **Francesco Moriero**(29) Plays for Inter Milan, winger who scored twice against Paraguay on April 22 **FORWARDS** ● **Roberto Baggio**(31) Maldini's single biggest selection headache – the fans are with still him but his f rm isn't ● **Filipo Inzaghi**(24) Plays for Juventus ● **Cri tian Vieri**(24) Has the build of a heavyweight boxer, little slow off the ground ● **Fabrizio Ravanelli**(29) Never-say-die attitude helps him inside the six-yard box

COACHSPEAK **I prefer a little and large strike force**



Veteran striker Roberto Baggio

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** A talented squad, the easiest group and impressive World Cup traditions ● **Weakness** They lack a creative midfielder and the team's confidence level is rather low. There is no link between a solid but static midfield and the potentially explosive but ultimately impotent attack. There's hardly anyone in Italy who can do it for them ● **Opportunity** Their struggle to qualify for France 98 could both mislead opponents and act as a spur for themselves to do better ● **Threat** Coach Maldini's counter-attacking game may turn out to have become passe

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Fourteen finals** 1934, '38, '50, '54, '62, '66, '70, '74, '78, '82, '86, '90, '94, '98 ● **Best performance** Winners 1934, '38, '82 Runners-up 1970 and '94 ● **Road to France** Beat Russia in a European zone play-off game

Side show

Do fans help teams win?

History says yes. In the 1978 final, Holland had to wait five minutes in front of enthusiastic home crowds before Argentina, the hosts, appeared. Argentina won

The first African nation to have made a mark on world football, Cameroon have replaced their first generation of swashbuckling heroes with a young team

The lions are no longer indomitable





COACH

● **Claude Le Roy** Trying to stitch a team in too short a time

COACHSPEAK **Things haven't been too organised, but I hope to fix that**

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **William Andem** (age 30) Let in three goals against South Africa in the 1996 African Nations Cup leading to his removal from the squad at that time ● **Bruno Njeukam**(19) A reserve goalkeeper even with his club Le Havre, France ● **Vincent Ongandzi**(22) Was the first choice during the last African Nations Cup ● **Jacques Songo'O**(34) Let in six goals against Russia in 1994 but named the best keeper in the Spanish league last season.
DEFENDERS ● **Romarin Billong**(28) Battling an injury to be fit for the Cup ● **Earnest Oben** Etchi(23) Big, strong fullback ● **Raymond Kalla**(23) Central defender who partners Rigobert Song ● **Tobie Mimbou**(28 Has played a lot of club football in South America ● **Rigobert Song**(21) Star defender whose sense of positioning is excellent ● **Pierre Nlend Wome**(19) Can play both as a left-back and as a medio ● **Lucian Mettomo**(24) Recent addition, did not play in the qualifiers
MIDFIELDERS ● **Marc-Vivien Foe**(23) Knows French football and a crisp passer ● **Jean- Jacques Etame**(31) Made his debut last November against England at Wembley ● **Samuel Ipoua**(25) Almost a sure candidate for a red card ● **Cyrille Mangan**(21) Plays for Xanthi in Greece ● **Fabrice Moreau**(30) Has moved from Toulon in France to Rayo Vallecano in Spain ● **Geremi Fotso** **Njitap**(19) Exciting youngster, used as a substitute ● **Salomon Olembe**(17) Talented young player with a bursting run ● **Augistine Simo**(19) Operates from behind the front duo ● **Guy Tapoko**(29) Injury-prone but Le Roy cannot ignore him ● **Joseph-Marie Tchango**(19) Has 14 caps, plays in Mexico ● **Bernard Tchoutang**(21) Skillful dribbler but wayward passer
FORWARDS ● **David Embe**(24) Played very little for the country since the last Cup ● **Nicholas Dikoumbe**(29) Occassional choice striker ● **Patrick Mboma**(27) Deadly speed and finish, taking the charismatic Roger Milla's place, sensation in the J-league ● **Francois Omam Biyik**(31) Remember his goal against Maradona's Argnetina? ● **Joseph-Desire Job**(20) Had a good season with Lyon in France ● **Alphonse Tchami**(26) A 1994 survivor, playing in Bundesliga ● **Patrick Suffo**(19) Young, yet solid build



Rigobert Song

Side show

Which player, apart from Colombia's Andres Escobar, has been involved in a betting scandal?

Italy's Paolo Rossi. Banned for two years, he returned just in time to win the '82 Golden Boot



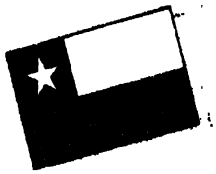
SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** On current form, Mboma can rip apart any defence. The defence has Song who is regarded by many as one of the best stoppers in the world. The youthfulness of the side adds to the speed and spirit ● **Weakness** The players will find it difficult to adjust with less than even a month's practice. The coach had difficulty assembling players who were away playing in different leagues ● **Opportunity** The young side eager to prove itself ● **Threat** Four years ago, it was money-related problems which fragmented the side. That may resurface yet again. Says Roger Milla: "Cameroon may creat a sensation again if there is no hitch over payments to the players"

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Four finals** 1982, '90, '94 and '98 ● **Best performance** Quarter-finalists in 1990 ● **Road to France** Topped Group 4 in the African section

chile



To Chileans, playing the World Cup after 16 years, football is all about goals, even if that means the ball lands as much into their own nets as their opponents

Attack is their own form of defence

COACHSPEAK **I'm not entirely satisfied with my team**



COACH

● **Nelson Acosta**: Has never coached a national team or even a big club before



THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS

● **Nelson Tapia Rios**(age 31) Good in patches ● **Marcelo Ramirez**(32) Too inexperienced to face tough challenge ● **Carlos Tejas**(22) Plays for Coquimbo Unido in Chile

DEFENDERS ● **Pedro Reyes**(25) Central defender in the first 11 ● **Francisco Rojas**(23) Sweeper and occassional midfielder ● **Ronald Fuentes**(28): Central defender ● **Mauricio Arce**(22) Like several members of the squad, plays for Universidad de Chile ● **Cristian Castaneda**(29) Full-back and weak marker ● **Miguel Ramirez**(27) Lacks technique to stop class forwards ● **Javier Margas**(28) World-class defender who played for the All-Star team ● **Moises Villarroel**(22) Plays for Wanderers ● **Fernando Cornejo**(28) Often used as a substitute

MIDFIELDERS ● **Clarence Acuna**(22) Attacking medio with lots of promise ● **Nelson Parraguez**(26) Plays for the club Universidad Catolica ● **Jose Luis Sierra**(29) Plays for Colo Colo ● **Marcelo Vega**(26) Plays for Metrostars, USA ● **Luis Musrri**(29) Plays for Universidad de Chile ● **Fabian Estay**(29) Plays for Toluca, Mexico

FORWARDS ● **Ivan Zamorano**(31) One of the likely stars of France 98, Ronaldo's striking partner at Internazionale is a danger anywhere near goal and suitably nicknamed 'Bam Bam' ● **Marcelo Salas**(23) Called 'Matador', is any defence's nightmare. Much sought after by European clubs ● **Manuel Neira**(20) Plays for Colo Colo ● **Rodrigo Barrera**(27) Exciting striker, used as a substitute for Zamorano

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** They have a fantastic forward line that scored 32 goals in 16 qualifying matches. Especially feared is the 'Za-Sa' partnership of Zamorano and Salas on whose backs Chile reached France ● **Weakness** The porous defence and a weak goalkeeper cannot stand the pressure of a competent side. Acoste has made no effort to strenghten the defence which let in as many as 18 goals during the 16 qualifiers ● **Opportunity** Zamorano is familiar with most European sides having played in both the Spanish and Italian leagues ● **Threat** Injured players — as on May 13, eight players were injured — especially Zamorano's and Salas's recurring injury problems

Side-show

Which country got a holiday when their national team won a place in the World Cup finals?

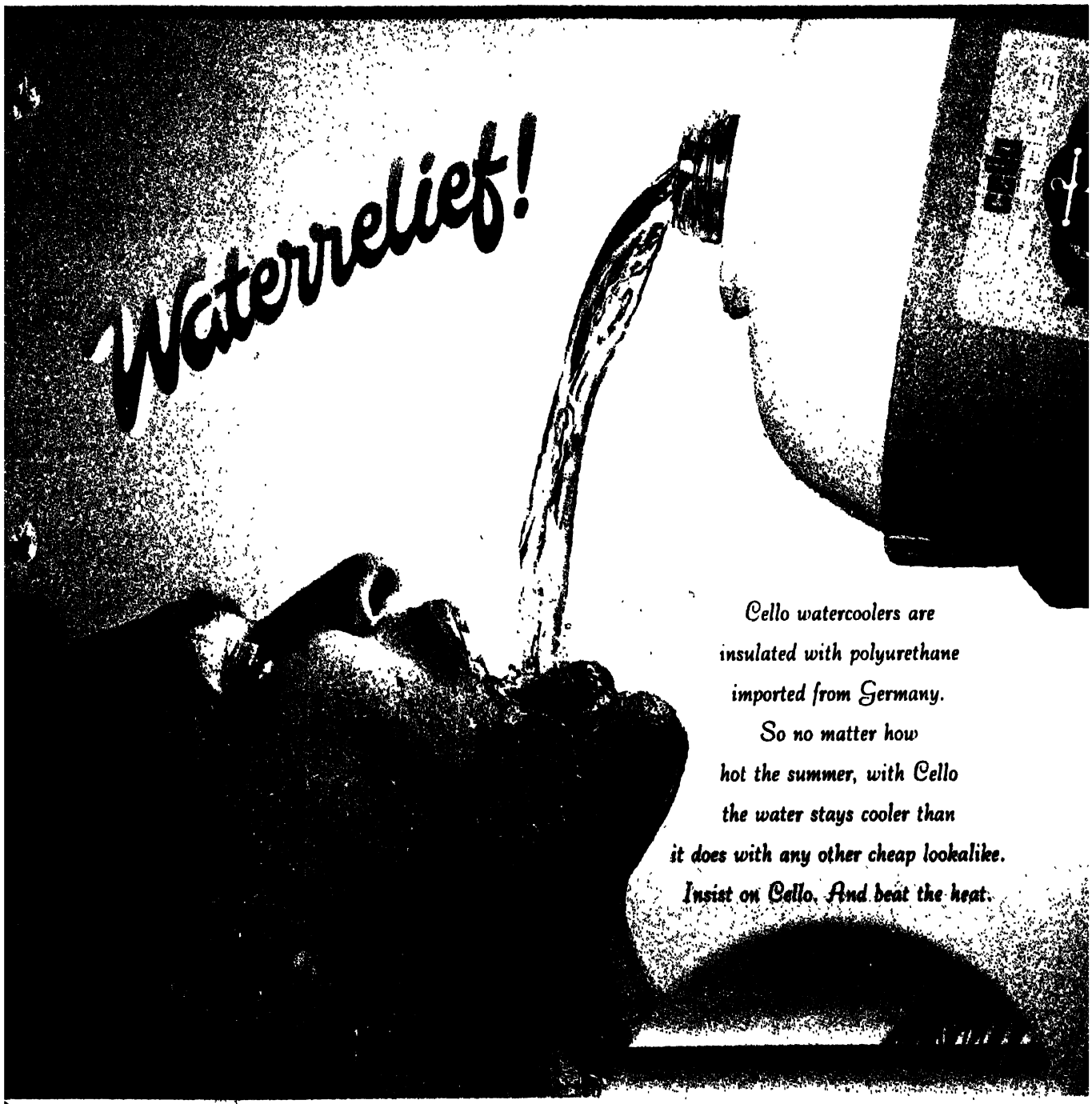
Jamaica, on November 16, 1997

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Seven finals** 1930, '50, '62, '66, '74, '82, '98



● **Best performance** Finished third in 1962 ● **Road to France** Qualified as the fourth team and the highest scorer of their South American group



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france

The tournament comes home to France, where it was conceived some seven decades back by Jules Rimet, for the last World Cup of this century



Dogged by burden of great expectations

COACH



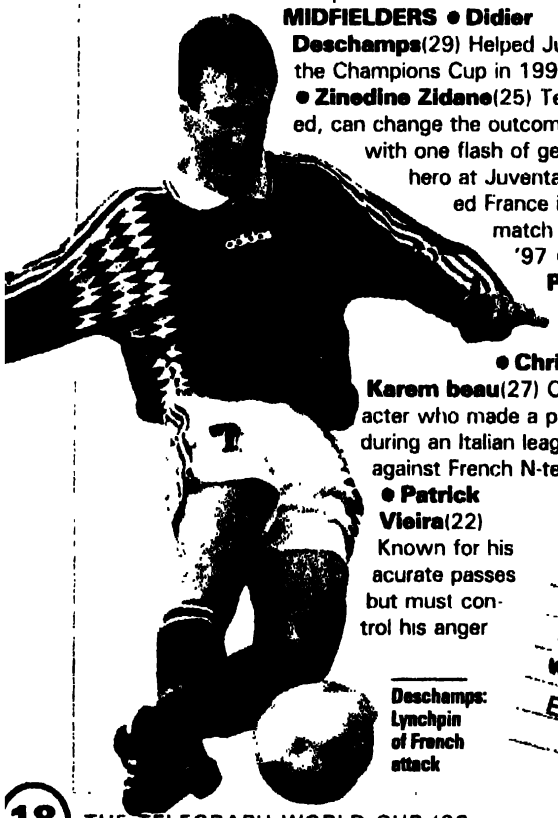
Aime Jacquet Constantly criticised by the French press since taking over four years ago for dull, albeit effective, performance

COACHSPEAK **«« Since January, my sole thought has been not to make a mistake with the 22 »»**

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS • **Fabien Barthez**(age 27) Dependable under the bar but has to be more careful with crosses • **Lionel Chabonnier**(32) Plays for Auxerre • **Bernard Lama**(35) Has lost form and importance after failing a dope test

DEFENDERS • **Laurent Blanc**(32) Sweeper and occassional midfielder • **Marcel Desailly**(30) First player to win the Champions Cup with two different clubs in succession • **Lillian Thuram**(25) Equally adept at playing in the centre of defence and defensive midfielder • **Vincent Candela**(24) Plays for the Italian club Roma • **Bixente Lizarazu**(27) An orthodox defender who loves to hit the net • **Franc Leboeuf**(29) Has been successful playing for the English club Chelsea • **Alain Boghossian**(27) Has joined Sampadoria after three seasons with Napoli



Deschamps: Lynchpin of French attack

MIDFIELDERS • **Didier Deschamps**(29) Helped Juventus win the Champions Cup in 1996 • **Zinedine Zidane**(25) Technically gifted, can change the outcome of a match with one flash of genius, cult hero at Juventas, represented France in the All Star match in December '97 • **Emanuelle Petit**(27) Plays for Arsenal • **Christian Karem beau**(27) Colourful character who made a public protest during an Italian league match against French N-tests • **Patrick Vieira**(22) Known for his acurate passes but must control his anger • **Youri Djorkaeff**(30) Renowned for his attacking play, has a terrific bicycle kick

FORWARDS • **Stephane Guivarc'h**(27) Scored on debut against South Africa • **Christophe Dugarry**(25) Back in Marseille after spending two seasons on the sidelines • **Robert Pires**(24) Highly successful at club level • **David Trezeguet**(20)



Impressive appearences for Monaco this season • **Bernard Diomede**(24)Yet to be capped • **Thierry Henry**(20) Teenage protege of Jacquet

SWOT ANALYSIS

• **Strength** Balanced in almost every department. If the Zidane-Djorkaeff chemistry works, no side can beat France • **Weakness** Lately the team has been goal-shy. Their long absence from the World Cup has affected their cohesion. Zidane has been hampered by an ankle injury • **Opportunity** With opponents like Saudi Arabia and South Africa, France will easily move into the second round • **Threat** Excessive demands from the fans. Plus, if the tensions between Zidane and Djorkaeff resurface, France will be doomed

Side show

Which France 98 coach is a left-wing academic by profession?

Egil Olsen of Norway

WORLD CUP RECORD

• **Nine finals** 1930, '34, '38, '54, '58, '66, '78, '82, '86 **Best performance** Semi-finalists 1958 (third) and '82 (third) • **Road to France** Automatic qualifier as hosts

Only a second-timer, the Danes are very cautious; luck is with them as far as the group line-up is concerned, but it's hardly all that matters in the finals

They have everything but experience



COACH

Bo Johansson His Swedish nationality forgotten after Sweden, Denmark's oldest and fiercest rivals, were defeated in his first match in charge

COACHSPEAK **«We can score from corners, throw-ins, long balls and on rapid counter-attacks»**

THE PLAYERS



Irup: Danish ace upfront

GOALKEEPERS ●**Peter Schmeichel**(age 34) The towering figure is the world's best goalkeeper ●**Mogens Krogh**(34) Comes a poor second but reliable ●**Peter Kjaer**(32) Yet to play an international **DEFENDERS** ●**Soeren Colding**(25) A workhorse and an aggressive player ●**Jes Hoegh**(31) The country's best sweeper who started as a medio ●**Jacob Laursen**(26) Plays for Derby, England, and can fill a variety of positions ●**Marc Rieper**(29) A hard tackler and the pivot of Danish defence ●**Jan Heintze**(34) Left-wing back and a fast overlapper ●**Michael Schjoenberg**(31) Well-built and attacking left-back who scores regularly ●**Thomas Graversen**(22) Technically impressive rookie **MIDFIELDERS** ●**Thomas Helveg**(27) An energy storehouse and a good man-marker ●**Bjarne Goldbaek**(29) Solid performer, had an impressive career in Bundesliga ●**Morten Wighorst**(27) Tall player, currently doing duty for Celtic ●**Per Franbeon**(28) Bustling medio with a good technique ●**Alan Nielsen**(27) Busy footballer and part of Johansson's goal-scoring strategy ●**Martin Joergensen**(22) Prefers the left-wing back position, successful with Udinese, Italy ●**Michael Laudrup**(34) Captain and a world-class ball player ●**Ole Bjur**(29) Right-side medio who's quick ●**Peter Nielsen**(30) Member of the 1992 European Championship squad, now nursing multiple injuries **FORWARDS** ●**Jon Dahl Tomasson**(21) Prolific goalscorer in the Dutch league, moved to Newcastle United for a sum of $4.1 million in 1997 ●**Brian Laudrup**(29) Brilliant dribbler and a would-be star of the Cup ●**Mikkel Beck**(25) Fast and goal-hungry, had an indifferent club season ●**Miklos Molnar**(28) Attacking striker and frequent scorer ●**Peter Moeller**(26) Has 10 caps, currently with PSV Eindhoven in The Netherlands ●**Ebbe Sand**(25) Very fast striker

SWOT ANALYSIS

●**Strength** Anyone who has Schmeichel under the bar knows that only the very best shot will enter the net. In the midfield, Michael Laudrup still commands a lot of respect. Upfront, brother Brian can take on the hardest of tacklers



●**Weakness** Inconsistency in Michael's form and injury to Schmeichel. With few stars, it'll be harder for them to overcome suspensions and loss of form by important players ●**Opportunity** The team has a better chance than its 1986 predecessors [illegible] team to make it to the finals but unfortunately [illegible] ed the hardest of the group stage. They don't have any strong opponent except France in the group ●**Threat** The being only the second time the Danes have made it to the finals, World Cup experience is [illegible]

Side show

Who was asked to select the best-looking player at the 1994 World Cup in USA?

Madonna. She chose Italian star Roberto Baggio

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Two finals** 1986 and '98 ●**Best performance** Second round in 1986 ●**Road to** [illegible] Finished top of group 1 in the [illegible] action



Childhood has its own world of wonders.
Days of pure joy ringing with echoing laughter.
The warmth of pure love and a golden wealth
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Morientes

Ranked second in the world by FIFA and rarely beaten since the USA 94 flop, Spain hope to inscribe a new name on the trophy since 1978

They'll be most attractive



COACHSPEAK **I am not worried about players' form just want them in one piece, come June**

COACH

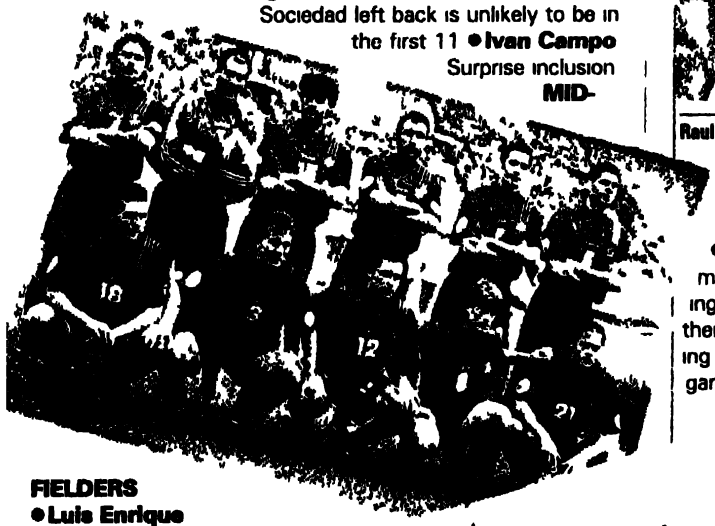
Javier Clemente Impressive record Has transformed Spain from a cavalier combination that buckled under pressure into a complete team

THE PLAYERS

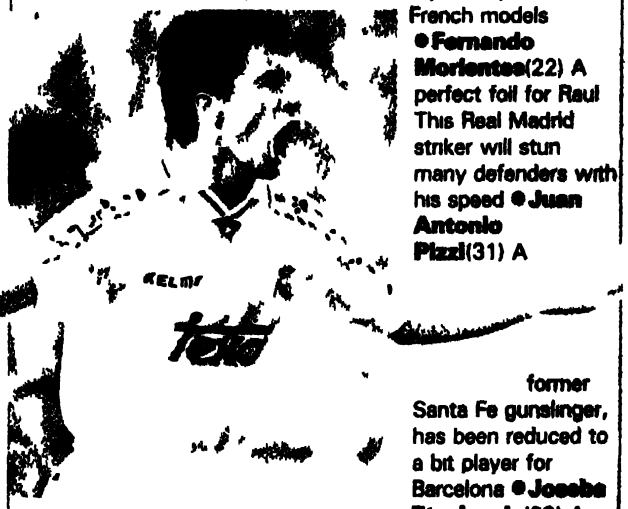
GOALKEEPERS • **Andoni Zubizarreta**(age 36) Fourth consecutive Cup appearance • **Santiago Canizares**(28) A second choice even for his club Real Madrid • **Jose Molina**(27) Has to wait for Zubi s retirement

DEFENDERS • **Fernando Hierro**(31) The best in Spanish defence the no nonsense traditional defender has his job cut out for France • **Albert Ferrar**(27) A tough man marker • **Sergi Barjuan**(26) Will be hard put to repeat his USA 94 performance • **Miguel Nadal**(31) Yet to repeat his club performance in internationals • **Abelardo Fernandez**(28) His left knee is still to heal • **Carlos Aguilera**(29) Should find a place when Spain plays 3 3 3 1 • **Rafael Alkorta**(30) Fastest Spanish centre back • **Agustin Aranzabal**(26) This Real Sociedad left back is unlikely to be in the first 11 • **Ivan Campo** Surprise inclusion

MID-FIELDERS • **Luis Enrique Martinez**(29) New job for the Barcelona striker • **Guillermo Amor**(31) A tidy player with more than 500 club caps • **Julen Guerrero**(24) Spanish fans are worried over their former golden boy s off form • **Albert Celades** The Barcelona medio is no match for the injured Josep Guardiola



FORWARDS • **Alfonso Perez Munoz**(26) Wizard of the dribble • **Francisco Kiko Narvaez**(27) Andalusian of the Year creates chances for others • **Raul Gonzalez**(20) Spanish hopes are pinned on this prodigy A prolific scorer and a cool head on the pitch he s best kept away from French models • **Fernando Morientes**(22) A perfect foil for Raul This Real Madrid striker will stun many defenders with his speed • **Juan Antonio Pizzi**(31) A former Santa Fe gunslinger, has been reduced to a bit player for Barcelona • **Josebe Etxeberria**(20) A fighter on the pitch



Raul Spaniards are banking on his form

SWOT ANALYSIS

• **Strength** Ranked second in the world by Fifa, Spain is more than a collection of good players, a team In a qualifying match against the Czechs when nothing went right for them they still managed a victory (1-0), showing their staying power in difficult situations • **Weakness** The absence of gamemaker Guardiola and Zubizarreta's injury.

• **Opportunity** Nigeria's lack of cohesion and an ageing Bulgarian side will help Clemente's young lot • **Threat** In this Group of Death the Spaniards can't take any match lightly Nor can Clemente opt for 4 2 3 1 with his current midfield

Side show

Which card is a player shown when he spits on his opponent or any other person?

The Red card

WORLD CUP RECORD

• **Nine finals** 1934, '50 '62, '66, '78, '82, 86 90 94 • **Best performance** Semi-finalist in 1950 (fourth) • **Road to France** Topped group 6 in the Europe zone without losing a single match

bulgaria

Bulgaria is heavily relying on experience and wise old heads, a strategy that may not always be effective against teams comprising aggressive young talents

Hopes slim, stars past their prime

COACH



Hristo Bonev Sticking with his old stars but not out of choice Pessimistic about his team s chances

COACHSPEAK **« It is not realistic to talk about finishing fourth again »**

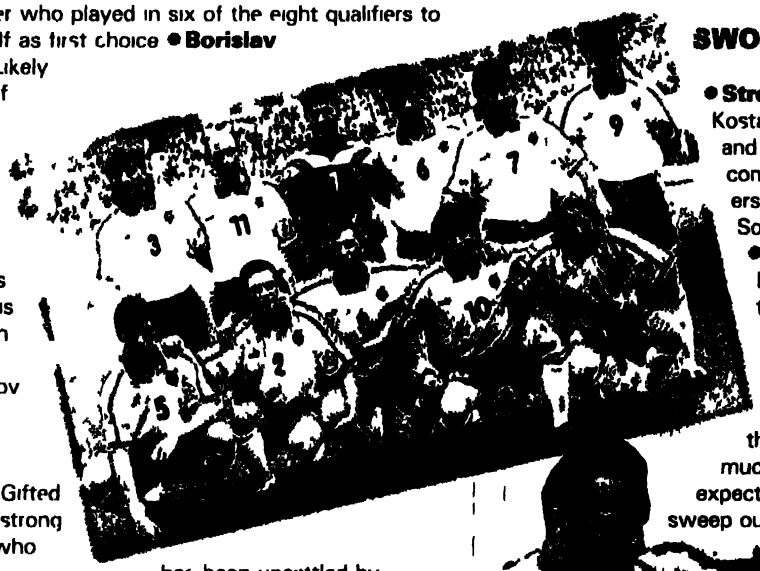
THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **Zdravko Zdravkov**(age 27) A reliable keeper who played in six of the eight qualifiers to establish himself as first choice ● **Borislav Mihailov**(36) Likely to remain out of play due to a string of recent injuries ● **Radostin Stanev**(22) Giant who lacks experience but is likely to stand in as reserve goal keeper if Mihailov is unfit

DEFENDERS ● **Radostin Kishishev**(23) Gifted youngster with strong technical skills who has been unsettled by controversy ● **Trifon Ivanov**(32) His invaluable experience will be an asset ● **Gosho Ginchev**(29) Shows good fighting spirit and man marks well ● **Adalbert Zafirov**(29) Physically imposing and a scare on the field ● **Milen Petkov**(24) Fast dynamic left back ● **Ivilo Petkov**(22) A dangerous left footer who has been most aggressive

MIDFIELDERS ● **Zlatko Yankov**(31) Defensive midfielder who can drop into the back line ● **Ivailo Yordanov**(30) Experienced with grit has fought back from multiple sclerosis ● **Yordan Lechkov**(30) Balding mid field schemer with excellent passing ability ● **Krassimir Balakov**(32) Has great ball control ● **Anatoli Nankov**(28) Hardworking midfielder who likes to go forward ● **Daniel Borimirov**(28) Fast aggressive player with an eye for goals ● **Ilian Iliev**(29) Energetic player keeps defenders on their toes

FORWARDS ● **Hristo Stoichkov**(32) A big match player has a lethal left foot shot foul tempered and aggressive ● **Emil Kostadinov**(30) A wily forward who has scored 25 times for the national side ● **Georgi Donkov**(27) Plays for Vfl Bokhum in Germany ● **Lyuboslav Penev**(31) Missed last Cup because of a malignant tumour strong in air ● **Marian Hristov**(24) Is the future of the national side ● **Svetoslav Todorov**(19) His debut was in a friendly against Argentina ● **Georgi Bachev**(23) Left winger with a powerful shot

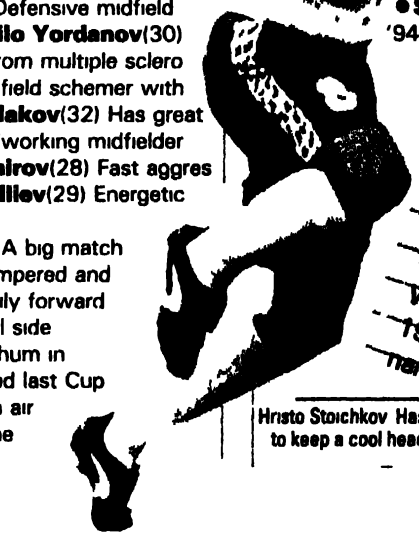


SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** Players like Stoichkov, Ivanov Kostadinov and Lechkov are still classy and experience counts in high pressure competition The return of the key players to the country's top club CSKA Sofia has helped Bonev build the side ● **Weakness** Most of the stars of this Dad's Army have struggled to hold their places in the club side which in turn can affect the match readiness of the team ● **Opportunity** This is the last chance of the old guard to prove their worth This will make the team much more determined than Bonev expects ● **Threat** When Bonev tried to sweep out the ageing stars of USA 94 Stoichkov objected to the changes and refused to appear in the country's first qualifiers Such flare ups are not unexpected

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Seven finals** 1962, '66, '70, '74, '86, '90, '94 ● **Best performance** Finished fourth in 1998 ● **Road to France** Topped Group 8 of the European section



Hristo Stoichkov Has to keep a cool head

Side show

This World Cup trophy will last till 2038, and will be replaced in 2042. Why?

When the FIFA Cup was made in 1974, it had room for inscribing names of only 17 nations

Armed with the Olympic gold, the 'Super Eagles' are out to fulfil the prophecy that an African nation could win the World Cup by the end of this century

Dark Continent's great white hope



COACHSPEAK **« We have an excellent squad of players, now I must make an excellent team »**

COACH

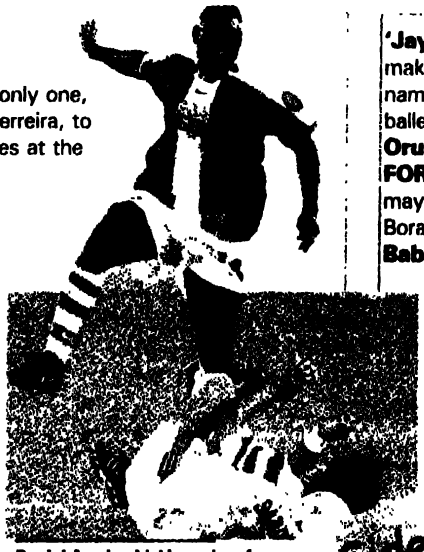
● **Bora Milutionovic** The only one, apart from Carlos Alberto Perreira, to coach four different countries at the World Cup finals

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS
● **Abiodun Baruwa**(age 23) Unsteady but still the first choice ● **William Okpara**(29) Now giving Baruwa a run for the number one spot ● **Peter Rufai**(34) Was under the bar in USA 94 ● **Ike Shorunmu**(30) Plays for FC Zurich

DEFENDERS ● **Celestine Babayaro**(19) A broken leg while playing for Chelsea may cost him a place in the final 11 ● **Austin Eguavoen**(32) Right-back with awesome physical presence ● **Uche Okafor**(30) Struggling to find a place in the strating line-up ● **Uche Okechukwu**(30) The pivot who was the stand-in captain ● **Godwin Okpara**(25) Can also play as a medio ● **Patrick Paschar**(21) Was a member of the under-23 Olypmic squad, but didn't play ● **Taribo West**(24) Spectacular player, had a good season with Inter Milan

MIDFIELDERS
● **Mutiu Adepoju**(27) Currently doing duty for Real Sociedad in Spain ● **Finidi George**(28) A potential match winner and an explosive winger ● **Garba Lawal**(24) Was a member of the Dutch Amstel cupwinner last year with Roda JC Kerkrade ● **Stephen Mussa**(23) A surprise selection by Bora ● **Augustine**



Daniel Amokachi: Live-wire of the Nigeria attack

'JayJay' Okocha(24) Charmingly creative, a brilliant playmaker, predicted by Michel Platini to be a player of the tournament ● **Sunday Oliseh**(23) One of Africa's finest footballers currently doing duty for Ajax Amsterdam ● **Wilson Oruma**(21) Had a fine season with the French club Lens **FORWARDS** ● **Jonathan Akpoborie**(29) A goal-drought may jeopardise his chances ● **Emmanuel Amunike**(27) Bora hopes he will be fit in time to score goals ● **Tijani Babangida**(24) Busy player with a terrific long ranger ● **Victor Ikpeba**(25) The African Footballer of the Year is a recent entry to the Super Eagles squad ● **Nwankwo Kanu**(21) Has recovered from a heart surgery, captained the Olympic gold medalist team at Atlanta ● **Daniel Amokachi**(24): Powerful striker and a potential star of this World Cup ● **Rashidi Yekini**(34): The giant 'Kaduna Bull' has great dribbling skills and is getting goals, justifying his recall by Bora

Side show

Why are footballers considered the best sex symbols?

"Soccer players are exposed on the field. They have a greater opportunity to demonstrate sex appeal". Maria Messing, president, Women's World Cup

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** The squad boasts of four African Footballer of the Year award winners including the current holder, Victor Ikpeba. They have the mind of Bora Milutinovic to spearhead the attack ● **Weakness** They try to do too much too soon leading to impatience, which the calculating European sides often take advantage of ● **Opportunity** They have the Bulgarians in their group whom they thrashed 3-0 in th



involve players

WORLD CUP RECORD

Two finals 1994, '98
Best performance qualified for econd round in 1994
to France Topped Group ction

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Known for their defensive tactics, the 'Red Devils' have been concentrating on attack; the team's combined experience should be enough to make its rivals work extra hard

Tough job, because stars are old

COACH



Georges Leekens Entrusted a year ago to ensure Belgium's entry into the finals, his sole aim now is to finish in the 'top two of the group'

COACHSPEAK **«« Emphasising on attack can expose the side's defence. If you pull up the bedsheets, you expose your feet »»**

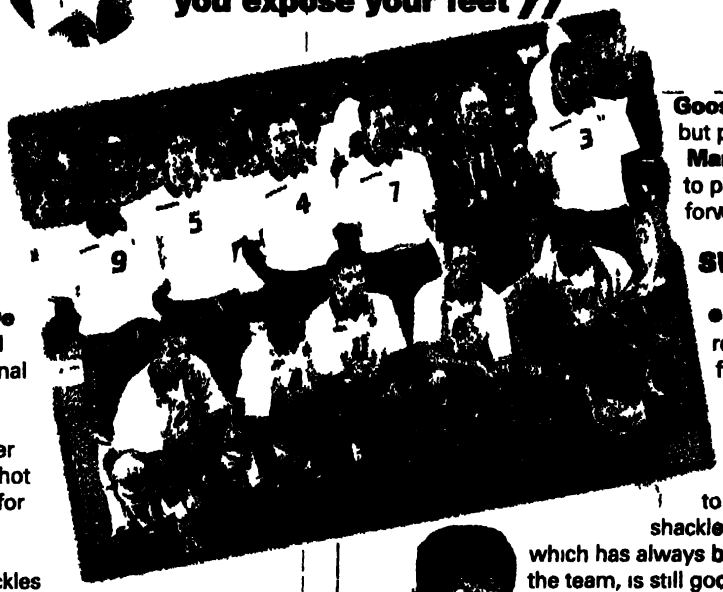
THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **Filip De Wilde**(33) Confident custodian with acidic tongue ● **Dany Verlinden**(34) His electric reflexes take care of height disadvantage ● **Phillipe Van De Walle**(36) Loves to move ahead with the ball and score from penalties

DEFENDERS ● **Eric Van Meir**(30) Strong central defender with a powerful long distance shot ● **Mike Verstraeten**(30) Plays for Germinal Ekeren ● **Bertrand Crasson**(26) The Napoli central defender is given to reckless tackles ● **Vital Borkelmans**(35) An energy storehouse with a never say-die attitude ● **Glen De Boeck**(26) Skill, positional sense and speed make him an all round player ● **Eric Deflandre**(24) Attacking right back ● **Philippe Clement**(24) Utility player who is moving to Coventry City next season ● **Gordan Vidovic**(29) Dynamic stopper and a good marker

MIDFIELDERS ● **Franky van der Elst**(37) Has slowed with age but still a driving force ● **Danny Boffin**(32) A good dribbler, nicknamed 'Speedy' ● **Nico Van Kerckhoven**(27) Left winger who often doubles as a left back ● **Lorenzo Staelens**(34) Indispensible even at his age, has a spectacular shot ● **Enzo Scifo**(32) The country's best bet, returned to the side after doing a Melba ● **Gert Claessens**(26) Fast mover and good dribbler but erratic **Gert Verheyen**(27) Hard worker but lacks skill

FORWARDS ● **Luc Nilis**(31) Goals from impossible angles and set pieces make him a deadly striker ● **Luis Oliviera**(29) Horses and goals are his passion ● **Lokonda 'Emile' Mpenza**(19) Explosive striker, likely to be used as a substitute ● **Michael Goossens**(24) Injury- prone but potential match-winner **Mark Wilmots** (29) Loves to play as an withdrawn forward





SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** Scifo's return and Oliviera's form have encouraged Leekens. The coach's attacking one-touch football has helped the team to break its defensive shackles but the defence, which has always been the mainstay of the team, is still good ● **Weakness** Most of the stars are on the wrong side of 30 Many say the midday matches in France are likely to affect their ageing legs, as in the qualifiers

● **Opportunity** Belgium have reached the second round in all the last four finals. With Mexico not showing enough promise and South Korea yet to be rated as a good team, history is likely to be repeated

● **Threat** Belgium's first match is against Holland, who mauled them in the qualifiers. A defeat is likely to prove disastrous The squad has been quarreling with the country's soccer union over bonus payments for warm-up and the final games

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Top finals** 1930, '34, '38, '54, '70, '82, '86, '90, '94, '98 ● **Best performance** Semifinalists, fourth place, 1986 ● **Road to France** Placed second behind Netherlands in Group 7 of the European contest

Side show

Said a coach about a player, "If he was a girl, I would marry him." Who are this odd couple?

Spanish coach Xavier Clemente and his midfielder Luis Enrique

The old war horse, Enzo Scifo, is the team's best bet

holland

For the Dutch, France 98 is another opportunity to shake off the title they have of 'the best country never to have won the World

Tackling the enemy within



COACHSPEAK **« We are sitting in a vacuum after Rijkaard, Koeman, Van Basten, Wouters and Gullit**



Clarence Seedorf

COACH

●**Guus Hiddink** Doesn t find easy his primary task of keeping a knife at the back of the Orange Machine

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Edwin van der Saar**(age 27) Has the height to handle crosses and can withstand pressure ●**Ed de Goey**(31) A bit sluggish in coming off the goal line ●**Ruud Heap**(32) His performance for Barcelona should worry van der Sar

DEFENDERS ●**Michael Reiziger**(24)The country s best full-back ●**Ferdi Vierklau**(24) Surinamese likely to be a substitute for Reiziger ●**Frank de Boer**(28) The Dutch captain is a free-kick specialist ●**Japp Stam**(25) World's most expensive defender is also the best in the business ●**Arthur Numan**(28) A fast overlapper but is often caught napping ●**Winston Bogrado**(27) Likely to spend more time on the bench

MIDFIELDERS ●**Clarence Seedorf**(22) Hiddink hopes his fine form last season will continue ●**Aron Winter**(31) His skill and experience will be in great demand ●**Ronald de Boer**(28) Frank's twin is a sure starter ●**Philip Cocu**(27) As the other medios join the attack, he waits for the counter-attacker ●**Wim Jonk**(31) Creative playmaker, his injury in a Dutch Amstel cup match against FC Twente has fans worried ●**Edgar Davids**(25) Injury and differences with Hiddink are unlikely to bog down this talented Dutch ●**Giovanni van Bronckhorst**(23) A left flank player with Feyenoord

FORWARDS ●**Pierre van Hooijdonk**(28) His lethal free kicks notwithstanding he is unlikely to start in the first 11 ●**Patrick Kluivert**(21) Centre forward with immense potential but rape and drunken driving charges dog his career ●**Marc Overmars**(25) Left winger who can shoot with both feet ●**Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink** This Leeds United forward is a surprise inclusion ●**Dennis Bergkamp**(29) At his current form he can give Ronaldo a run for his money Holland s best bet ●**Boudewijn Zenden**(21) Left wing player with PSV Eindhoven

SWOT ANALYSIS



●**Strength** Tremendously talented, almost all the Dutch stars were in deadly form last season for their respective clubs In every department of the game they have at least two stalwarts But the trump card is Dennis Bergkamp, if he can reproduce his Arsenal magic the Dutch fans can paint the world orange ●**Weakness** The egos of individual players who tend to use the finals to showcase their own talents rather than play for the team as a whole The Dutch also have the habit of kicking their own feet as they did in Euro 96 or as Ruud Gullit did by marching out of the squad weeks before the start of USA94 Lacks do or die attitude what former star Johann Cruyff describes as being "short on mental toughness" ●**Opportunity** Holland have a relatively easy group They can use the matches to sort out their problems and develop a winning combination ●**Threat** The racial tension in the team If that surfaces then players like Seedorf will be affected

Side show

What does Ibrahim Ba, the dyed-blond-haired player, dropped from the French side, have in common with supermodel Kate Moss? Both have signed up with the

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Seven finals** 1934, '38, '74, '78, '90, '94, '98 ●**Best performance** Runners up 1974 and 1978 ●**Road to France** Qualified as the top team from group 7 of European zone

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germany

The Germans still can't forget the tough time they had in their qualifying group — a narrow win against the Albanians finally saw them through

Track record the biggest bulwark



German hopes lie on Klinsmann

COACH

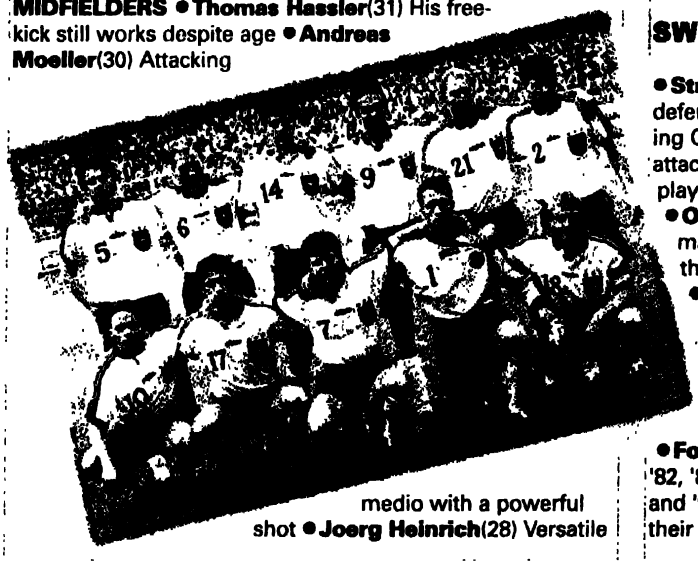


Berti Vogts Likely to play 1-2-5-2 format

COACHSPEAK **«« I don't think we are the European favourites. I would say we are level with Italy, England and France »»**

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS • **Andreas Koepke**(age 36) The 1993 Footballer of the Year is Germany's first choice for the last line of defence • **Oliver Kahn**(28) Waiting for Koepke's retirement • **Jens Lehmann**(28) The third-choice keeper
DEFENDERS • **Lothar Matthaeus**(37) Returns to squad to replace injured Matthias Sammer • **Thomas Helmer**(33) Good man-marker and libero • **Markus Babbel**(32) Possibly the fairest defender in Germany • **Jurgen Kohler**(32) German Footballer of the Year 1997 • **Stefan Reuter**(31) Can play as a medio, full-back, sweeper and stopper but injuries worry him • **Olaf Thon**(32) A libero fighting a damaged knee ligament • **Christian Woerns**(25) Good on the overlap, he is moving to Paris St Germain next season
MIDFIELDERS • **Thomas Hassler**(31) His free-kick still works despite age • **Andreas Moeller**(30) Attacking



medio with a powerful shot • **Joerg Heinrich**(28) Versatile player for Bourussia Dortmund • **Stefan Freund**(29) Another player from Borussia Dortmund • **Christain Ziege**(26) A speedy left-back, weak in defending • **Michael Tarnat**(28) A defensive medio who had a successful club season
FORWARDS • **Jurgen Klinsmann**(33) Captain who is struggling with his form • **Oliver Bierhoff**(29) If Germany does well, he will have a hand in it • **Ulf Kristen**(32) Former East German who has been a prolific scorer in Bundesliga • **Olaf Marschall**(32) The former East German has scored 13 goals this season for Kaiserslautrn

SWOT ANALYSIS

• **Strength** Koepke under the bar, Helmer and Kohler in defence and Bierhoff upfront form the backbone of this ageing German side. The midfield with Ziege and Moeller looks attacking enough • **Weakness** The number of semi-injured players in the side, Klinsmann's form and Matthaeus's age • **Opportunity** A relatively safe group is likely to help them make a good start. And their past records indicate, once the German machine starts moving, it's difficult stopping it • **Threat** Despite winning Euro 96, the Germnas are showing signs of cracking under pressure. And Vogts still hasn't hit upon the winning combination

WORLD CUP RECORD

• **Fourteen finals** 1930, '38, '54, '58, '62, '66, '70, '74, '78, '82, '86, '90, '94, '98 • **Best performance** Winners in '54, '74 and '90, runners-up in '66, '82, '86 • **Road to France** Topped their group in the European section



Civil war may have affected Yugoslavia politically and socially, but their footballers' performance is still intact, as might be proved from their performance during the next few weeks

Opportunity for individual brilliance

COACH



Slobodan Santrac Reclusive and soft spoken he remains Yugoslavia's top marksman

COACHSPEAK **«« Our best players are in foreign league and are trained by club coaches. So my team plays a system which has been forced on it »»**

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **Ivica Kralj**(age 25) Solid and reliable he is the first choice custodian ● **Aleksandar Kocic**(29) A proven penalty saver he lost his place to Kralz

DEFENDERS ● **Zoran Mirkovic**(26) Good in overlaps and crosses to join Italy's Juventus soon ● **Risto Vidakovic**(29) Can play both as a libero and a medio ● **Albert Nadj**(23) Central defender can double as a left back ● **Sinisa Mihajlovic**(29) The Bomber from Borovo with a lethal free kick ● **Miroslav Djukic**(32) Plays for Valencia good reader of the game ● **Goran Djorovic**(26) A swift attacking left back ● **Branko Bronvic**(30) Workhorse on the right wing

MIDFIELDERS ● **Slavisa Jokanovic**(29) A long ranger good in the air ● **Vladimir Jugovic**(28) Had a successful season with Lazio ● **Dragan Stojkovic**(33) A set piece maestro and an excellent passer ● **Zeljko Petrovic**(32) A likely bench warmer ● **Ljubinko Drulovic**(29) Can play either flank

FORWARDS ● **Dejan Savicevic**(31) A member of the Italia 90 squad and dead



Savicevic can be the anchor of Yugoslav attacks

ly striker ● **Predrag Mijatovic**(29) Runner-up to Ronaldo as the European Footballer of the Year 1997 ● **Savo Milosevic**(24) Erratic at times he has a deadly left foot ● **Darko Kovacevic**(24) Plays for Real Socieded in Spain ● **Dejan Stankovic**(19) Exciting new player who scored twice against South Korea in April ● **Anto Drobnjak** (29) Plays for Lens, knows the French conditions

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** A forward line the envy of the world with one potential France 98 star in Mijatovic spearheading a spirited attack, and a strong mid-field They also show an uncharacteristic thrust to win after the international sanctions were lifted ● **Weakness** Not enough practice as a team. The side doesn't have good defenders to stop strikers with class Also, the goalkeeper is suspect under pressure ● **Opportunity** Santrac has a chance to experiment with his frontline against Iran and the US ● **Threat** They meet Germany whom they have [illegible] — in [illegible] Stan[illegible]

WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Eight finals** 1930, '50, '54, [illegible], '82, '90 ● **Best performance** Semifinal[illegible] and '62 ● **Road to France** Second in Gro[illegible] European section, beat Hungary in play-[illegible]

Side show

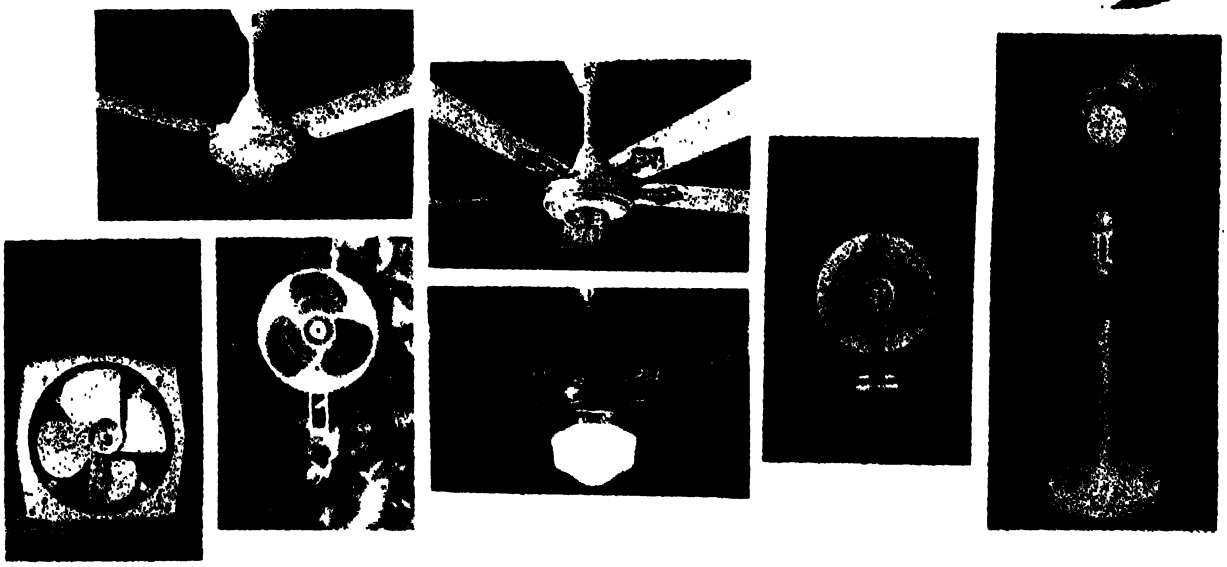
Which goalkeeper wears, quite appropriately, the image of a snarling bulldog on his club jersey?

Jose Luis Chilavert of Paraguay



Date: 10.6.98-13.7.98

WORLD CUP FOOTBALL



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SUN 12 JULY 0.30am

WED 8 JULY QF1 vs QF3 0.30am

THURS 9 JULY QF2 vs QF4 0.30am

QUARTER **QUARTER**

QF1 SAT 4 JULY 0.30am **QF2 FRI 3 JULY** 8pm

QF3 SAT 4 JULY 8pm **QF4 SUN 5 JULY** 0.30am

LAST **LAST**

SUN 28 JUNE A1 vs B2 0.30am
MON 29 JUNE D1 vs C2 0.30am
SAT 27 JUNE B1 vs A2 8pm
SUN 28 JUNE C1 vs D2 8pm

TUE 30 JUNE E1 vs F2 0.30am
WED 1 JULY H1 vs G2 0.30am
MON 29 JUNE F1 vs E2 8pm
TUE 30 JUNE G1 vs H2 8pm

GROUP C **GROUP D**

Saudi Arabia vs Denmark 8pm
Morocco vs South Africa 0.30am
South Africa vs Denmark 5pm
Morocco vs Saudi Arabia 0.30am
Denmark vs Morocco 7.30pm
S. Africa vs Saudi Arabia 7.30pm

Paraguay vs Bulgaria 8pm
Spain vs Nigeria 8pm
Nigeria vs Bulgaria 5pm
Spain vs Paraguay 0.30am
Spain vs Bulgaria 0.30am
Nigeria vs Paraguay 0.30am

GROUP G **GROUP H**

England vs Tunisia 8pm
Romania vs Colombia 8pm
Colombia vs Tunisia 5pm
Romania vs England 0.30am
Romania vs Tunisia 0.30am
Colombia vs England 0.30am

Argentina vs Japan 8pm
Jamaica vs Croatia 0.30am
Japan vs Croatia 5pm
Argentina vs Jamaica 0.30am
Argentina vs Croatia 7.30pm
Japan vs Jamaica 7.30pm

GROUP A

THURS 11 JUNE ★
TUES 16 JUNE
WED 17 JUNE
WED 24 JUNE ★

GROUP B

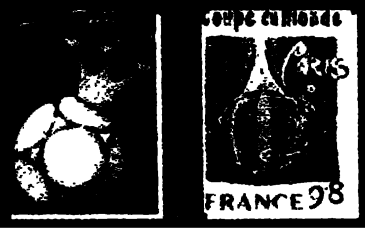
WED 17 JUNE
THURS 18 JUNE
TUES 23 JUNE ★

GROUP E

SAT 13 JUNE
SUN 14 JUNE ★
SAT 20 JUNE
SUN 21 JUNE
THURS 25 JUNE ★

GROUP F

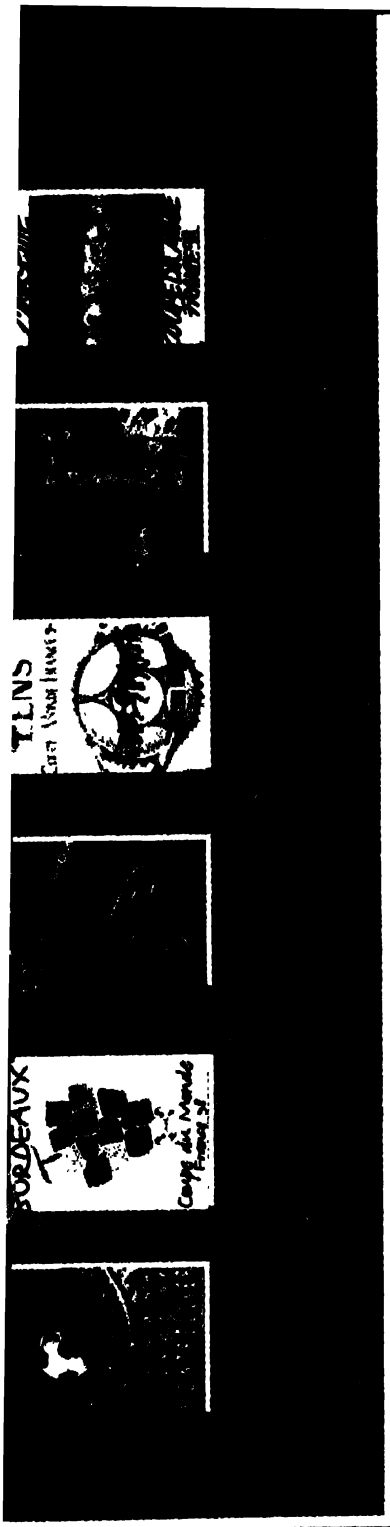
TUES 16 JUNE
SUN 21 JUNE ★
MON 22 JUNE ★
FRI 26 JUNE



PARIS
NANTES
ST DENIS
LENS
BORDEAUX
LYON
ST ETTIENE
TOULOUSE
MONTPELLIER
MARSEILLE

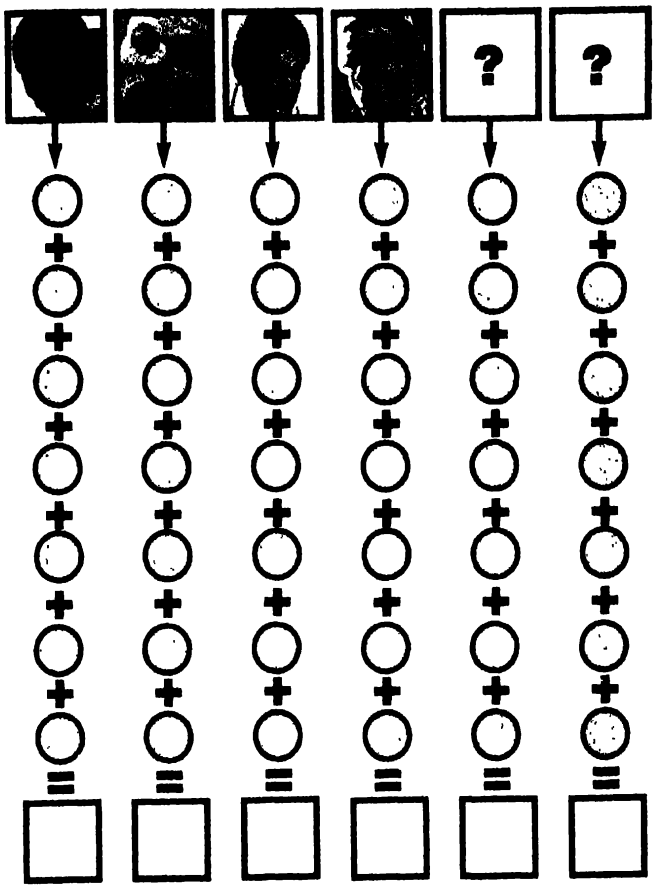






Who will wear the golden boot at the end of the tourney? There are a few known favourites and a few unknowns. Guess who?

THE STAR SCORERS



8 reasons to remember France 98

1 Best return to form _____

2 Worst send-off _____

3 Most lethal shot _____

4 Most unlikely red card _____

5 Biggest letdown _____

6 Most colourful personality _____

7 New sex symbol _____

8 Worst fans _____

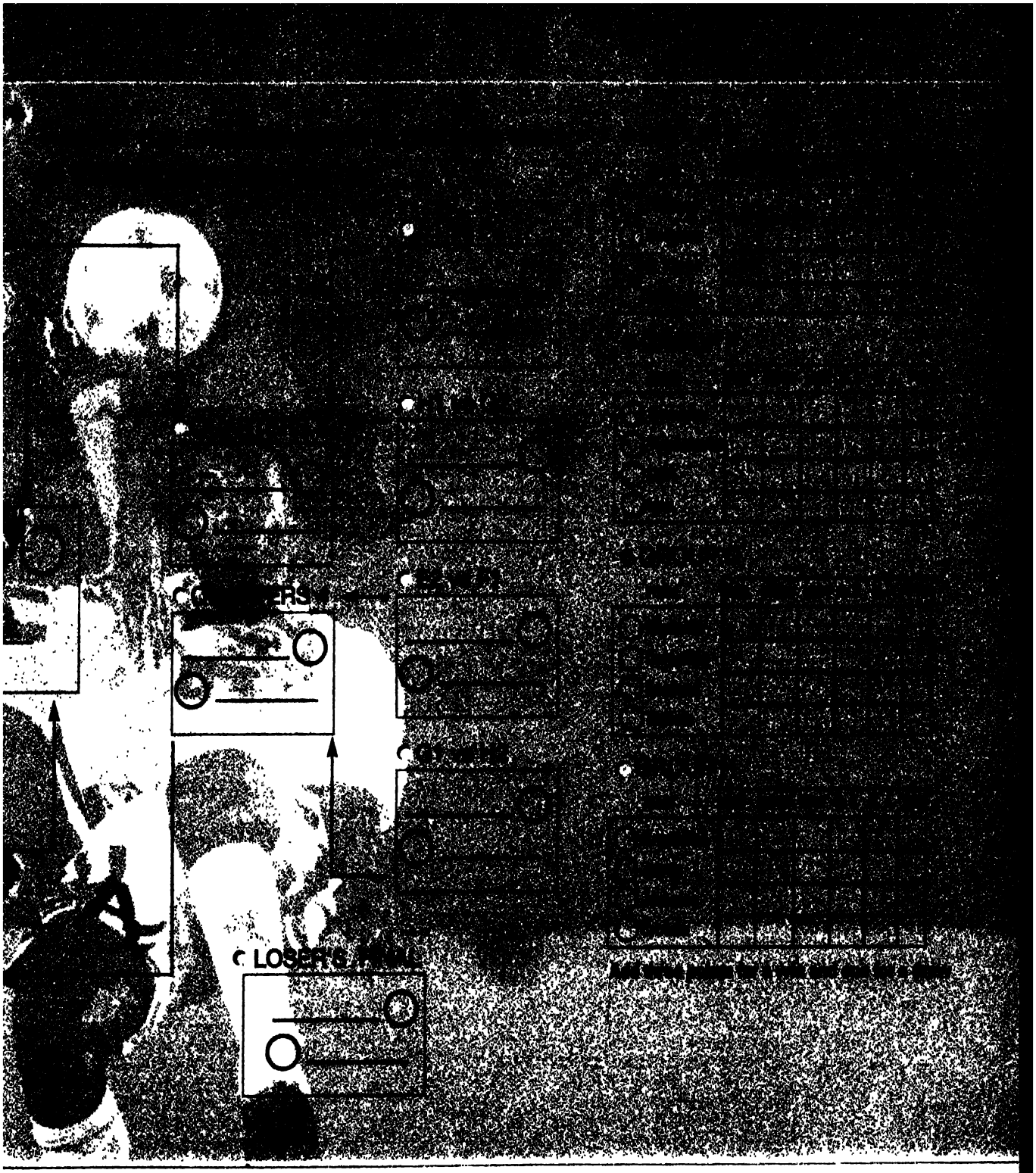
follow your spirit

CONCHESSA

XXX

T
GROUP A
GROUP B
GROUP C
GROUP D
Spain
Nigeria
Paraguay
Bulgaria
Add three points for a win and one for a draw
ARTERS 1
ARTERS 2

Radic



follow your spirit

CONVERSE

xxx

england

1966 is a distant memory. England are desperate this time to better their Cup record and, after a long time, the domestic media is not belligerent with the team

Struggling to keep stiff upper lip

COACH



COACHSPEAK **Experience is an important aspect. We lack it at World Cup level**

●**Glenn Hoddle** Has faced flak for bringing in faith healers to help his team But England have suffered just two defeats in the 14 matches since he took over

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**David Seaman**(age 34) Hoddle's first choice and extremely reliable ●**Tim Flowers**(31) His record transfer money ($4 million) may not ensure him a place on the field ●**Nigel Martyn**(31) Seems in fine form, returned to the squad this year after a gap of four years **DEFENDERS** ●**Gary Neville**(23) Excellent tackler with pace and good distribu tion ●**Philip Neville**(21) Looks set for a long international career like his brother Gary ●**Gareth Southgate**(27) Central defender, unpopular in England for his fail ure to score against Germany in the last Cup ●**Martin Keown**(31) Tough man marker, still nursing broken shoulder ●**Tony Adams**(31) 'Mr Arsenal' is a real threat in set piece situations ●**Andy Hinchcliffe**(29) Watch out for his left footed free kicks ●**Sol Campbell**(23) A likely partner for Adams in the starting line-up ●**Graeme Le Saux**(29) Hardworking wing back for Chelsea **MIDFIELDERS** ●**Paul Ince**(30) Hates to be disciplined, hard working commander ●**Nicky Butt**(23) Hard tackler known for his bursting runs ●**Paul Gascoigne**(31) England's last link with the team that reached the semi finals in Italy eight years ago, injury prone, form in doubt ●**David Beckham**(23) Outstanding natural talent, still to be tapped ●**Robert Lee**(31) Plays for Newcastle United as an attacking medio ●**David Batty**(29) His never say die attitude forced Hoddle to recognise his potential ●**Paul Merson**(30) Has scored great goals ●**Steve MacManaman**(26) Good ball control and ability to create spaces but lacks killer instinct **FORWARDS** ●**Alan Shearer**(27) The English captain is the country's biggest hope ●**Teddy Sheringham**(32) Lacks speed but a good passer ●**Paul Scholes**(23) A dangerous player during a goal mouth melee ●**Ian Wright**(34) Popular player with a foul temper, nursing an injury ●**Andy Cole**(26) Likely to be a reserve ●**Michael Owen**(18) Hoddle s 'secret weapon , England's youngest ever international player is described as a natural goal scor er in the Jimmy Greaves mould



SWOT ANALYSIS

●**Strength** Under Hoddle, England have changed their older tac tics of hit and run which paid rich dividends during the qualifiers The return to form of Alan Shearer has added to the country's optimism With Seaman and the two centre backs performing well, the team has a real chance of making it to the quarter-finals ●**Weakness** Hoddle is still in search of a team The fitness factor will come into play from the second round A midfield has too many players in the same mould which may upset Hoddle's plans ●**Opportunity** After a long time, both the media and the fans are singing the same tune. This is going to do wonders for the team's morale. A not-too-difficult group placement even without seeding is a bonus ●**Threat** Cut the hype and what do you have? A team tottering on the brink of confidence

Side show

Which star playing in the current World Cup has posed as Jesus Christ in an ad?

Ronaldo, in a campaign for Italian tyre manufacturer Pirelli



Alan Shearer

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Ten finals** 1950, '54, '58, '62, '66, '70, '82, '86, '90, '98
●**Best performances** Winners in 1966, semi-finalists in 90
●**Road to France** Topped Group 2 in the European section

From the coach to many of the players of Romania, including the famous Hagi, the finals in France represent one last assignment for the national team

If only age could and youth would

COACH

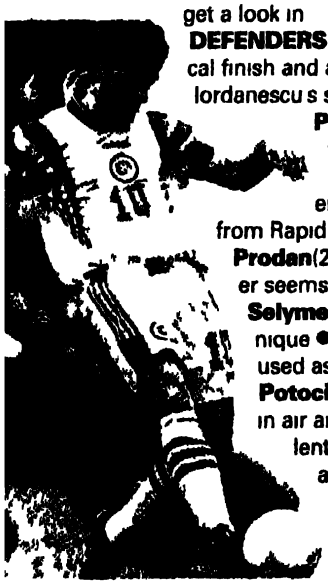


● **Anghel Iordanescu** A firm believer in the old guard

COACHSPEAK **"I would have accepted to go to France with Romania even for nothing. Some things are more important than money"**

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ● **Bogdan Stelea**(age 30) One of the best keepers in Europe has been inconsistent this season ● **Florin Prunea**(29) Second choice custodian plays for Dynamo Bucharest ● **Dumitru Stingaciu**(33) Unlikely to get a look in



DEFENDERS ● **Dan Petrescu**(30) His clinical finish and attacking style fit well with Iordanescu's scheme ● **Gheorghe Popescu**(30) Visited Calcutta with PSV Eindhoven a complete player and a fine sweeper ● **Cristian Dulca**(23) A rookie from Rapid Bucharest ● **Daniel Prodan**(26) The best Romanian defender seems to have lost his form ● **Tibor Selymes**(27) Full of energy, little technique ● **Anton Dobos**(32) Likely to be used as a substitute ● **Dan Potocianu**(24) Good in air and has excellent positional sense

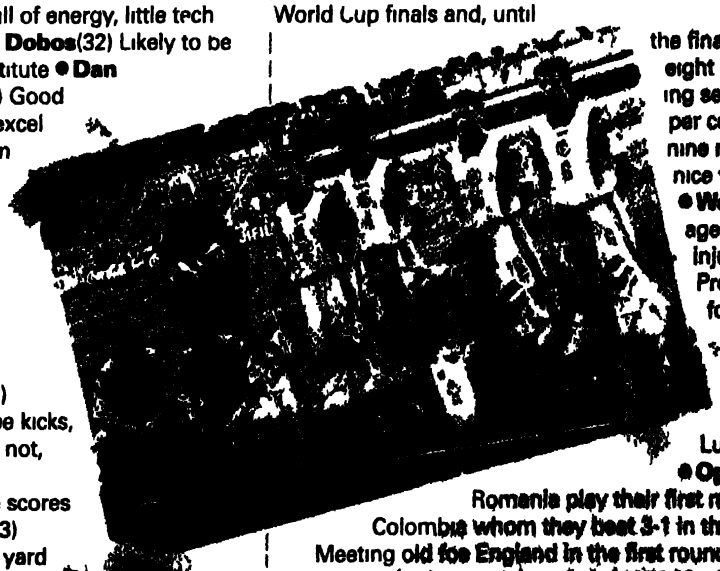
Hagi displays his stuff

MIDFIELDERS ● **Gheorghe Hagi**(33) Superb ball player and a master of free kicks, the Maradona of the Carpathians is not, however, in his prime ● **Dorinel Munteanu**(29) Short and bustling, he scores in tight matches ● **Radu Niculescu**(23) Temperamental his presence in the 6 yard box is dangerous ● **Alin Stoica**(18) Baby of the team, made his international debut this year ● **Ovidiu Stinga**(25) Plays for PSV Eindhoven, headed for the bench in France ● **Iulian Filipescu**(24) Can also play as defender or as a left winger ● **Gabriel Popescu**(24) The Salamanca player is an excellent playmaker ● **Denis Serban**(22) May not be fit in France ● **Ilie Dumitrescu**(29) Another USA 94 star, but too individualistic ● **Lucian Marinescu**(26) A recent entry into the national side, plays for Rapid Bucharest ● **Catalin Munteanu**(19) Prolific scorer in league matches star material ● **Constantin Galca**(26) Espanyol player essays perfect passes

FORWARDS ● **Gheorghe Craioveanu**(30) Skilful but inconsistent ● **Viorel Moldovan**(25) Strong but did not have a good time with Coventry City ● **Adrian Ilie**(24) Watch out for The Cobra in France exciting goalscorer ● **Ion Vladoiu**(29) Temperamental yet never say die player, expelled from the team in USA 94 ● **Marius Lacatus**(34) The star of 1990 is back with a bang this season

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** The stars of 1990 and 94 continue to impress critics Romania was the first Eurpean team to qualify for the World Cup finals and, until the final fixture of their eight group qualifying series, held a 100 per cent record — nine matches played, nice victories ● **Weakness** The age of the stars, injury of Serban, Prodan's dismal form and the absence of Florin Raducioiu and Ioan Lupescu ● **Opportunity** Romania play their first match against Colombia whom they beat 3-1 in the US ● **Threat** Meeting old foe England in the first round will bring back memories of the 1970 Mexico World Cup when England won 1-0 and Romania were eliminated in the first round. Plus, the ever-present danger of a showdown between the warring coach and Federation Roumaine de Football



WORLD CUP RECORD

● **Seven finals** 1930, '34, '38, '70, '90, '94, '98 ● **Best performance** Quarter-finals 94 ● **Road to France** Topped group 8 in European section

Side-show

Who is the first player to have played for two countries in two World Cup finals?

Juliete Monti — for Italy and Argentina

colombia

Colombia are looking on France as a chance to wipe out the bitter memories of starting out as hot favourites in USA 94 but returning home after the first round

Bad luck, it's the group of death





COACHSPEAK **« In the World Cup, it's not a case of who scores the most goals, it's case of who concedes the fewest »**



Faustino Asprilla should do the star turn

COACH

●**Hernan Dario Gomez** Pragmatist who has infused the flamboyant Colombians with a little practical spirit

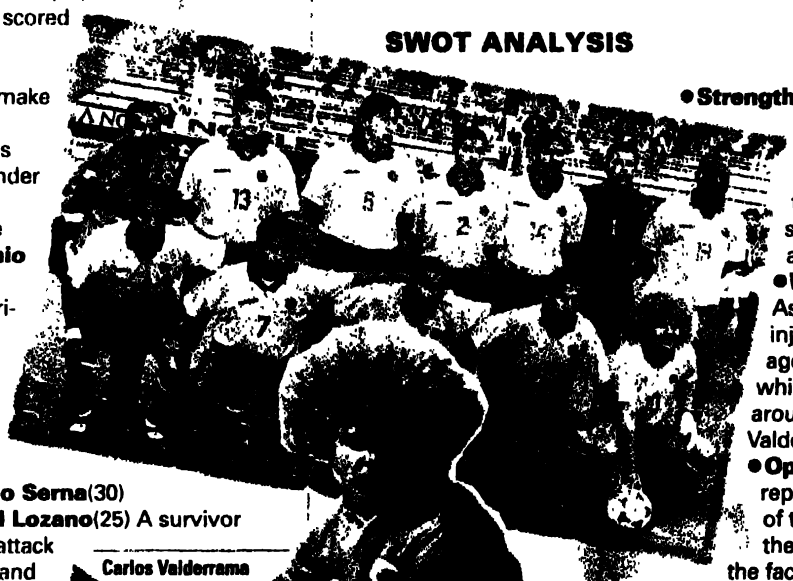
THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Oscar Cordoba**(age 28) The current number one and an excellent performer ●**Farid Mondragon**(25) Generally safe, but committed vital mistakes in qualifiers ●**Miguel Calero**(27) Third-choice keeper who once scored a brilliant goal

DEFENDERS ●**Wilmer Cabrera**(30) Full-back sure to make it to the first 11 ●**Jorge Bermudez**(26) Has emerged as the country's best central defender over the last four years ●**Ivan Ramiro Cordoba**(21) A rookie who is fast improving ●**Antonio Moreno**(27) Capped 12 times, but still shows signs of inexperience ●**Jose Santa**(27) Strong defender, likely to enter the pitch as a substitute ●**Everth Palacious**(29) Plays for Deportivo Cali and a likely reserve

MIDFIELDERS ●**Mauricio Serna**(30) Defensive midfielder ●**Harrold Lozano**(25) A survivor from the 1994 squad, loves to attack ●**Freddy Rincon**(31) A gifted and stylish player whose goal against Germany in Italia 90 was a treat ●**Carlos Valderrama**(36) The extraordinary gamemaker is still playing with the same apparently lackadaisical style and sporting the same unkempt mass of dyed flaming orange hair as eight years ago, living up to the tag 'peroxide Gullit' ●**Wilson Perez**(30) Capped 37 times, plays for Unicosta ●**Jorge Bolano**(21) Rookie midfielder with nine caps ●**Andres Estrada**(30) A ball player but weak in tackling

FORWARDS ● **Faustino Asprilla**(28): Extravagantly g ed, the inimitable match-winner, 'Octopus' is remarkable wi both feet and in air **Victor Aristizabal**(26) Likely to partnei Asprilla in attacks ●**Adolpho Valencia**(31)'The Train' is another 1990 survivor ●**Antoni de Avila**(33) Partners and sometimes substitutes Aspirilla ●**Hamilton Ricard**(23) Young and goal-hungry



Carlos Valderrama

SWOT ANALYSIS

●**Strength** Several gifted players like Valderrama an Rincon in midfield and the 'sil skills' of Asprilla attack

●**Weakness** Asprilla's groin injury and the ave age age of the tea which still revolves around 36-year-old Valderrama

●**Opportunity** A reported weakenin of the influence of the drug lobby anc the fact that, unlike las time, few Colombians expect much from their team in France. This is likely to help players like Aspirilla to play their normal game — draw their opponents in, show them the ball and dart away with it while they are still looking for it ●**Threat** With both England and Romania baying for their blood, Colomb will have to peak in every match to make it to the second round

Side show

Who has David Beckham, England's well-known forward, teamed up with to form a star couple?

Posh Spice Victoria Adams

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Four finals** 1962, '90, '94, '98 ●**Best performance** Second round 1994●**Road to France** Placed third in South American group

Watch out for the fabulous prizes in store
in The Telegraph on June 10th & July 3rd.
Score the winning goal with the

EVEREADY

9

EVEREADY KICKOFF CONTEST



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argentina



Ariel Ortega is the new Argentinian star

Despite Maradona's absence, a famous coach, money-spinning stars and a young squad keep Argentina among football's great powers



Many stars, little team spirit



COACHSPEAK **The aim is to go very far, but I don't want to be labelled as a favourite**

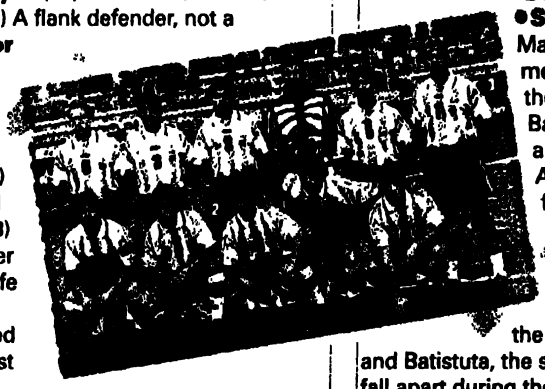
COACH

●**Daniel Passarella** A strict disciplinarian, has banned long hair, earrings and homosexuals from the team

THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS ●**Carlos Roa**(age 28) Manned the goal in the last seven qualifiers ●**Ignacio Gonzales**(26) Plays for Racing Club in Argentina ●**Pablo Cavellero**(23) First choice at 1996 Olympics, reserve at his club to Paraguayan Jose Luis Chilavert

DEFENDERS ●**Roberto Ayala**(24) A libero comfortable in air ●**Fernando Caceres**(28) A flank defender, not a Passarella favourite ●**Nestor Sensini**(32) Used to mark the most dangerous forwards ●**Nelson Vivas**(28) Likely to be a bench-warmer ●**Jose Chamot**(28) Experienced stopper, played in USA94 ●**Hernan Diaz**(33) Foul-tempered flank defender ●**Pablo Paz**(25) This Tenerife stopper is a good marker ●**Javier Zanetti**(24) Showed his shooting power in the last UFEA final ●**Juan Pablo Sorin**(21) Still a learner, plays for River Plate



MIDFIELDERS ●**Diego Simeone**(28) Squad's most-capped player ●**Matias Almeyda**(24) A Passarella favourite, outstanding attacker ●**Leonardo Astrada**(27) Almeyda's substitute as attacking half ●**Gustavo Zapata**(30) Another bench-warmer, plays for San Lorenzo ●**Juan Sebastian Veron**(23) A rising star known for his speed ●**Marcelo Gallardo**(23) Generally used as a substitute ●**Sergio Berti**(28) Loves to surge ahead with the ball ●**Juan Jose Borrelli**(27) Plays for River Plate, the club where Passarella was a successful coach

FORWARDS ● **Ariel Ortega**(23) Filling Maradona's no. 10 shirt, called 'El Burrito' (little donkey) ●**Gabriel Batistuta**(28) 'Batigol' has netted 38 goals in 59 games for Argentina, more than even Maradona ●**Hernan Crespo**(22) Good at club level but yet to perform in international matches ●**Claudio Lopez**(23) Very fast and very erratic ●**Abel Balbo**(32) A veteran who now plays for AC Roma ●**Julio Cruz**(23) Plays for the Dutch club Feyenoord

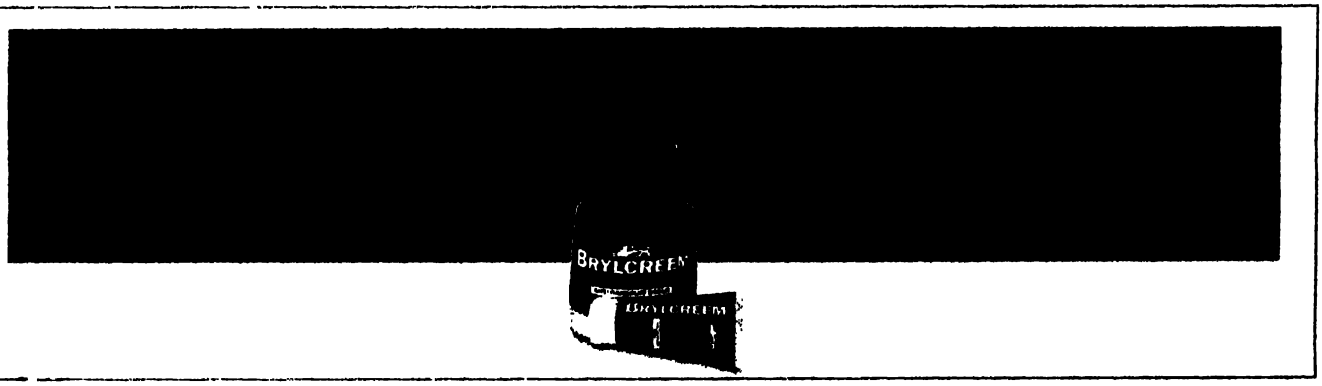
SWOT ANALYSIS

●**Strength** Though not as strong as Maradona's team, it has stars in all departments of the game. The defence is strong, the midfield is outstanding. And an Ortega-Batistuta combination can rip through almost any defence ●**Weakness** The Argentine stars have been prolific scorers for their clubs but have been unable to do the same for their country

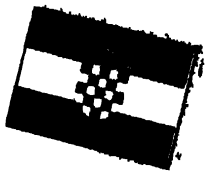
●**Opportunity** Thanks to three debutants, especially Jamaica and Japan, Argentina should have an easy passage to the second round ●**Threat** Coach Passarella and Batistuta, the star of the team, are at loggerheads. If they fall apart during the tournament, Argentina are in for trouble

WORLD CUP RECORD

●**Twelve finals** 1930, '34, '58, '62, '66, '74, '78, '82, '86, '90, '94, '98 ●**Best performance** Winners in 1978 and '86, runners-up in '30 and '90 ●**Road to France** Topped the South American group after a shaky start



Youth, optimism, team spirit and a little bit of luck — the 'Fiery Eleven' have it all; the newly-born nation aims high so that others take note



From Zagreb, with determination

COACH



● **Miroslav Blazevic** Walter Mitty of Croatian football, a motivator and tacti cian who has luck on his side

COACHSPEAK **I'll be coach of this team as long as I live**

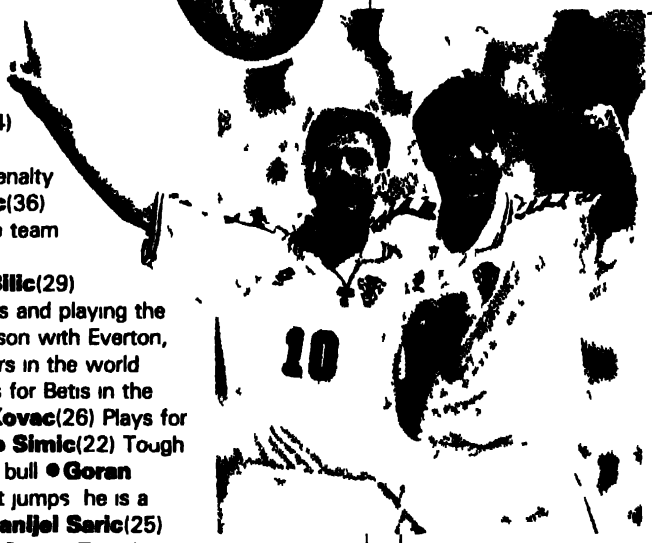
THE PLAYERS

GOALKEEPERS
● **Marijan Mrmic**(age 34) Reliable under the bar ● **Drazen Ladic**(34) A penalty specialist ● **Tonci Gabric**(36) The oldest member of the team and yet the fastest

DEFENDERS ● **Slaven Bilic**(29) Enjoys terrorising forwards and playing the guitar Despite a lean season with Everton, he is one of best defenders in the world ● **Robert Jarni**(29) Plays for Betis in the Spanish League ● **Niko Kovac**(26) Plays for Bayer Leverkusen ● **Dario Simic**(22) Tough customer known as a pit bull ● **Goran Juric**(35) Other than spot jumps he is a near perfect defender ● **Danijel Saric**(25) Newcomer who plays for Croatia Zagreb ● **Igor Tudur**(19) Combines the best of Frank Rijkard and Marcel Desailly, say former Crotian coach Tomislav Ivic

MIDFIELDERS ● **Zvonimir Boban**(29) The chess playing captain has a cool head, is a great motivator and a national hero Gamemaker par excellence ● **Robert Prosinecki**(28) Has lost most of his Red Star Belgrade touch but flashes of brilliance are still visible ● **Mario Stanic**(25) This Parma star's house in Sarajevo was completely destroyed ● **Krunoslav Jurcic**(28) Nicknamed 'Propeller', he is almost impossible to pass ● **Silvio Maric**(22) Blazevic hopes to enthrall the French crowd ● **Aljosa Asanovic**(32) Left-footed star of Napoli scored the first ever international goal for Croatia

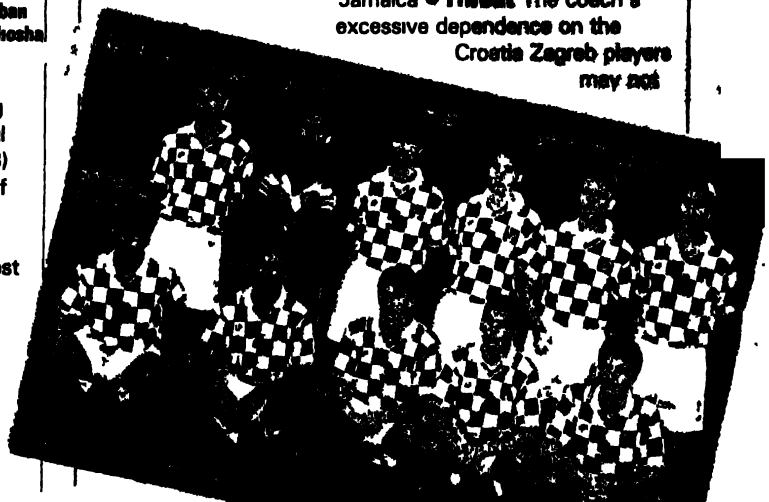
FORWARDS ● **Davor Suker**(29) His scoring abilities from within the 6 yard box is almost unparalleled Scores in almost every match he plays for Real Madrid Watch-out for his lethal left foot ● **Igor Cvitanovic**(27) A star in the domestic league who joined Real Sociedad in Spain ● **Goran Vlaovic**(26) Second highest scorer, yet a benchwarmer **Tomislav Erceg**(26) Plays for the Italian club Encona



Zvonimir Boban (left) with Aleksha Asanovic

SWOT ANALYSIS

● **Strength** Boban's presence is the key to the team's success. Besides the Croat captain, the team has at least three of the most gifted players in Europe. And they can combine well, as demonstrated in the qualifying matches ● **Weakness** The team has a tendency to self-destruct by trying to do too much Blazevic's penchant for astrological predictions often gives rise to false hopes ● **Opportunity** Croatia is much better placed than the other debutants in the group — Japan and Jamaica ● **Threat** The coach's excessive dependence on the Croatia Zagreb players may not help His decision to leave out Igor Stimac of Derby is seen by many as a bad move



WORLD CUP RECORD

● No previous involvement as Croatia was formerly part of Yugoslavia ● **Road to France** Qualified after beating Ukraine in play-offs from Group 1 of European zone

Side show

Welsh player was banned for 18 months from the national squad for 'immoral acts' like drinking alcohol and having relationships with women?

Saudi striker Saweed Al-Owairan



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AFRICA'S PLACE IN THE SUN

The long wait in the dark will end — soon, says JOHN LEY

There were those who mocked Walter Winterbottom, the England manager during the late 1950s and early 1960s, when he claimed that an African country would win the World Cup before the end of the twentieth century. When, some years later, Pele added his belief that an African nation could win the most coveted of soccer prizes, more took note. Now, with the final World Cup tournament of the this century about to kick off in France, that continent has a greater chance than ever before of finishing on top of the world.

Winterbottom travelled Africa extensively in search of new ideas; what he observed generally were impoverished yet highly talented individuals. He sensed that, given intelligent coaching and finance, the Africans could emerge from the third world to threaten soccer's high and mighty.

It was not until 1958 that African nations even took part in the qualifying stages, with Sudan the first to enter. Forty years later the continent has come a long way. But lack of finance still hampers the Africans. On the other hand, powerful governments know that a successful soccer team equates to a happier nation and much has been directed into attracting leading European and South American coaches to the continent. For the first time, no fewer than five African nations will take their place in the final, the same number representing South America. In Nigeria, Cameroon, Tunisia, South Africa and Morocco, Africa has a real opportunity to reach, at the very least, the semi-finals. Nigeria offer Africa's most realistic chance. For the 1996 Olympic champions, success in France will depend much upon the fitness of Nwanko Kanu, now back to his best following heart surgery. Victor Ikpeba, the 1997 African Footballer of the Year – the fourth Nigerian in five years to claim the award — will also pose a threat.

« Africa has a real opportunity to reach, at the very least, the semi-finals »

Africa's finest achievement, so far, was via Cameroon who, on the last occasion Europe staged the finals, got to the quarter-final stage before losing narrowly to England. They beat Argentina, Romania and Colombia to reach the last eight, signalling once and for all that Africa did pose a threat to the dominant nations of the world.

Their ambitions may not be as great this time around; a country where the national team coach's office does not have a light bulb suggests that organisation may not be their strongest point. The World Cup, though, appears to inspire the Indomitable Lions and, like Nigeria, they have a new coach, a move prompted by their elimination in the first round of the recent African Cup of Nations. The unknown quantity - and to many pundits the possible surprise of the tournament — is South Africa, a nation left in international isolation until five years ago. Now Bafana Bafana (translated from Zulu it means, simply, The Boys) take their place at the World Cup finals.

The real potential for surprises lies with the sublime township skill of the likes of Doctor Khumalo, John Moshoeu and Helman Mkhalele. All are potential match winners when they want to be, but seem to pick their performances. African football, though, retains an air of mystery; only recently a riot was sparked at a game between Mozambique's Ferroviario and Dynamos of Zimbabwe in the African Champions League following allegations that the Zimbabweans were using black magic. Fifteen people including a policeman were injured during skirmishes which followed a dispute over the Dynamos' goalkeeper's extra pair of gloves, which Ferroviario fans claimed contained juju — magic charms.



Kanu and his teammates after defeating Argentina in the 1996 Olympics final





During the next 32 days, they will make or mar the fate of 32 nations — and their own — just sitting on the sidelines, writes JOHN LEY

LEADING FROM BEHIND

Achieving the status of footballing coach is one thing; being able to add to his curriculum vitae the words 'World Cup' effectively affords the coach immortality.

Players make the game and in most cases those representing their countries will be more famous and, certainly, wealthier. However, ever since Jules Rimet gave his name to the original trophy, coaches around the world have attempted to prove that it is their leadership and ability to outsmart the opposition, like a chess player, rather than the skills on the pitch that shape a nation's destiny.



Mario Zagallo: Coaching for nearly three decades

Sir Alf Ramsey, the man who brought the World Cup to England for the first and only time, was chastised by use of the 'wingless wonders', a team committed to direct play through the middle. He left Jimmy Greaves, at the time England's most potent striker, out of his team and preferred to promote a relatively unknown forward called Geoff Hurst. Hurst played in the 1966 final, scored a hat-trick and Ramsey was knighted. Iran fired their coach, Tomislav Ivic, less than a month before the World Cup kickoff following a 7-1 defeat by Italian side Roma.

Mario Zagallo was brought in by Brazil half way through the 1970 campaign, replacing Joao Saldanha, and led his nation to success with the use of a flexible, potent strike force. He used Brazil's strengths and it is no surprise that, 28 years on, he is back in charge of Brazil.

« There will be four Brazilian and three Frenchmen in charge of seven nations this time »

For France 98 there are a host of coaches who are well-versed in World Cup etiquette; many have played on the stage and want another dose from the dug-out; others just cannot keep away. Two nationalities predominate in France: there will be four Brazilians and three Frenchmen in charge of seven nations. Indeed, of the 32 qualifiers only 22 will be coached by men born in that country. Two of the nomads will make World Cup history this summer: Bora Milutinovic and Carlos Alberto Parreira will become the first men to coach four different World Cup finalists.

Milutinovic guided Mexico in 1986, Costa Rica in 1990 and in 1994 he was at the helm with the host nation, the United States. He actually led Mexico to the 1998 finals, but was sacked due to the unpopularity of his style. It is difficult to keep a World Cup man down and this summer he will lead Nigeria.

Carlos Alberto is one of the four Brazilians in France. He replaced Otto Pfister as coach of Saudi Arabia on a one-year contract worth in the region of $3 million. Such is the value of the man who led Brazil to success four years ago. However, while Alberto's abilities are not in question, his nation is not one which will threaten the favourites.

Zagallo, the godfather of Brazilian football, is expected to claim another triumph, particularly by those back home who believe the country will claim the trophy for the second successive finals. Another less experienced, yet equally respected coach in France this summer, will be Glenn Hoddle, a man not frightened to adopt unusual practices. Hoddle won 53 caps for England and many critics felt he should have won many more.

His career was spent with London's Tottenham and then Monaco, in France, where he was heavily influenced — and persuaded to take up coaching — by Frenchman Arsene Wenger, now manager at Arsenal in London. As a coach Hoddle, at 40 one of the younger coaches in France this summer, took Swindon to the Premiership and then, with Chelsea, reached the FA Cup final before replacing Terry Venables after Euro 96.

Hoddle has employed the uses of a faith healer to help England's cause — and offered her services to his entire squad. The move attracted massive criticism from the English media — as did his endorsement of the news that Paul Gascoigne, his star midfielder, smokes 20 cigarettes a day, not something fitness-conscious England expects from the man who might win them the World Cup.

The third coach who must be regarded highly is Daniel Passarella. The coach previously banned earrings and long hair. Now, however, Passarella has informed his charges he is prepared to tolerate marital cohabitation before games — as long as they keep their private lives away from the team hotel. Clearly, Passarella has realised the best ways to encourage his highly talented team.

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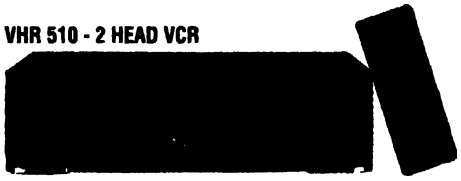
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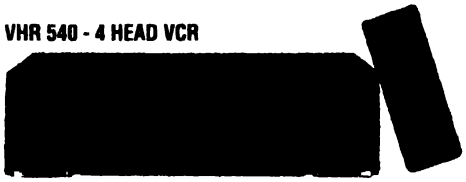


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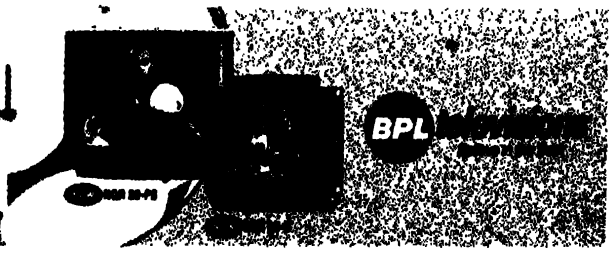
It is the favourite pastime of all football fans – building one's own dream team, choosing the very best from the greatest football talents from all corners of the world.

Still, picking a team from this World Cup's congregation is not as easy as it sounds. With so many stars from so many countries on the threshold of superstardom, this is possibly the best congregation of precocious talent ever.

Decision-making is more difficult because so many have to be left out. But you can't have a team of 11 strikers and medios, can you? Yet, we've done it – got the right mix of speed, skill and stamina and a coach who can deflate egos without disturbing the balance of the side.

In reality, several hundred millions of dollar may be too small a budget for the side we have put together. But then, that is the nicest part of this dream – it is one of the perks of being a football fan.

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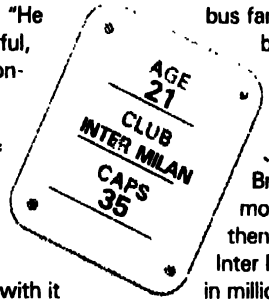
Phenom beyond phenomenon

He is perfect, he is fast, he is skilful, he is the best player on earth



Every four years, Brazilians look to someone to bring home the World Cup. Ronaldo Luis Nazario da Lima is their chosen apostle for France 98. But Ronaldo is a little different from Brazil's hugely exciting men in gold and blue. Simply put, he is the best footballer on this planet.

Even World Cup oldtimers sound a little breathless when talking about him. 'He has everything," says Franz Beckenbauer, Germany's former World Cup captain and coach. "He is perfect, he is fast, he is skillful, he can score goals. He is a wonderful player and it is great to watch him." His sorcery is based on the calculated use of two attributes – lightning fast reflexes combined with a capacity for infinite patience.



Such mastery has brought with it the inevitable comparisons with football legends. "Such comparisons are made by the press and others," says a modest Ronaldo. "Of course, it's flattering to be compared to great figures of soccer history, but as far as I go I'm barely beginning and I still have a lot to do to get into the history books of soccer."



Not everyone expects such modesty from a 21-year-old millionaire who has the world at his feet. But that is Ronaldo. "That's the first time I see such a big champion with so much press, with a lot of stress around him, who's always so calm and good humoured. He's always joking, always helping someone. He's an extraordinary man," says the vice-president of Inter Milan where he now plays.

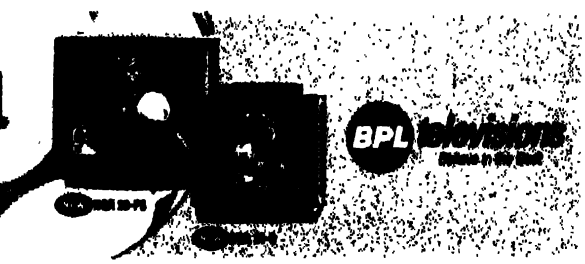
Ronaldo's modest beginnings – much like that other Brazilian God, Pele – might have something to do with it. Born in Bento Riviero, a poor Rio suburb, he grew up playing ball on the streets. He could not even afford the bus fare for a trial at Flamengo, a big local club, and joined a second division club instead.

Talent-spotted by Jarzhino, another Brazilian great, he moved to PSV Eindhoven then to Barcelona and now Inter Milan. Each move brought in millions of dollars for the boy whose mother once had to sell pizzas to nurture her son's dreams.

That dream exploded into reality in the last two years with Ronaldo being twice elected Fifa Player of the Year. In 1997, he got the award with 480 points, more than seven times his nearest rival, compatriot Roberto Carlos.

Interestingly, Ronaldo was part of the Brazilian World Cup squad in 1994. As a rookie 17-year-old he spent all his time warming the benches on the sidelines. This time around he hopes to warm the hearts of football lovers everywhere.

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batistuta



His national team's coach may not agree, but his Italian club and fans have no doubts that Argentina's 'Batigol' is one of the greatest strikers in the world



Close encounters with goal posts

He has the enviable record of scoring 41 goals in the 58 matches he has played for his country, making him Argentina's highest scorer ever. On a good day, Gabriel Batistuta can evoke comparisons with the indomitable Mario Kempes, the Argentine who led his team to World Cup glory in 1978. In France, he may well rival Brazil's whiz-kid Ronaldo as the star of the World Cup.

If he gets a game that is. Coach Daniel Passarella made him sit out most of last year's qualifying games until, reportedly under pressure from above, the final match. Things came to such a pass that 'Batigol' -- his name in Italy for his goalscoring feats -- nearly called its quits, but decided against it because he craves recognition on football's greatest stage, the World Cup finals.

But, he admits, "It's not a comfortable situation. I think I'm playing well, I have a successful career behind me and a long history with the national team. I would like to be going to the World Cup in a different atmosphere," says Batistuta. However, his recent, much-raved about hat-trick against Bosnia will have reassured coach and fans alike.

Batistuta's running battle with the national team's coach dates to his early days at River Plate, where Passarella was a highly successful coach. At that time, too, Passarella kept the young striker on the substitutes' bench and eventually allowed him to be sold to Boca Juniors in 1991.

Soon after, Batistuta moved to Italy to play for Florence's Italian Serie A Side Fiorentina. His goals lifted the team from near obscurity to a pedestal in Italian football and won Fiorentina the Italian Cup.

He himself has twice been Italian football's top scorer. Last year, Fiorentina demanded more than $20 million when Barcelona and Manchester United both made inquiries about Batistuta.

AGE 28
CLUB FIORENTINA
CAPS 54

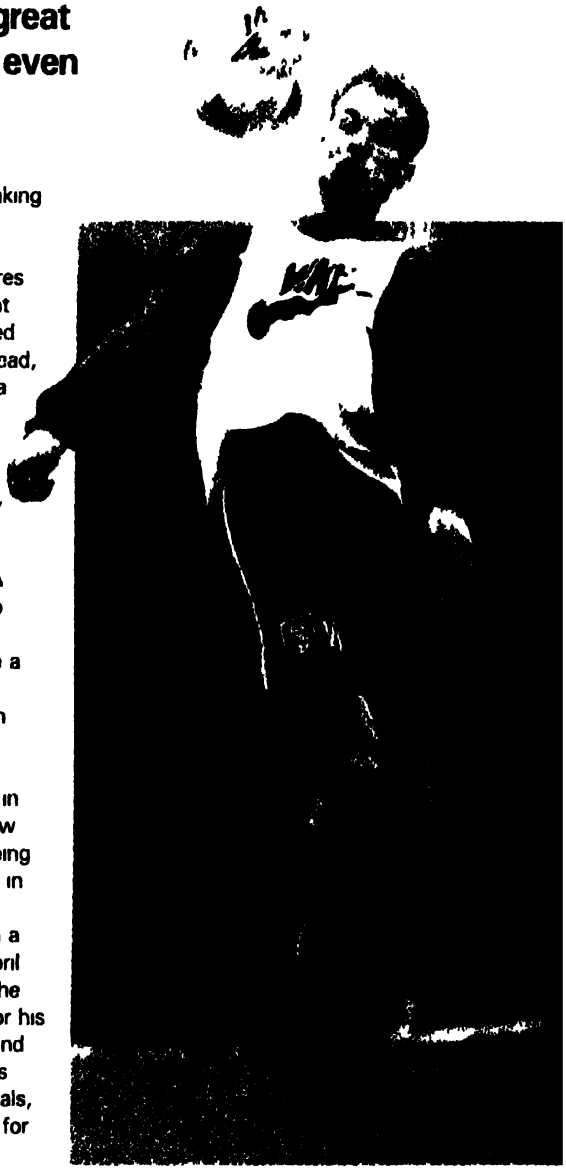
Batistuta's style of marksmanship does not, however, easily fit into the passing game Passarella likes his team to play. The problem is, Batistuta is an out-and-out striker and very rarely gets involved in ball play outside the opposition's penalty box. He might not appear too involved with team effort either. But, as fans and critics have discovered, Batistuta can find the back of the net with amazing regularity, specially when the chips are down.



A steady head and an eye for the goal



Bergkamp combines speed with great football sense, scoring with ease even when cramped for space



Denis Bergkamp hates flying But once on the field, there is no stopping the Flying Dutchman, as he is popularly called Whether it is an aerial ball or a grounder, Bergkamp, the nominee for the European Footballer of the Year, can climb any height to net the ball

At 28 he is a key figure in Holland's World Cup plans In fact, but for this non flying flying Dutchman, it would have been pretty diffi cult for his team to qualify for the finals A hattrick against Wales and a series of vital goals in other matches paved the way for the Netherlands to play in the finals

AGE 29
CLUB ARSENAL
CAPS 57

In September last year, the Dutchman who plays for Arsenal, England, was named player of the month for the second time in the English league, the first player to win the award in con secutive months

In fact, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger says, "He is at the peak of his career and I don't think there's anybody better in the world "

A product of the famous Ajax Amsterdam youth system, the Dutch master has surprising strength and pace, coupled with an immaculate touch and fabulous football sense He also has the ability to produce stunning shots with virtually no backlift, making him a danger even when closely marked

This is precisely where he scores over Klinsmann and to some extent Romario The German, once marked very closely, cannot keep a cool head, while the Brazilian has aged quite a bit Bergkamp combines the goal hunting nose of Paolo Rossi and the playing skills of Zico

However, like all other mortals, he too has his drawbacks over exaggerated diving being one The new FIFA rule of showing a card to anyone playing to the gallery might turn out to be a problem for him

He has already been given marching orders in a match for this offence and suspended for three matches for the same fault in another Bergkamp's version is, how ever, somewhat different "I am being targeted by referees and defenders in England," he says

A hamstring strain picked up in a league match on the last day of April has left doubts over his fitness in the finals Dutch fans will be praying for his complete recovery Once fully fit, and provided he can rein in his excesses and channel his frustrations into goals, France should be the perfect stage for the Dutchman to fly

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suker & mijatovic

Davor Suker seems slow on the field but averages a goal a game



Sukerman takes flight

The Croatians may come to France riding the wheel of fortune but there is one other element too -- in the form of Davor Suker.

It was at Euro 96 that this striker from Zagreb first served notice of his talents. One of his moves even had Peter Schmeichel -- the Danish goalkeeper reckoned to be the best in the world - a little red in the face. Two years on, his awareness of footballing space and his appetite for goals have increased. He has averaged a goal a game and was the top scorer in his country's none-too-impressive World Cup qualifying campaign. He also remains the top scorer for the national side till date. Many a team has been deceived by Suker's apparent slowness but, armed with a lethal left foot and a knack for scoring from set pieces, he can find holes in the best defences.

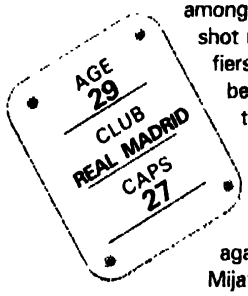


His club career with Real Madrid (he signed fo $ 5 million in 1996) seems to have gone into a tailspin though and he is struggling to hold on to a place in the first 11. It is alleged that a romance with a TV star has caused the slump in his career. But France is sure to bring out the best in him.

Predrag Mijatovic's prolific strike-rate should scare the best of teams

Belgrade bomber

His club coach has paid him the ultimate compliment. "I wouldn't swap him for Ronaldo," says Real Madrid's coach about his most prolific striker, Predrag Mijatovic. A comment that could be echoed by Yugoslav manager Slobodan Santrac in the days to come.



Mijatovic's star billing amongst his countrymen shot up during the qualifiers as he ensured a berth for Yugoslavia in the finals through such impressive scores like 7-1 (including a hat trick) and 5-0 against Hungary.

Mijatovic's display of dribbling talents is most spectacular in goalmouth, as was seen barely a month ago when he scored against Juventus in the UEFA Champions League final in Amsterdam.

The boy from Belgrade, who was a regular in Partizan Belgrade, moved to Spain three years ago to play for Valencia. His scintillitating moves in opponents' penalty zones attracted rave reviews and made him Spanish Footballer of the Year in 1996. But 'Pedje', as he is called by the Spaniards, is too prone to antics.



Once, seeing him take a tumble in and around the box, Atletico Madrid president Jesus Gil called him an 'epileptic'. "It's only jealousy," Mijatovic retorted. "Anyway, it takes real skill to be a good actor."



More expensive than Ronaldo

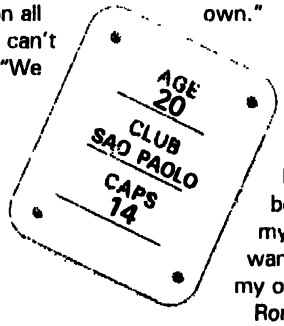
Denilson de Oliviera might turn out to be the alternative star of this summer's World Cup



Spain's Real Betis has just signed him up for an astronomical £ 20 million, making Denilson de Oliveira the world's most expensive footballer. His transfer fee overshadows even the king's ransom paid to team-mate Ronaldo last year. Is he, then, better than Brazil's best known ball kicker?

"I don't want to be compared with other players or judged against them," bristles Denilson. (In Brazil football stars are called only by their first names — a measure of their popularity.) The Ronaldo issue weighs heavily on all Brazilian players. "Anyway you can't compare us," insists Denilson. "We play in different positions for a start."

True enough. A midfielder, the left-footed Denilson is the nearest thing to an old-fashioned winger whose explosive pace made him an instant success with Brazil's coach Mario Zagallo.



Coming from a poor background, like so many Brazilian players, Denilson was quite unknown before last summer's French World Cup precursor, Le Tournoi de France. With a couple of quick dummies, a lightning burst of pace and a selection of stunning shots, the barely 20-year-old footballer from Sao Paolo announced his arrival to the world.

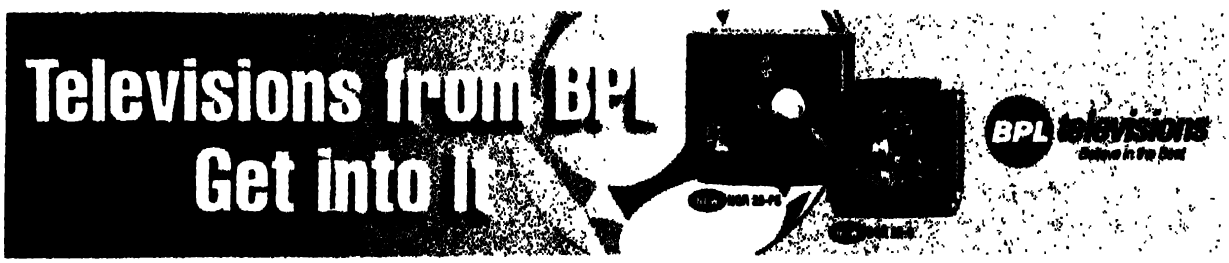
The dazzling performance in the Tournoi was followed by more scintillating footwork in the Copa America and Denilson's place in the national team as a first-choice player was firmly established.

More, every major club in Europe wanted his signature, including Barcelona where Ronaldo played till last year. Denilson chose Real Betis over the glamour outfits because, he told *Football 365*, "I felt they were more interested in me than the others. There's no point going to a big club if they don't have genuine affection for you. Real Betis were genuine and have a real ambition which matches my own."

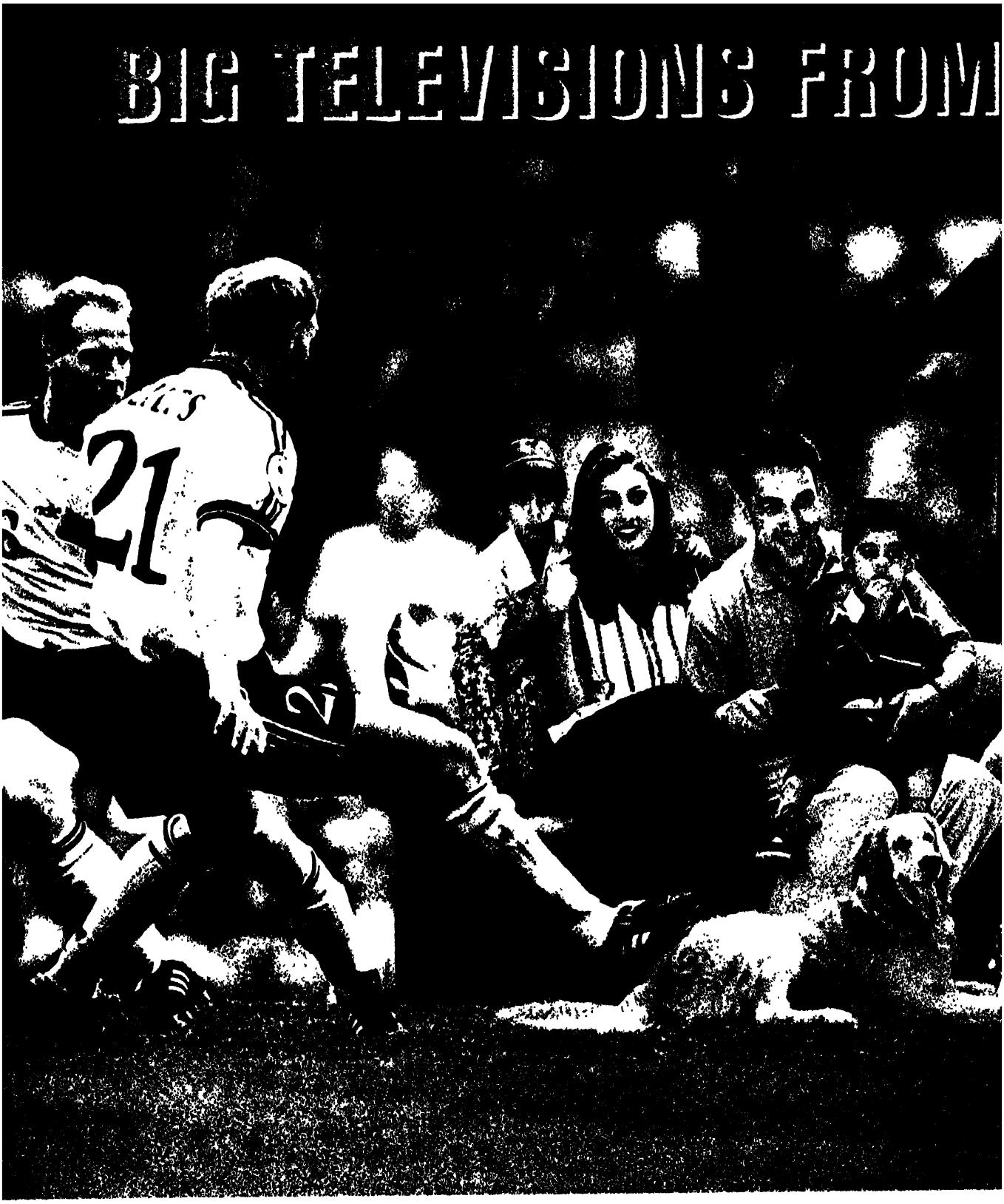
But in the case of Barcelona there was another problem. "I wondered whether comparisons would have been made between Ronaldo and myself. I don't want that. I want to achieve success in my own right.

Ronaldo's a tremendous player and has achieved so much in such a short space of time that he's always lived up to his transfer fee. That's the only thing we have in common."

Actually, Denilson will move to his new club and start justifying his stupendous fee only after the World Cup is over. But he seems to be in awe of neither. "I think we can do it," he says, win the Cup in France, that is. As for himself, "As long as I don't go really off the boil, then I think I'll be alright."



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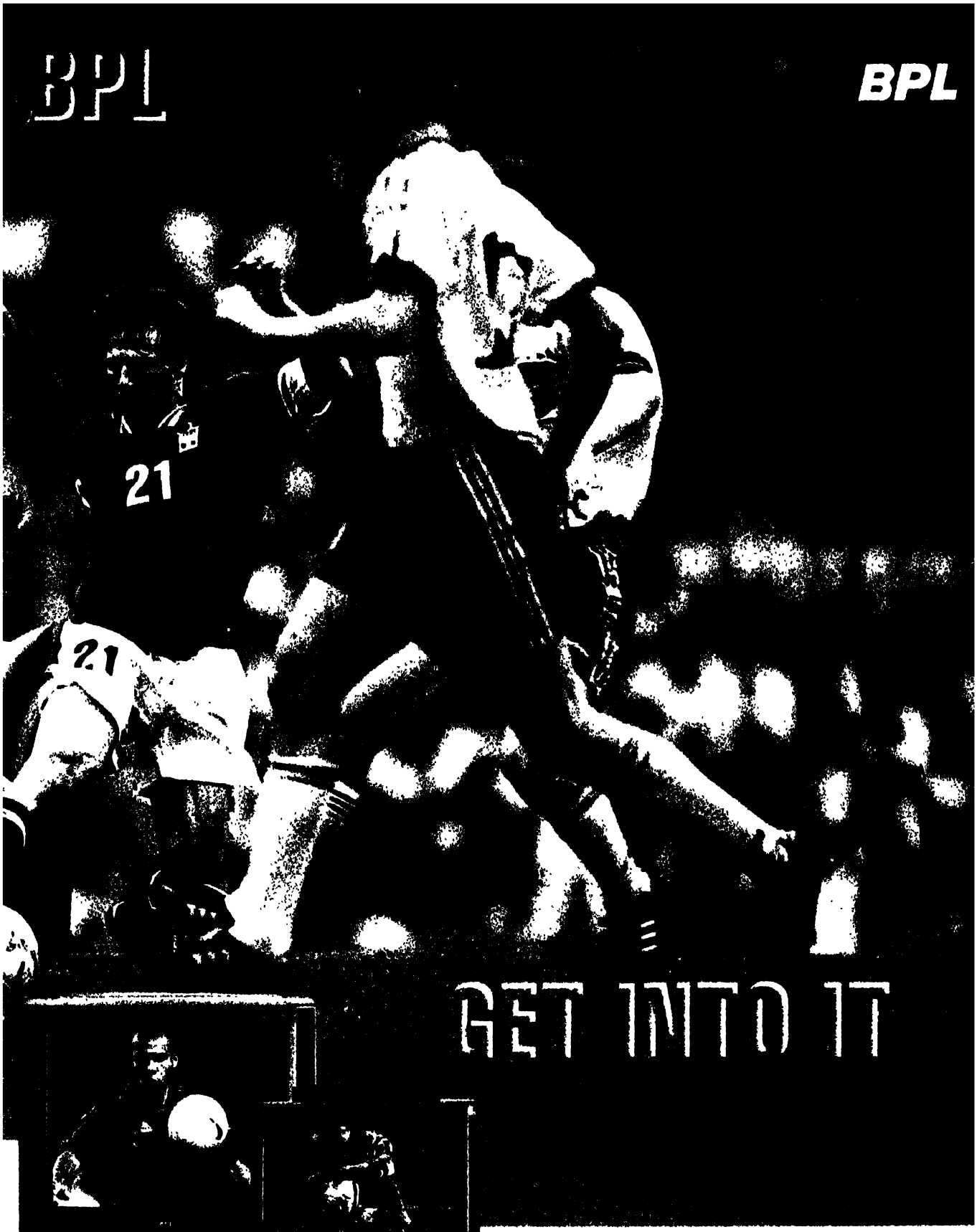
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zidane & djorkaeff

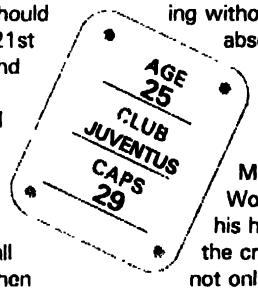
With his amazing ball play, Zidane can recreate the magic of Platini

French soccer's new messiah

In Fance, stepping into Michel Platini's boots is not easy. But midfielder Zinedine Zidane has succeeded to such an extent that many now expect the French team of 1998 to relive the glory days of the early Eighties. Like Platini, Zidane too has attained cult status with Juventus fans. And like the former French captain, the soft-spoken Zidane has been known to change the outcome of matches with his magic touch.

"Zidane does everything you should expect from a soccer star of the 21st century. He helps the team first and himself next," says Dynamo Kiev coach Igor Lobanovsky. He should know for only two months ago Juventus crushed Dynamo Kiev 4 1 in a European Cup match with Zidane playing a stellar role.

The new hero of French football exploded on the scene in 1994 when he made his debut against the Czech republic and scored two goals in the 17 minutes that he spent on the field. The same year he was voted the best young player in France. Zidane's indispensability was shown again this March when the national team, playing without him, revealed the absence of any attacking punch and lost 1-0 to the Russians at Moscow.



When the boy from Marseille plays his first World Cup finals match in his hometown on June 12, the crowds will be cheering not only France but the man who has inspired hopes of a French footballing revival.

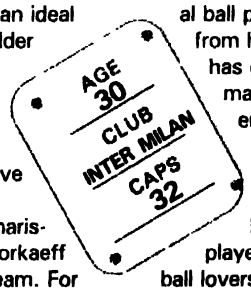


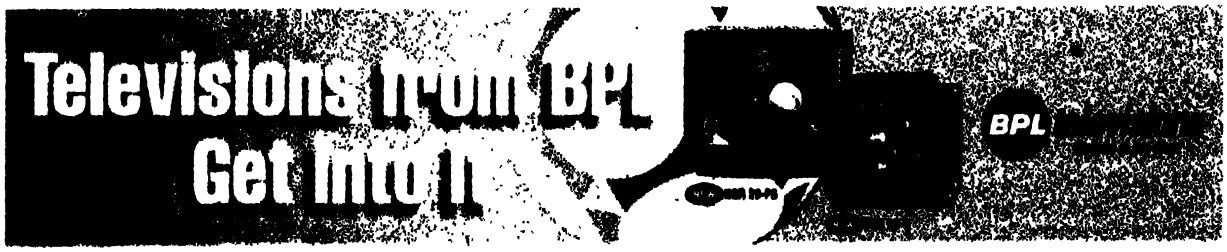
Djorkaeff (left) and Zidane

Forwards can trust this man to set up chances

The bicycle-kick artiste

It is both a dream and a nightmare – having the two French stars, Youri Djorkaeff and Zinedine Zidane, in the same team. The Armeninan, a striker and a midfielder combined, is an ideal foil for midfielder Zidane. But, they hate each other's guts and can make things explosive in all the wrong ways. With or without his charismatic countryman Djorkaeff is an asset for any team. For his club Inter Milan he is either scoring by his trademark bicycle kick or creating chances for Ronaldo, as in the last UEFA cup final against Lazio. The reason Youri scores over most other midfielders is his ability to combine a ball player skill with a never-say-die attitude. Though Valderrama is a natural ball player, he often shies away from hard tackles; Hierro of Spain has guts but his skills are no match for the French midfielder. Djorkaeff was centre of France's best moves against Portugal in Tournoi de France last year where he blossomed as a complete player. The good news for football lovers is, Youri and Zinedine say they've put their differences behind them and are looking forward to kicking up a storm in the Cup ahead.





carlo

When Ronaldo, Romario and Bebeto move up to score, they can safely trust their left back to stand his ground

Here's a defender who can also score

If Brazil manager Mario Zagallo has the last laugh in Paris, he'll have been immensely aided in his game-plan by his attacking left back: Roberto Carlos. This Real Madrid defender will be a regular in the blue-and-marigold line-up.

With his deadly sprints down the flanks, he is as much a part of the Brazilian defence as of its attack. His ability to initiate attacks from deep makes him any manager's dream weapon.

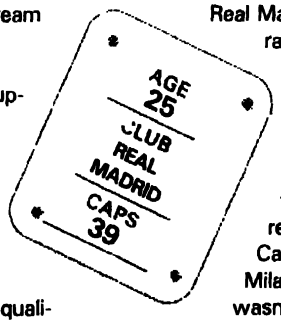
It was manager Carlos Alberto Parreira of Brazil's Cup-winning team in 1994 who first spotted the dazzling power of the thunder-king kicks of this defender. Parreira helped Carlos make his international debut as an 18-year-old, but he was not played in even a qualifying match for the 1994 World Cup.

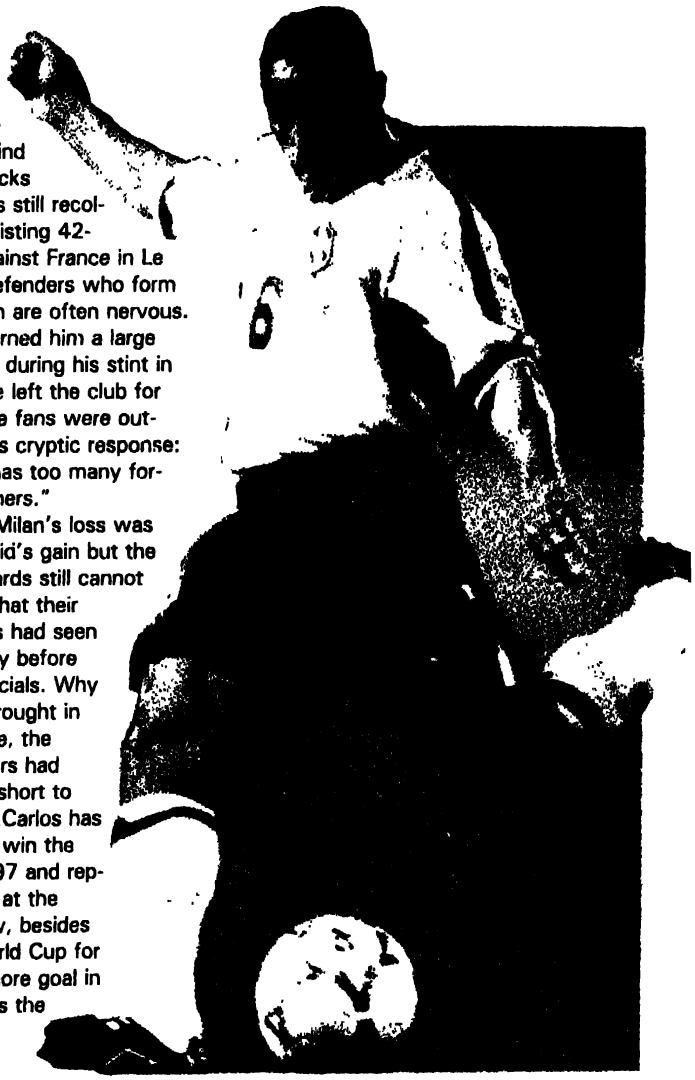
A player best known for his charming smile both on and off the pitch, Carlos says he has inherited his tree-trunk legs, with thighs measuring 58 cm, from his father. The amazing shooting power he utilises to his great advantage in each game is a treat to watch.

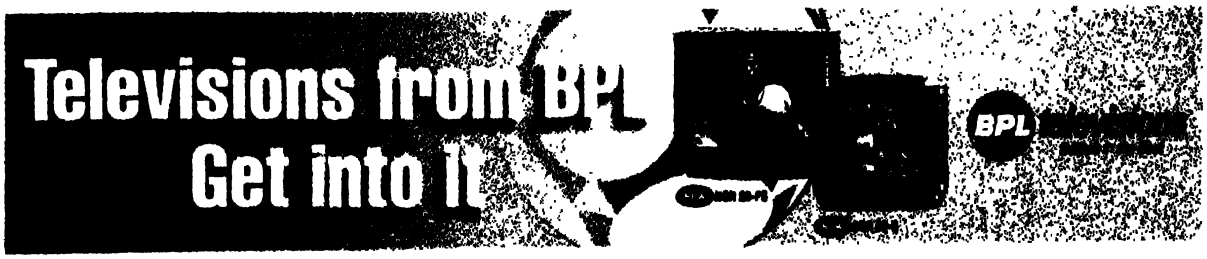
An all-round athlete, the speed of his shot has been recorded at 150 km/h. An opponent's best tactic to tackle is to mark him along the right flank but even those who are good at it find his swerving free-kicks deadly. Brazilian fans still recollect the wickedly twisting 42-yarder he scored against France in Le Tournoi last year. Defenders who form a wall in front of him are often nervous.

Carlos's skills earned him a large fan following in Italy during his stint in Inter Milan. When he left the club for Real Madrid the fans were outraged. His cryptic response: "It has too many foreigners."

Milan's loss was Madrid's gain but the Spaniards still cannot forget that their recruiters had seen Carlos play before Milan's officials. Why wasn't he brought in then? Because, the Madrid managers had thought he was too short to make a top full-back.Carlos has already helped Brazil win the Copa America in 1997 and represented his country at the 1996 Olympics. Now, besides winning the fifth World Cup for Brazil, he has one more goal in France: to prove he is the world's greatest left back.







stam & desailley

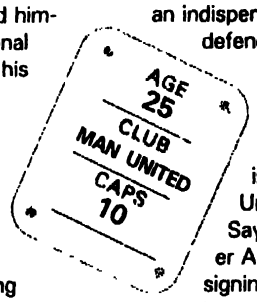
Japp Stam is almost unbeatable in an one-to-one situation

The toughest brick in the wall



The best goal scored in the Dutch Amstel Cup was unfortunately a self goal. As he saw the ball hitting the roof leaving his PSV Eindhoven team-mate helpless, the world's most expensive defender held his head between his hands. FC Twente was up by a goal in a match PSV was dominating. But, as the TV commentator said, "Only Japp Stam could have reached the ball." The six-feet-two central defender is too quick for his structure.

Stam established himself as an international superstar following his debut against Germany as a late replacement for Frank de Boer at Euro 96.



His ability to handle the aerial ball and man-marking make him almost unbeatable in a one-to-one situation. In a team where he can partner Paolo Maldini as stopper, Stam can place himself a few yards behind the Italian to allow the latter make surging moves along the flank. Strong marking abilities helped him establish himself as an indispensable player in the Dutch defence.

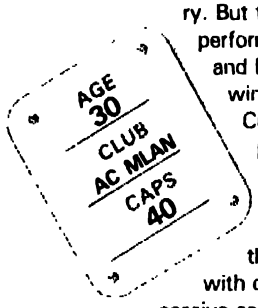
The Dutch Footballer of the Year, who started his career playing in midfield, comes to France after signing up with Manchester United for £10.75 million. Says the English club's manager Alex Ferguson, "It's a major signing for us. He is a fantastic player. We are really delighted to get him."

Marcel Desailly always turns out be the key defender for whichever side he plays for

Rock around the box



When he was picked up by AC Milan in 1993, a season after he had helped Marseille win the 1992 Champions Cup, Marcel Desailly admitted to feeling a bit awestruck by the club's famous history. But that didn't affect his performance in the least and Milan went on to win the Champions Cup. The strongest pillar in the French defence thus became the first footballer to win the Champions Cup with different clubs in successive seasons.



Born in Ghana, Desailly shot into fame during his six-year stint at Nantes, for whom he played 164 league matches before joining Marseille in '92. His large build was an asset in the midfield region and he quickly established himself as a key defender for whichever side he was playing, deservedly earning the nickname 'Rock'.

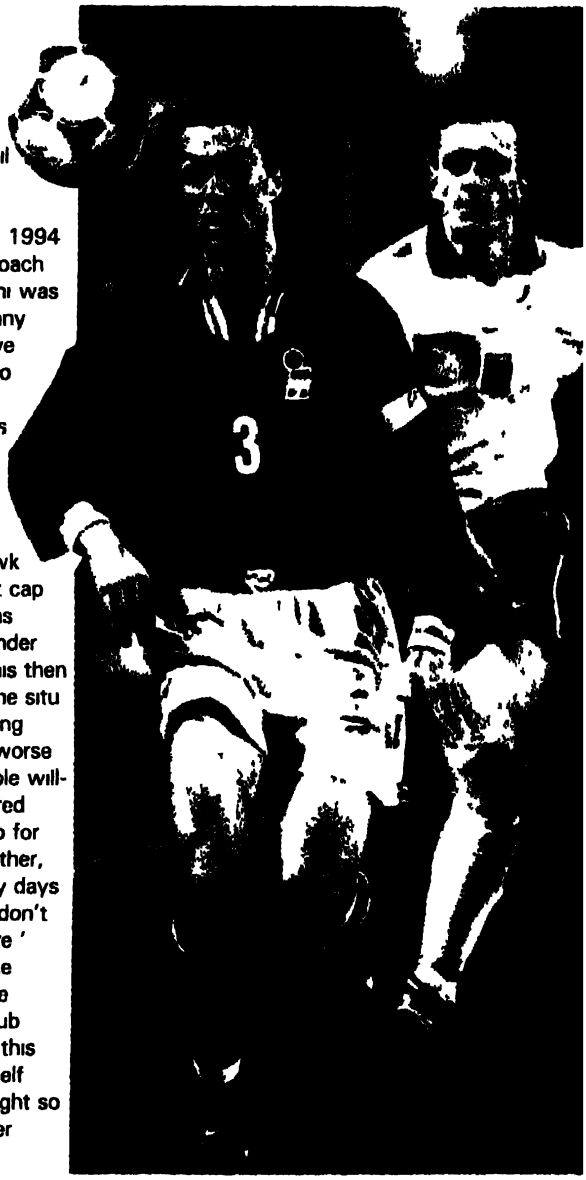
At the club level, Desailly usually plays in the centre of midfield. For the national side, however, he has dropped hints he would like to play at the back, a position he is capable of manning equally well. France is likely to indulge him and field him as their right back in the World Cup.



maldini

Best player in any position

Paolo's happy, for his critics no longer consider him a 'favoured son'



If Italy win in France they will create a record of a different sort a son will lift the Cup as the skipper under the guidance of his father Italy's captain Paolo Maldini is the son of their squad's coach Cesare Maldini But nepotism is not the issue

One of the outstanding Italian foot ballers of his generation, Maldini junior would be an automatic choice in most world elevens He is a regular sweeper in AC Milan which he joined in 1985 when he was just 16 and has been with it since Maldini senior was also with AC Milan A player of considerable standing he won 14 caps his finest moment being in 1963 when he lifted the European Cup No won der Paolo enjoys the largest fan following among Milan supporters

AGE 29
CLUB AC MILAN
CAPS 85

Paolo emerged in Italian soccer at a cru cial moment, filling the boots of Franco Baresi as the defensive organiser for both Milan and Italy when the legendary defender retired Maldini showed his abilities right from the beginning he scored five goals in 12 matches for the Italian under 21 team

In the national squad Maldini is often the starting point of many Italian attacks A captain who leads by exam ple, he has shown his adaptability by playing in central defence in important matches, including the 1994 World Cup final which Italy lost to Brazil on penalties and Milan s 4 0 European Cup final demolition of Spanish giants Barcelona also in 1994

In 1995, Morocco's French coach Henri Michel declared that Maldini was 'the best player in the world in any position ' Says Maldini Sr, "I have been very proud of the way Paolo has conducted himself as a foot baller People may think I say this because I am his father, but I believe that no one with an objective mind can fault my analysis "

But for Paolo it was awk ward getting his first cap when his father as coach to Italy s under 21 side, called in his then 18 year old son "The situ ation was embarrassing because for better or worse there were always people will- ing to say I was a favoured son I have always tried to for get that the coach is my father, but anyway since those early days things have changed and people don't make certain accusations anymore '

Paolo, who turns 30 during the World Cup, has experienced some unaccustomed setbacks at the club level over the last two years and this should spur him to motivate himself specially for France 98 And it might so happen that both he and his father might have a lot to celebrate

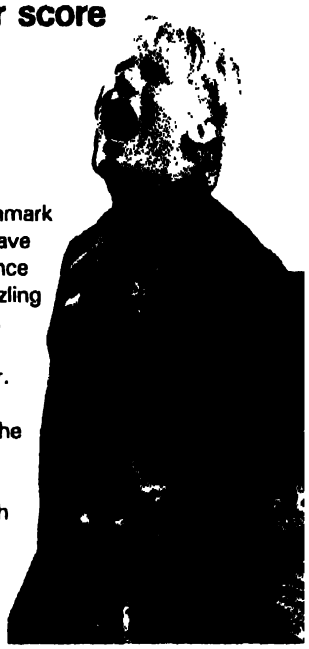


schmeichel & seaman



Don't be surprised if you see the Danish goalkeeper score in France 98. That is what he has in mind

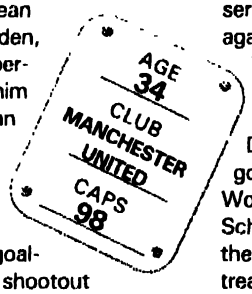
Denmark's first line of attack



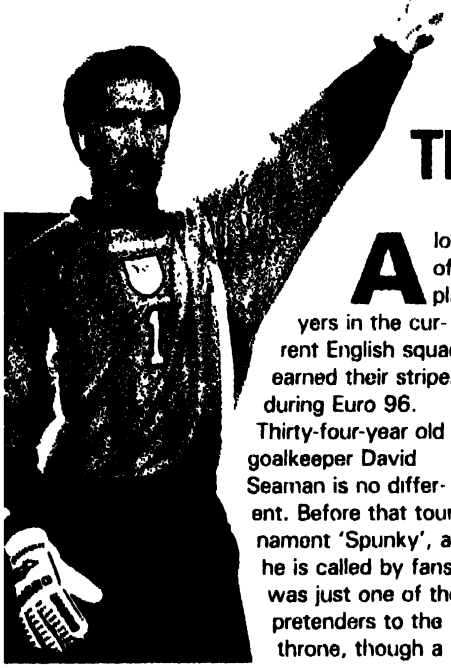
Denmark's goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel has a dream. He wants to score a goal in France 98. He would have a tough job achieving that if the opposing goalkeeper were half as good as him. "I'm more than fed up seeing 0 goals next to my international appearances total. It is an ambition to score at least once for my country, especially at the World Cup," says the world's best goalkeeper.

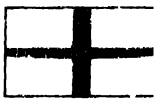
Under the bar, of course, making spectacular saves is routine for him. With an overwhelming physique – he stands 1.91 m tall and weighs just short of 100 kilos – and gravity-defying reflexes, Schmeichel is a nightmare for strikers. His rock-like presence before the net has helped his English club win four English championships.

At the 1992 European championships in Sweden, Schmeichel's brilliant performance established him as the world's best man under the bar. The Danes won a place in the finals largely due to a fantastic stop made by the burly goalkeeper in a penalty shootout against the Netherlands.



In fact, Denmark would never have made it to France but for his dazzling series of saves against Greece last October. As in the qualifiers, the Danish side goes into the World Cup with Schmeichel as their most treasured asset.



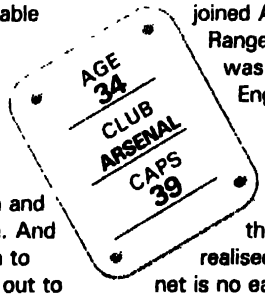


When it comes to high balls, it is virtually impossible to beat him

The £1.3-million goalkeeper

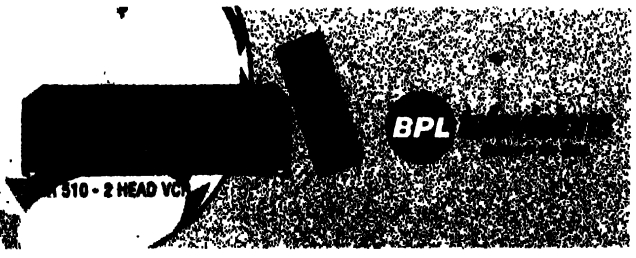
A lot of players in the current English squad earned their stripes during Euro 96. Thirty-four-year old goalkeeper David Seaman is no different. Before that tournament 'Spunky', as he is called by fans, was just one of the pretenders to the throne, though a confident attitude and a safe pair of hands had always made him a favourite. He accentuated that in Euro 96 with a series of crucial penalty saves.

Seaman's calm and unflappable presence has inspired many Englishmen to play beyond their abilities. A good understanding with Tony Adams, Arsenal and English national team mate, has also helped. Seaman stalks the penalty area and marshals the defence with elan. And he has hardly ever been known to miss a cross that he has come out to collect. The Yorkshireman had made his debut in 1988 against Saudi Arabia but in the early years he had to fight for his place with Tim Flowers, another talented goalkeeper. In 1990, Seaman joined Arsenal from Queens Park Rangers for £ 1.3 million, which was then a record fee for any English keeper.



If anyone deserves to inherit Peter Shilton's mantle, this is the man. As super strikers from the world over have realised, finding the back of his net is no easy task.

Record the action on a BPL-SANYO VCR



Twenty years back, he had won the Cup as a captain. France 98 might see him repeating the feat as a coach

No kidding, the boss is strict

On June 14, when Argentina take on debutant Japan at the Municipal ground in Toulouse, all eyes will be on their star off the field – their coach Daniel Passarella. Passarella is not only a soccer hero having captained his country's 1978 squad to World Cup victory but also a towering personality. His keen football sense and penchant for strict discipline place him on top of a vaunted group that comprise such greats as Brazil's Mario Zagallo, Germany's Berti Vogts, Italy's Cesare Maldini, England's Glenn Hoddle or Nigeria's Bora Milutinovic.

It is not easy to steer a team that boasted, till the last Cup finals, a charismatic striker named Diego Maradona, the greatest player in world soccer after Pele. Argentine fans have still not recovered from the shock of the unseemly dismissal of their hero following a positive dope test during the 1994 Cup finals in America and subsequent elimination of their team at the hands of Romania. But the past does not bother Passarella. He knows how to lead from behind.

Never hesitant to do things his own way, even the great Maradona may have found it difficult to qualify for Passarella's squad if he did not fit the coach's bill. And this would have had nothing to do with their rivalry which saw Passarella dejectedly sitting on the sidelines, ostensibly for injury, while Maradona captained the side to victory in Mexico 86.



Faced with the task of rebuilding the battered pride of a footballing nation, Passarella started off with a range of controversial disciplinary measures. He banned players who were homosexual, had long hair or wore ear-rings. Not that he has had uniform success with his strictures. Star striker and skipper Gabriel Batistuta may have got rid of his flowing locks but Fernando Redondo, the skilful midfielder who plays for Real Madrid, has refused. Result: Redondo is not in the squad for the finals. In fact, as far as the line-up is concerned, Passarella cannot be very comfortable. That was why he began his search for a new team by trying out as many as 70 players.

Still, he has been accused of showing favours to players from River Plate, the Argentine club for which he made his first division debut in 1953 at the age of 21. After playing for Italian clubs Fiorentina and Inter Milan, he became the manager of River Plate which won three league titles under his leadership.

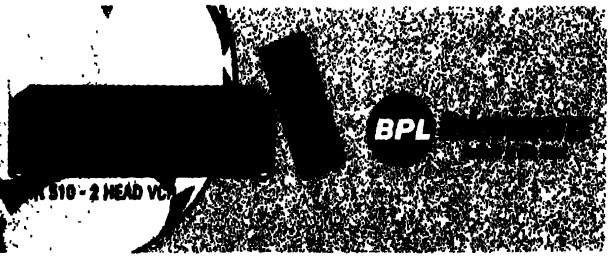
An otherwise sad man (he lost his 18-year-old son in a car crash in 1995), Passarella's strength is his confidence in himself.

He is never afraid of angering others, be they his players or his fans. He refused to field Batistuta for most of Argentina's qualifying matches and on one occasion punched a pushy fan who came to ask him for money.

France may or may not add to his glory but whatever happens Passarella will continue doing things differently.



Record the action on a BPL-SANYO VCR



VHS 310 - 2 HEAD VCR

THE CENTURY'S XI

FRANCO BARESI DEFENDER →
(*extreme left*) Redefined the sweeper position in a 20-year career with AC Milan. Played in four World Cups from 1982 to '94

JOHANN CRUYFF RIGHT HALF
Architect of total football, transformed dull, defensive Dutch football into attractive, attacking style in 1974 World Cup

GARRINCHA LEFT HALF
With his curved legs, because of polio, Brazil's 1962 Cup winner is world's greatest dribbler

FERENC PUSKAS CENTRE HALF
Part of Hungary's 'Magic Magyars', Puskas scored 83 out of 84 matches. His left-foot was legendary. First World Cup: '54





PELE → STRIKER
Simply incomparable. Brazil's Edson Arantes Do Nascimento began playing with a ball that was a round bundle of rags. Exploded on world scene in '58 World Cup. First player to score 1,000 goals



ALFREDO DI STEFANO FORWARD →
(*extreme left*)The greatest all-rounder of his generation, never played in the World Cup

DANIEL PASSARELLA DEFENDER
Could strike terror in the hearts of most strikers. Led Argentina to victory in 1978

FRANZ BECKENBAUER SWEEPER
'Kaiser' transformed the role of a sweeper during the '74 finals which Germany won

LEV YASHIN GOALKEEPER
The Russian kept his goal untouched in 270 games. Played in '58, '62 and '66

← DIEGO MARADONA FORWARD
Brilliant and controversial, the left-footed genius from Argentina scored unforgettable goals, won the Cup in 1986, was runner-up in 1990. In the end, his dazzling talent succumbed to the pressures of fame and was forced to leave the '94 World Cup for doping



BOBBY MOORE DEFENDER ↗
England's greatest footballer confounded pundits with his uncanny speed of thought and cool authority under pressure. Captained England to its only World Cup victory in 1966

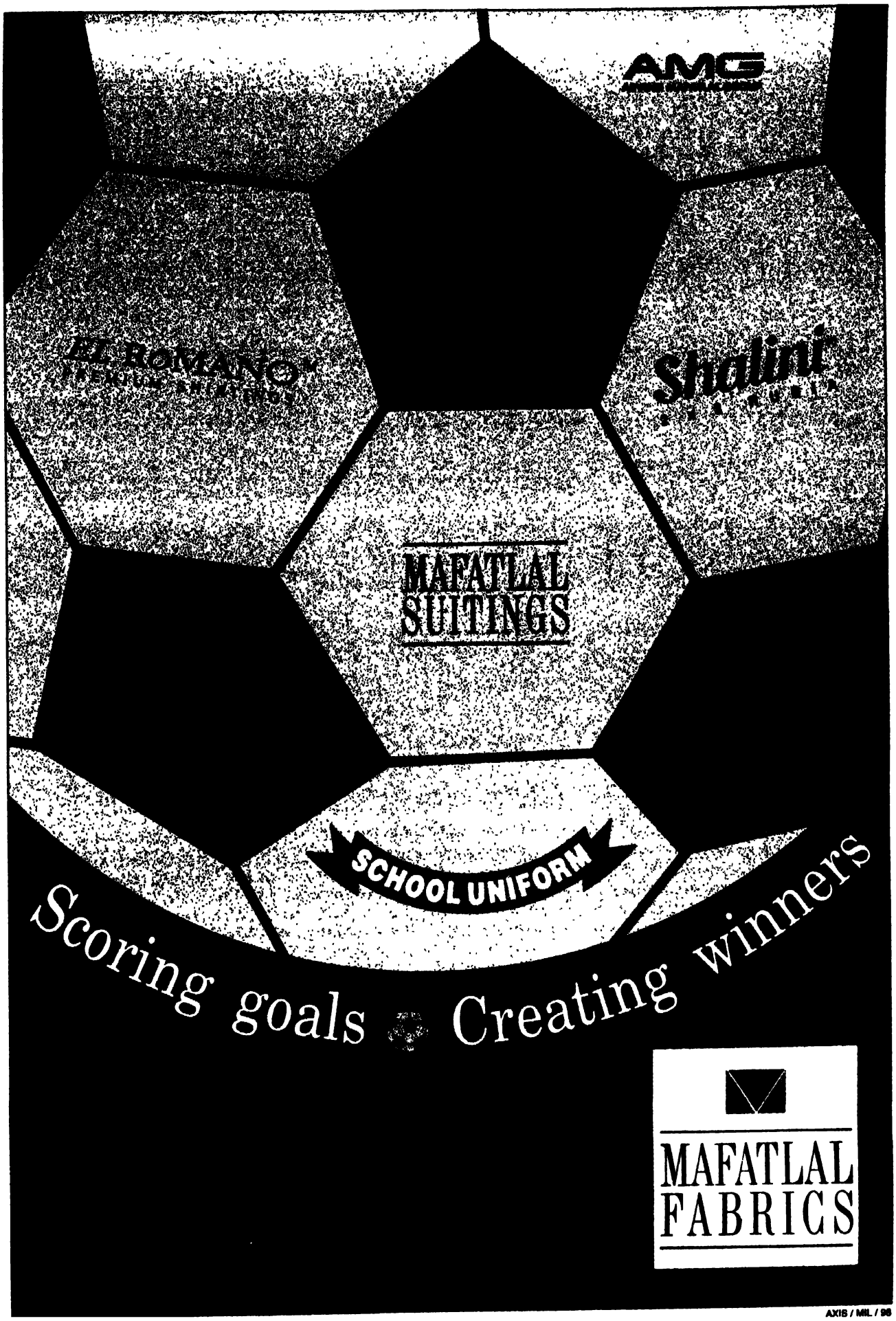
ALF RAMSEY COACH →
England's Cup winning manager in 1966 was essentially a player's man, quickly proved who was the boss



Catch the excitement on a BPL-AJIT B&W TV



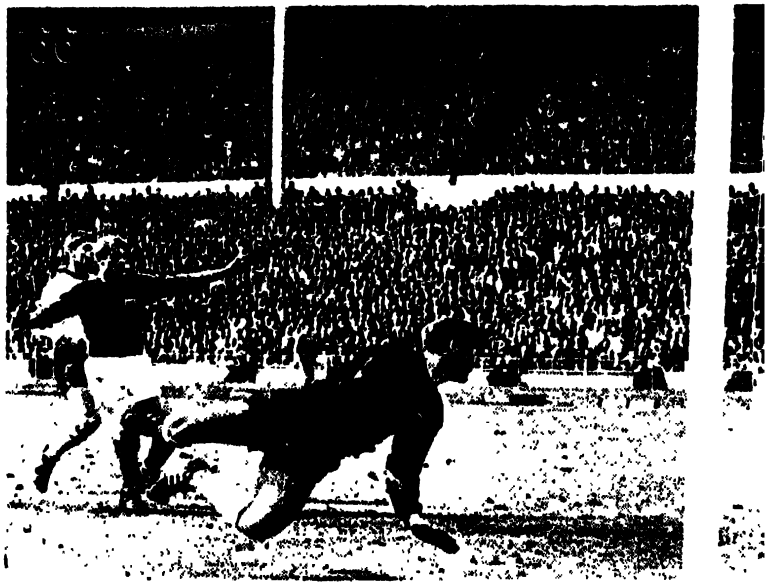
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AMG
EL ROMANO
Shalini
MAFATLAL SUITINGS
SCHOOL UNIFORM
Scoring goals Creating winners
MAFATLAL FABRICS
AXIS / MIL / 98









THE GOAL & THE

1930 URUGUAY

Jules Rimet's dream comes true

The World Cup, conceived by Fifa president Jules Rimet, began with most European countries keeping away. They balked at the three-week boat trip to South America, even though the Uruguayans offered to pay all expenses. Anyway, the fans were enthusiastic. With Uruguay in the final, the Centenary Stadium gates in Montevideo had to be opened by eight in the morning though the match was scheduled to begin at two. The organisers were so tense that bayonet totting soldiers frisked everyone and only 90,000 spectators were allowed in even though the capacity was 100,000. The match did not disappoint them. Uruguay defeated Argentina 4-2.

1954 SWITZERLAND

Hungary played, Germany won

The first real World Cup with no boycotts, the 16 entrants were divided into four groups after which they had to play quarter-finals. Playing extra time to avoid a tie and play-offs were introduced in this tournament. The latter rule enabled West Germany to field a deliberately understrength side against the favourites Hungary. A defeat would have meant a play-off against the weak Turks. Not only did the Germans succeed in beating the Turks, a deliberate foul on Hungarian star Puskas made him ineffective for most of the tournament. The Hungarians claimed that the Germans won (3 2) by cheating them of a legitimate goal in the final.

1958 SWEDEN

A football legend is born

Pele, 17 years old, exploded on to the world football field. The final between Brazil and Sweden was a dream match. The home team started with a goal in the fourth minute only to trail 2-1 at half-time. The second half belonged to the Brazilians and the Swedes had nothing to do but stand and watch the South Americans net three more goals. Pele and Brazil won their first World Cup.

1966 ENGLAND

Lucky in Wembley

The eighth World Cup showed what a violent game even the best of football can be. The two most skilled players of the tournament — Portugal's Eusabio and Brazil's Pele · · were injured so badly that both were ruled out for the tournament. Argentina, unlike their normal style, played a very violent game. England, lucky to play all six matches at Wembley, won, defeating Germany 4-2. However, all this paled into insignificance with the sensational theft of the Jules Rimet Cup. The Cup was finally recovered by the police with the help of a sniffer dog.

1970 MEXICO

Pele's fourth, Brazil's third

Pele's third World Cup victory made the Jules Rimet Cup Brazil's property. More significantly, John L. Baird's invention started taking the driver's seat from this year. Bowing to television's demands, Fifa rescheduled most of the matches to the middle of the day when temperatures were well over 100° F. The group match between England and Brazil ranks among the best matches ever. A fabulous goal by Jarzinho and an equally, if not more, brilliant save by Gordon Banks of a Pele header were the highpoints. Brazil eventually defeated England 1-0. After this group match there was no stopping Zagallo and his team.

1974 WEST GERMANY

Triumph of total football

For the first time, Fifa decided to extend









GLORY

the group format beyond the first round so that there were no quarter or semi-finals. This was also the Cup of total football -- both the finalists Holland and Germany were famous for it. This was the first time the 4-2-4 and 4-3-3 combinations were tried out and with great success, thanks to Dutchman Johan Cruyff. Though Holland lost in the finals, they were the winners when it came to popular support. Cruyff, Han, Krol, everyone talked about the players in the orange and white jerseys. But it was Franz Beckenbauer who stole the World Cup (and the girls) this year.

1978 ARGENTINA

Hosts win again

There was considerable disquiet during the qualifying rounds because Argentina had been allowed to play at all. A military coup in 1976 had been followed by massive human rights violations and the economy was in turmoil. The whole world was agog with rumours that Fifa would switch the tournament to Holland. Finally, however, the Latin Americans managed the tournament, the Cup (defeating Holland 3-1), and top scorer (Martin Kempes). But the hosts led the violence and unsporstsmanlike spirit that riddled the games.

1982 SPAIN

Stained by violence

Espania 82 was perhaps the most violent World Cup ever. Maradona was made inoperational by Italy's Gentele, Brazil's Zico could not even touch the ball he was hurt so badly and team-mate Socrates had nothing to do but watch in dismay. Germany's goalkeeper, Schumaker, hit French striker Battiston with his elbow so badly that the latter had to be taken off the ground. The German escaped with just a yellow card. In a dull final, Italy beat Germany 3-1, paving the way for their captain – the 40-year-old Dino Zoff – to lift the World Cup. This also turned out to be a competition which saw power football calling the shots and skill taking a backseat. Italian striker Paolo Rossi was top scorer and the hero of this tournament. In the game against Brazil, a hattrick by Rossi and a missed penalty by Zico caused the biggest upset of the tournament.

1986 MEXICO

Graced by Maradona

The Brits won't agree because of what they call the 'hand-of-God' episode (Maradona scoring a goal against them with his hand), but what this Cup actually proved is that Diego Maradona alone could make a heaven and hell difference to a match. His second goal against England where he dribbled past seven players before netting the ball is sure to qualify among the top ten goals ever produced in the world. The brilliance of Maradona helped Argentina sail through the semis. The final kept everyone on the edge of their seats. By the 55th minute, Argentina were 2-0 up. A 73rd minute goal by Karl Heinz Rummenigge was followed by another by Voller in the 81st minute. With just nine minutes left, a loose ball went to Maradona who initiated the attack with a gem of a through. All Burruchaga had to do was net the ball. Argentina won the match 3-2.

EXCITED TO BE A SPECTATOR

Soccer is the pain of growing up, not knowing what to do with the hopelessness of the world around oneself, writes PRITISH NANDY

grew up in the narrow lanes of north Calcutta. Football was my favourite sport. I watched it with undying passion but was such a rotten player that even I was embarrassed. But that never stopped me from joining in to chase that elusive leather ball. Years have gone by but my obsession for the game has not diminished. Soccer and rugby: They still represent the two faces of my adolescence. Rugby was school. La Martiniere. That old colonial building on Loudon Street. Lazy hours spent with Shakespeare and Kafka. Listening to Elvis and John Lennon and arguing over who was more exciting, more enduring. Oohing and aahing over Francoise Sagan, slumming with Henry Miller. Writing love poems in blank verse, smoking grass at times, climbing up the waterpipe to kiss the Principal's daughter good night.

Soccer was exactly the opposite. The dark, winding lane behind the house where we lived, smelling of piss and pusillanimity. Prabhat cinema, long queues for Mughal e Azam. The hard, angular, bitter rain. The pain of growing up, not knowing what to do with the hopelessness of the world around oneself. Rooting for Mohun Bagan; quoting Jibanananda Das; sauntering out of the Dover Road festival at five in the morning with the *bhairavi* ringing in the ears. Matinee shows. Mohammed Rafi. Uttam Kumar, Suchitra Sen. Charu Mazumdar and Jangal Santhal. Lines from a postman straying through the forests of autumn.

Till today, both have stayed with me. Rugby and soccer. And, of course, Calcutta. The only city in the world I have ever called my home.

Soccer brings back the strongest images. Sailen Manna scoring a goal from way back. Full back, in fact. Chuni Goswami, silhouetted by a setting sun, nimbly weaving his way through a pack of the toughest defenders to kick the ball into the net. Yelling, blood-thirsty spectators. Angry losers. Victory celebrations in the fish market.

The Mussalmans rooted for Mohammedan Sporting. The sad-eyed migrants from across the border swore by East Bengal. We, who had nothing to call our own except Calcutta, sported the colours of Mohun Bagan. But that was never all. Every club — be it Aryan or Rajasthan or Eastern Railway had its own loyal band of followers who were ready to kill for the club or the game. But they never did.

For football hooliganism was rare. The age of whiskey endorsements had not arrived. The stars of the game never talked about money so shamelessly. It was a time when footballers felt like god every time they netted the ball. Orgasms came from playing well. Not from raking in the greenbacks.

In rugby, we were luckier. My school produced the best and the toughest players and the La Martiniere Old Boys team was one of the finest. But, much as I dreamt about scrums and line-outs, tries and kicks and goals, I never even managed to make it to the C team. Did that bother me? Naah! I was as excited to be a spectator.

It is the same excitement that made me step in as a white knight (earlier this year) to try and prevent Mohun Bagan and East Bengal from being sold to a liquor baron to promote his whiskey and beer brands. It demeaned my memories of the game. A game played by proud, tough men who refused to cower before Mammon, kneel before Brands, kiss the arse of Industry, beg for Endorsements.



On this occasion of the World Cup we should pay a tribute to the brave men who may not have been world class stars but kept alive the spirit of football for so many years. Ever since a team of Indians, bare feet, beat the mighty Brits in 1911 and dared us to dream of Independence.

Do we want such a game to be colonised by Adidas, Pepsi and United Breweries today?

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WRITE IN



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LIKE IRON LADY

The world may have frowned upon her unconventional ways but one must give Protima Gauri Bedi due credit for she has truly managed to live life on her own terms and achieved great success without basking in anybody's reflected glory ('Blood Ties', May 24). My heart goes out to her on her adolescent son's untimely demise. One can learn a lot from the likes of her even if one does not wish to emulate her approach to life.

AJANTA CHATTERJEE, CALCUTTA

ALSO AN EXERCISE

Thank you for the cover story on Protima Bedi. As an exponent of Odissi, she is a celebrity by her own right.In today's world, when so much attention is being showered on physical fitness, I think it would be a good idea to introduce dance as a compulsory subject in schools and colleges as it is not only a great form of physical exercise but also an art form which should not be neglected at any cost. This is very important what with the Western influx into our culture.

Prahlad Agarwala, Nadia

Protima Bedi has more often than not been in the news for all the wrong reasons. The media, too, has exploited her in its own way given that she always makes a sensational copy. Going through your profile on her, however, it seems that she has undergone a tremendous metamorphosis in her outlook towards life. Perhaps,being a grandmother might have done the magic. We cannot, however, help but sympathise with her as she endeavours to bear the pangs of the demise of her beloved son.It does take a very big heart to accept one's child's decision to leave the world voluntarily and she has done this so gracefully.

Kirankumar Atom, Manipur

I was indeed very pleased to see you feature Protima Bedi in your magazine. I think she is a woman of true grit and substance. Running her dance school and facing life all alone. What I want to thank you for, however,are the photographs of her cherubic grand-daughter. It seems that the birth of baby Alia has changed the life of the Bedis. I am sure the world is looking forward to Pooja Bedi's book on baby care after seeing the photographs of the adorable child!

Sharbani Gangull, Asansol

GOING GREEN

Why only Delhi, several schools all over the country are trying to sensitise their students towards environmental concerns ('Greening them Young', May 31). It is a pity that we did not show these concerns earlier while nature had actually provided us with abundant greenery. If this generation is suffering, it is primarily because of our negligence of the environment. However, it is heartwarming to see that people have woken up from their slumber and are facing facts.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

It is heartening to see that young minds are being trained as good citizens of tomorrow.However, very little can be done unless big industrial houses and entrepreneurs come forward with financial help and other incentives to further the cause.

A. John, Gaya

graphiti ★ 5 July 1998

4 THE SHATTERING OF ZEENAT AMAN The sex symbol of the Seventies, bares her broken heart **10** MASQUERADE Playing the door-to-door salesperson for a day **12** BY DESIGN Candles are the accessory of the hour **14** SURVIVAL STRATEGIES Namita Gokhale tells you how to deal with your personal problems **16** MIXED BAG **18** RASOI Jiggs Kalra **22** BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY Suparna Trikha's recipes for looking and feeling good **26** TIME TABLE **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE Exploring Renuka Chowdhury's interiors





THE SHATTERING OF ZEENAT AMAN

Can she pick up the pieces and put her life back together? **Sudipta Basu** finds out

Sexy is not a word you would associate with Zeenat Aman today. Clad in faded jeans and a sheer, shapeless floral top, she looks more like a harried housewife than a film star who was the sex symbol of her generation. Her complexion is sallow, and her bleached hair clearly hasn't seen a conditioner for some time. And the figure that had all of India salivating a decade ago, looks a little — well, okay, more than a little — heavier.

But looking good is the least of Aman's problems these days. She is too busy coping with the latest crisis in her chequered life : the aftermath of her failed 12-year-old marriage to Mazhar Khan. The divorce came through seven months ago, without the blaze of publicity that usually attends these events. But in May, Aman hit the headlines when she filed a complaint with the Bandra Police claiming that her ex-husband's family — along with her elder 11-year-old son, Azaan — ransacked her house and verbally and physically abused her.

Aman did more. She held a Press conference, flanked by supportive friends, Honey Irani and Dimple Kapadia, to tell the world her story. According to her, Mazhar's brother-in-law, Tajdar Amrohi, and his son, accompanied by Azaan, had arrived at her house and assaulted her mercilessly — first with their hands and then a cricket bat. Her friend, Zaheer Aslam, who lives with her and her younger son, Zahaan, was also beaten. (Tajdar Amrohi denies the story; he says that they were beaten up by Zaheer, not the other way around.)

Zeenat, who was awarded sole custody of the children, says that she allowed Mazhar visitation rights after the divorce because he was a sick man. "But he has abused his rights," she adds. "In March, he abducted my son Azaan. I was advised by lawyers not to move the courts, keeping in mind the interest of my son. But the result has been horrific."

After all, what could be more traumatic than being assaulted by your own first-born? "Mazhar wants to get back at me through our child," she says. "All my life I put up with a facade



THE YOUNG AND DASHING MAZHAR
That's what he looked like when Zeenat married him. He's now a shadow of his former self



THE MEN IN ZEENAT'S LIFE **Dev Anand was her friend, philosopher, guide and lover; she had a short-lived affair with Imran Khan (centre); was beaten up by Sanjay Khan (top right); and is currently living with good friend Zaheer Aslam (bottom right)**

of a marriage because I wanted to keep my children in a close-knit network. Now it pains me to see that very purpose being defeated."

Not that Aman has given up hope. Her first priority these days is to rescue Azaan from 'that family' which she says will turn him into a 'criminal'. "I am in touch with his school," she says, "but they want me to wait for some time before contacting him, to give him some space. He is going through counselling."

Meanwhile, Zeenat is redoing her flat in Bandra, where she will live with her younger son, and friend Zaheer. She has joined a gym to get back into shape, and is looking for work. "These are not desperate times," she says, "but they are definitely difficult." She hopes to rent out her late mother's apartment on Mumbai's Napean Sea Road to raise some money, and maybe produce a movie or even start a TV talk show of her own.

But whatever she does, it is clear that at the age of 45-something, Zeenat Aman has to start life all over again.

It wasn't meant to end this way. Zeenat, or Babusha, as her fond parents called her, was always a rather special child. "I was very loved," she says, "even though my parents' marriage didn't last more than a few years." Perhaps, it was that latent feeling of insecurity that spurred Zeenat to excel at whatever she did. As she says, "I had programmed myself to succeed — right from the healthy baby competition to the Miss Asia pageant."

Aman excelled at St Joseph's School, Panchgani, and in her final year won a Rotract Exchange scholarship to Orange City School, California. In those days, her ambition was to become a linguist and work at the United Nations.

"Zeenat was a typical convent-educated, Breach Candy girl, very Westernised and extremely dignified," says Rasna Behl, a senior model coordinator who was her colleague on the ramp at that time. "One expected her to pursue higher studies abroad as she was very good academically."

Instead, Aman became a model, won the Miss India contest and subsequently the Miss Asia pageant and moved slowly but inexorably towards the world of Hindi films.

D.L. Oberoi, a fashion photographer who worked with Zeenat on the late 60s-early 70s ad campaigns says, "She was a born fighter. Coupled with this ruthless streak, she was extremely disciplined and professional, qualities that made her a cut above the rest." According to him, "She tried to resist

At the age of 45-something, Zeenat Aman is having over again. And it's not going to be the easiest

films, but I saw her distinctly moving towards them."

Zeenat herself is surprised that she edged that way. "Gosh," she says, "I was this snooty south Bombay girl, never watched Hindi films, and was very much influenced by my step-father Heinz Scharwachter, who was German. We discussed literature and high philosophy. Satre and Camus were household names, not Raj Kapoor and Manmohan Desai."

But when Dev Anand settled on her, after a gruelling four-month search, to play Janice in *Hare Rama, Hare Krishna*, Zeenat could not say no. After all, this was a role tailor-made for her. As Dev Anand says today, "She was my Janice, the young girl brought up abroad, but with an Indian heart. Her whole personality spoke of the screen persona she was about to get into — the liberated, beer-guzzling, cigarette-puffing girl of the 70s."

And with *Dum maro dum*, Zeenat Aman sang and danced her way into the hearts of most movie-goers — and into filmland history.

Few people give Zeenat credit for what is her greatest achievement : she changed the way Hindi film heroines looked, spoke, dressed and behaved. Earlier, there had been a clear demarcation between the heroine (think Nutan, Waheeda Rehman, Nargis, Hema Malini) and the vamp (think Helen, Shashikala, Bindu). One wore saris, the other slunk about in dresses; one stayed at home and waited for her beloved to show up; the other went to parties and tried to seduce the hero; one sang sad songs; the other performed the cabaret.

But Zeenat combined both the heroine and the vamp in her persona. She fluttered her eyelashes at the hero, wearing the most provocative of clothes in *Yaadon Ki Baraat*. In *Shalimar*, her cleavage put Dolly Parton to shame. She played a nightclub singer in *Qurbani*, complete with thigh-revealing outfits. Her village belle role in *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* showed more flesh than Bindu in her prime. And yet Aman remained the good girl, who always managed to get her man in the end.

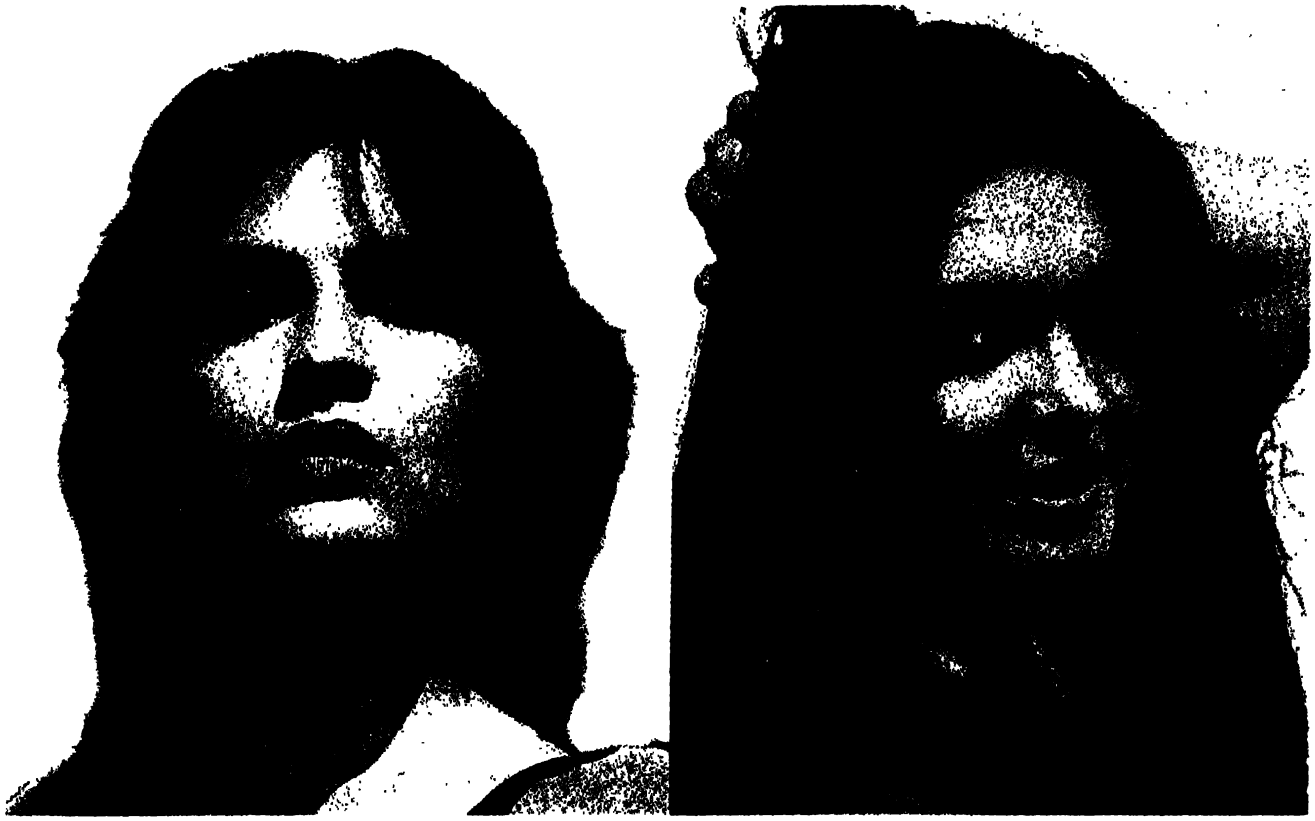
If today Karisma Kapoor can match Govinda, crude gesture for crude gesture, and Raveena Tandon can keep the front-benchers enthralled with *Ore, Ore*, it is because Zeenat Aman showed the way. Says Aman, "I never questioned my directors. And I wasn't shy of being bold on

ZEENAT COMBINED BOTH THE HEROINE AND THE VAMP IN HER PERSONA

She changed forever the way we looked at Hindi film heroines, and paved the way for Karisma Kapoor and Raveena Tandon



to start life all of tasks



screen. C'mon, I grew up watching Hollywood. Hindi films were innocent in comparison."

What wasn't quite so innocent was Zeenat - - or Zeenie baby, as Dev Anand had christened her — Aman's personal life. At a time when Hindi films heroines hid their whiskey in Coca Cola, and conducted their affairs in private, Zeenat's open attitude to sexuality had them all shocked in the film industry. Her affair with mentor Dev Anand didn't cause too many waves — perhaps because Anand insisted on a modicum of discretion - and Zeenat's relationship with industrialist Nusli Wadia remained veiled in secrecy. But with Sanjay Khan, Zeenat's personal life became something of a byword in the industry.

Sanjay was a married man with several children when Aman met him, and was instantly captivated by his charm. The two of them embarked on a passionate affair which culminated in a secret wedding (Sanjay, being Muslim, could marry more than once). And industry rumour had it that Zeenat even helped finance Khan's magnum opus, *Abdullah*, which turned out to be the box-office disaster of all times.

ZEENAT AMAN AND PARVEEN BABI OFTEN APPEARED TO BE MIRROR IMAGES

They were both Western-educated; more comfortable in jeans than saris; their love lives were the subject of innumerable gossip columns; and both turned out to have very bad taste in men

Disaster struck in Aman's personal life as well, as Sanjay turned viciously against her. It all came to a sorry end, when Zeenat was publicly assaulted by Sanjay and his wife Zarine at a five-star hotel in Mumbai — with at least one prominent Bombay socialite joining in - causing permanent damage to her right eye (it has been operated on a couple of times, the last being only about eight months back). Today Aman prefers to draw a discreet veil over that episode. All she will say is, "There has been one gruesome incident in my life in the past. But I am a mother today, and would rather not bring that up."

That's rather ironic, given that most people ascribe the bad choices Zeenat has made in her life (read men) to her troubled relationship with her own father, Amanullah Khan. The elder Aman was a bit of a waster, a wild man who left his wife and daughter to their own devices and went his own way. And some suggest that Zeenat has spent her entire life looking for the love of a man like a father : wild, rakish, irresponsible and a Khan.

Certainly Imran Khan, with whom Zeenat had a short-lived affair — they lived together in London for a couple of months — fit the bill. As did Sanjay, whom Zeenat married and hoped to make a life with. But the problem with wild men is that they can be, well, a bit wild. And while Imran was always the gentleman — at least with Zeenat — the same cannot be said of the other two Khans who played such a prominent part in her life: Sanjay and Mazhar.

Not that Zeenat restricted her attentions to men with a particular surname. She also went with Shatrughan Sinha for a while (though not too many people knew of the relationship), as she did with a small-timer called Robin Singh. And for a year or so, she was complete

ly enamoured of an Italian who went by the name of Frank Moreno.

But the moment Mazhar appeared on the horizon, Moreno was given the heave-ho. And Zeenat Aman recast herself as Mrs Mazhar Khan.

From the outset, Mazhar never appeared to be much of a matrimonial prospect. He was a chronic womaniser, he was married — at that time — to a girl called Rubaina, by whom he had a young son. And Zeenat was very much the other woman in his life.

But after a disgusted Rubaina gave Mazhar a *khulla* (an Islamic divorce initiated by the wife) and left for America with her young son, Mazhar and Zeenat settled into happy matrimony.

Or not so happy matrimony, as it turned out. The couple had two sons in quick succession, and Zeenat gave up on the movies to devote herself to her husband and children. But, she says now, the marriage went wrong from the word go. There were Mazhar's innumerable indiscretions, his dream project *Gang* which kept haemorrhaging money (and is still incomplete after 10 years), and Mazhar's illness.

Khan suffered from acute pancreatitis, and in the end had to be flown to England for treatment. But just when he began to show signs of improvement, says Zeenat, he became addicted to sleeping pills.

"That was it," says Aman now, "I could see him hurtling down the path of death. The doctors had given up on him and said that if he was not careful he would suffer renal failure. But would he listen to me? By now, I was tired. Tired of helping raise funds for his treatment and the film, running the house single-handedly, looking after the kids and nursing him. But the last straw was when he accused me of being an adultress and having an affair with our good friend from London, Zaheer Aslam. I wanted out now."

Mazhar and his family may deny that Zeenat ever raised money for him, but Aman insists that she has documentary proof of the same. Not that she is too concerned about the money. What worries her is the fate of her elder son. "I fear for him," she says. "Imagine having to hear your adolescent son hurl the choicest of abuses on you."

But despite the pain and the trauma of her life, she doesn't want to be anyone other than Zeenat Aman. "I only want to be in my own shoes," she says. "I can have no other life. I blossomed from girlhood to womanhood in the 17 years that I was in the industry. These years have given me something that the academic world couldn't have. Then I became a mother and felt most fulfilled."

Zeenat Aman is clear about one thing: she will never get married again. Zaheer is just a 'dear friend'

Zeenat, however, is clear about one thing : she will never get married again. Zaheer is a dear friend, who also has a wonderful relationship with her younger son, but she has other male friends as well, and marriage is not an option. "It is the best way to kill a relationship," she says.

Just as a comeback in the movies is out. "Me? Play a mother and *bhabhi* today? How can I? Even the other day an eight-year-old stopped by my car at the traffic intersection and said, 'Hey, look Zeenie baby!'" Aman laughs. Then after a moment, she adds, "Christ, that could have been my Zahaan." ■



THE ECSTASY AND THE AGONY
Failed marriages have a way of catching up with most heroines. Mumtaz's marriage to millionaire Mayur Madhvani failed spectacularly. And Meena Kumari never found true peace in husband Kamal Amrohi's arms

MASQUERADE

Ghazala Wahab spends one day as a door-to-door salesperson — and lives to tell her tale

SELLING A LIE

THE LADY MEANS BUSINESS
A little help from Lady Luck, perseverance, tact and a whole load of other qualities make for a good sales person

A salesperson's biggest nightmare? A board saying Beware ferocious dogs inside That was the last thing I wanted to see when I agreed to masquerade as a salesperson But the first house I stopped at said just that It seemed that Delhi's heat had driven away among other people Lady Luck as well

When the idea of masquerading as a salesperson came up at the office it had sounded exciting and simple All I had to do was call up one of the leading cosmetic companies borrow their products for a day and take off

But it turned out to be anything but simple All the shortlisted cosmetic companies declined politely Luckily,I discovered that one of our columnists develops herbal skin care products A hurried cramming session of the products followed, after which I had to show that I had all the information down pat

Then came the image part How should I dress? I hadn't a clue My colleagues were very helpful, but their help only added to the confusion as there were two contradictory schools of thought So a compromise was reached

A day before D day, we had a rehearsal in the office This, while doing nothing for my confidence, added to my nervousness as well meaning colleagues grilled me about the products I was carrying

Another problem was the weather Door-to-door marketing means walking at least two kilometres with a load of goods, trying to look pleasant — not a promising prospect in Delhi's heat

Finally, the day arrived Thankfully, the weather improved slightly The cyclone in Gujarat brought some rain to Delhi as well But the photographer was



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTTY

not happy. "Not a good day for outdoor shooting," he pronounced.

Dressing for the occasion proved to be as problematic. After debating for about 30 minutes, I zeroed-in on a salwar-suit which was sufficiently stylish and yet demure — after all I had to take the two schools of thought into account. Then came make-up. I decided to go easy on it. Lipstick? Well, subtle is safer.

So, finally, I was ready for the kill, or should I say, sales. I had decided to try my luck at New Delhi's Defence Colony. But the very first house I went to warned me of ferocious dogs — doing nothing to calm my nerves.

The next house I decided to try my luck at said nothing about dogs. Encouraged, I rung a bell and a full grown Pomeranian came bouncing up, barking madly. I stayed put,however, hoping that the charging canine would apply its brakes at the right time. It did. An elderly lady in a crumpled saree came trudging behind the dog. Well, my



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

I learnt a very important lesson: keep smiling, even when the only emotion the middle-aged woman opposite stirred in me was violence

first customer, I told myself hopefully. How would a salesperson address an elderly lady? "Excuse me, aunty," I said in a voice which was far from confident. "I am selling some herbal skin care products. Is there anyone in the house who would be interested in looking at them?"

The lady retreated without a word. For the next few minutes I debated what it meant: should I stay or should I go? Before I could reach a decision, a young college-going girl emerged inviting me into her bedroom."So what do you have?" was the first of her volley of questions. "Don't you have a sunscreen?"

After a 15-minute-long conversation during which she offered me water and related a few of her skin problems, she bought one anti-suntan face pack.

The next couple of houses were not so helpful. I learnt a very important lesson: keep smiling, even when the only emotion the middle-aged woman opposite stirred in me was violence. She didn't let me come in. Instead, she walked all the way from her door to the main gate dressed in a nightie and chatted unnecessarily.

"You know, I have a very sensitive skin. I am very particular about what I use. What all do you have, anyway?"

A long list follows.

"No, I am not interested." Period.

Luck had truly deserted me. The next house was no better. The middle-aged woman who opened the door was dressed for a party. Smiling sympathetically, she invited me in. The sweat, the weight of my bag and the fact that I had been walking for a while all combined to create a sorry figure.

"Would you care for some water?" she asked in a polished tone.

Encouraged, I promptly started off about the products.

"What is the range like?"

I told her.

"Actually, I am afraid we have a few guests right now. May be, some other time," she said with a smile.By this time, I was dead tired and ready to give up.

But I revived sufficiently to convince a young woman in her twenties about the virtues of the rose water she had shown interest in.

"How is it different from the ones available in the market?" she asked, even as she tried to roll her long hair in a bun.

"It's natural," I said.

"But you get natural rose water in the market also, which is much cheaper," she said still struggling with her hair .

"Well, the manufacturer claims that her's is the best," I said nonchalantly. Sure enough, she didn't buy it.

Experience is a great teacher. I resolved that for me to be a successful salesperson. I had to believe in the stuff I was trying to sell. Even if the humidity had taken its toll, and the weight of the bag had given me a dislocated shoulder, I still had to soldier on.

My resolve didn't go waste. I found myself outside a huge formidable gate. A young girl dressed casually in a pair of slacks and T-shirt opened the gate. The only thing that gave away her marital status was a slight hint of *sindoor* in her hair. Even before I could explain anything, she had invited me in and offered a glass of water.

Apparently, she had nothing much to do, so she started chatting. Once we were through with the sales part of the conversation — she bought one bottle of rose water — she asked me why I was doing what I was doing. I gave her the story I had developed in the office.

Then she told me about her experiences of the summer jobs she used to do, how she met her husband during one such assignment, how she got married a few months ago. "I am going to join him in Romania in a couple of weeks," she informed me with a faraway look. "I'll take this rose water with me to Romania."

After about 30 minutes of comfortable chatting, I excused myself, leaving her with a disappointed look on her face. Well, miles to go before I chat.

At the end of the day, I sold goods worth Rs 250. Not bad for an amateur salesperson, I think. Calling it a day, I decided to return and the timing was perfect. Just as I got into the autorickshaw, it started to rain. Now, who wants a dampener on high spirits? ■

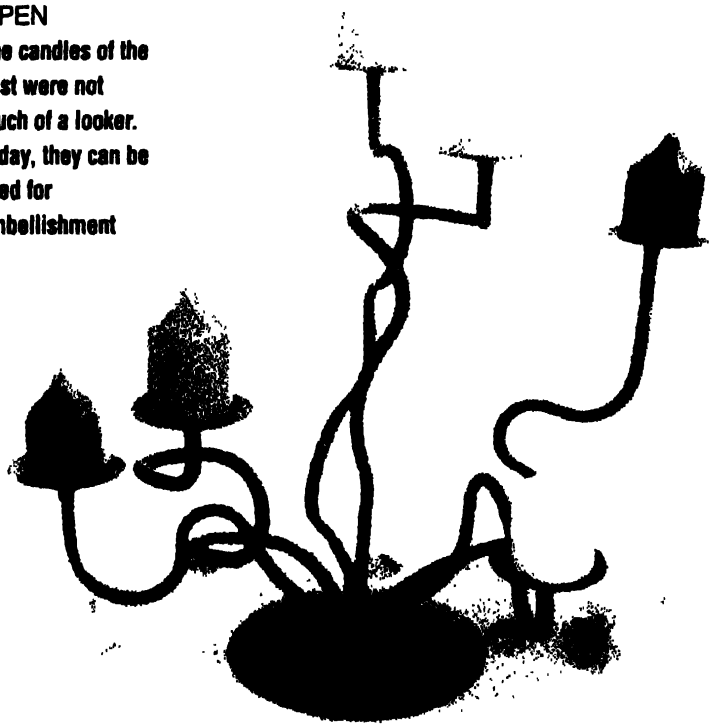
DESIGN Corner



A WHIFF OF WAX

Candles now come in every shape, size and colour; and some of them are perfumed as well. **Sujata Pandey** takes stock

OUT IN THE OPEN
The candles of the past were not much of a looker. Today, they can be used for embellishment



Power shortages; the fuse blowing out four times a night; a romantic dinner: whatever the reason, candles are a part of life in the 21st century. In the past, however, the average candle was not much of a looker and was always carefully hidden away at the back of a shelf. That has now changed and candles have been given a major makeover.

Not only have the shapes of the candle changed, but they come in all the shades of the rainbow — and more. Red, blue, aqua, lime green, shocking pink, sunshine yellow are only some of the colours that can be seen on the shelves of some of the boutiques.

Nini Srivastava, owner of Niniz Masha Allah boutique, caters to the cream of the city and the diplomats . She refuses to disclose the whereabouts of her candle supplier but was among the first to sell dripless candles. "These candles are bought by people who are very fussy about not having candle wax dribbling all over the table cloth", says Srivastava.Festive candles are also available in her shop: wax *diyas* for Diwali and Christmas candles decorated with bells.

Floating candles are popular buys. "People scatter them in their swimming pools when they have an outdoor party. It looks very pretty", says Srivastava. Her only despair in the candle business is the quality of the wicks. "Wicks are not good in India. There are no smokeless wicks, they emit smoke when the

candle is put out", she says.

There are candles to suit the mood of the hour also. The Aroma Shop of Blossom Kocchar stocks purple, lavender-scented candles for peace and calm, pink, rose-scented candles for love. The candles come in a glass dish holder, with a broad rim decorated with dried flowers. The cost of these candles is Rs 175. Once the candle is finished Kocchar refills the holder for a nominal price.

The most interesting candle in The Aroma Shop is the one that you make yourself. Fat jars containing powdered, aromatic wax with fragrances as exotic as basil, sandalwood, green apple, ylang ylang, lavender and jasmine can be filled in glass tubes or ceramic squares with your choice of fragrance. Add a wick and you have a personalised candle. The cost of this candle is Rs 250 and one can come back for more mood combinations. Says Ruth Panmei of The Aroma Shop, "We have good sales. Lots of people, both foreign and Indian, buy candles from here."

What is the common thread running through dinner tapers, slim line, spirals, large glazed pillars, squat pillars, big, medium and small rounds, votive, floating, pyramids and tea light, — these are the different types of candles on sale at the 'Good Earth' in Delhi.

Dinner tapers, slim line and spirals come in packs of three to twelve and the price ranges from Rs 180 to Rs 350. These candles are available in four to six hues. Large glazed pillars and squat pillars come in five colours. They are priced from Rs 75 to Rs 110.

Sundry rounds come in a variety of bright colours and are available in both glazed and natural finish. There is something about these candles that make one smile — they look so fat and cheerful! These are priced from Rs 25 to Rs 110. Votive candles are small and colourful and priced at Rs 25, exclusive of the holder.

Floating candles come in two sizes in four to six colours and cost between Rs 15 and Rs 25, with the dishes costing extra. The step bowl candle gets its name from the glass dish that is in the shape of outwardly spreading rings. The perfumed range includes lotus pond and lily pond. The shapes on offer are: cylindrical, round, pyramid and square glaze and the price ranges from Rs 40 to Rs 190.

Shashi Sehgal started 'Avishkar Corporation, which was basically an export-oriented venture, in Calcutta. This company has now opened an outlet in Delhi, Tarini, which stocks household furnishings and candles. According to Dalip Singh Rawat of Tarani, "All the candles stocked in Tarini are dripless and the wicks are smokeless." The candles and their holders — with cute names like Humpty Dumpty (for the round candles) — are piled here. The choice here is good and theprices range from Rs 15 to Rs 80."It is mostly the diplomatic crowd and some Indians who are coordinating their homes, who come to us. They come to us to understand themes ", says Seghal

The exclusive candle store is 'Limelight'. Located in Delhi's Hauz Khas Village, the store is owned by Ashok Bajaj. In addition to the vast variety of candles, Limelight stocks garden *mashals* for Rs 100 each, small ornament candles, perfumed hearts, insect repellent candles (Colibri) and perfumed candles. The aromas available are vanilla, pine and frankincense.

Payal Mathur of Creative Explosions has both aromatic and decorative candles in her shop. The floating candles come in the shape of stars and cost Rs 20. Benarasi candles come in terra-cotta holders with a traditional design on the holder, thus the name. Says Mathur, "I get my supply of fruity fragrances and garden torches from an NGO in Dehra Dun where women make the fruit candles in tin boxes.'

There are also dry flower candles with the fragrances of rose, jasmine and tuberoses. Mathur also stocks aroma diffusers — in which perfume-filled wax tablets are placed on top of a dispenser; a candle is lit at the bottom and as the wax tablet melts the perfume is released into the air. Mathur has candles in coconut shells from Calcutta and also fruit and vegetable shaped candles. The wax fruits available are apples and lemons.

Marbled candles and a variety of holders dressed up with dried flowers and natural leaves in many sizes are also stocked here. Stained glass and cracked glass holders in different colours are available to complement the candle and the room, along with a variety of floating candles— both aromatic and plain.

Clearly, candles have become the home accessory of the hour. So, how long could you possibly resist stocking up on your own particular favourites? Well, let's see...that red floater looks good...or maybe you could go for the vanilla-scented spiral...The possibilities, as they say, are endless.

CANDLE IN THE WIND
The choices are endless and even people who are finicky about candle wax can opt for dripless, perfumed ones



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

LONELY AUTUMN

Q. I am a 78-year-old widower living with my son and daughter-in-law. Ever since my wife's demise, my daughter-in-law has been habitually rude to me. She conveniently 'forgets' to serve me meals during lunch time. In fact, she has even told me that I am a burden on them. My son, of course, turns a deaf ear to his wife's rudeness towards me. I have no other place to go and I cannot tolerate my daughter-in-law's behaviour towards me. Please tell me what to do.

ABC, CUTTACK

Unfortunately, to many, personal relationships, including those between parents and children, are reduced to nothing but mere equations. The first thing to do is to stop feeling sorry for yourself. If your meals are not served on time, go to the kitchen and get them for yourself. Guard and preserve your self-sufficiency as fiercely as you can, it's the key to your happiness. Be firm about retaining control upon any money and assets you may possess. Reach out to friends and acquaintances, and keep yourself as busy as you possibly can. At the same time, try to be sympathetic to the problems of those around you. Modern life is full of impossible stresses, and your son and daughter-in-law may simply be finding it difficult to cope with the daily strains of survival. If you are strong and cheerful and self-sufficient you will stop being a burden to them and, of course, you will feel more happy and positive in the bargain.

BRAVE HEART

Q. I am 18 years old and I am presently studying Chemistry Honours in college. I live in my uncle's house because it is near to my college and also because my father has retired and cannot pay for my education. In my uncle's place, I help my aunt run her business in lieu of which my uncle pays my college fees. This worked out fine initially but soon, my aunt and her daughter started treating me as their slave. Previously, I used to work for two hours in the mornings and two hours in the evenings but now my aunt has stopped working totally and I have to do all the work till midnight. They also take turns in taunting me and inflicting all kinds of tortures. There is no hostel facility in my college and I cannot go home because my mother thinks I do not want to live there merely because of the strict discipline. What should I do?

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA

The thing about early difficulties in life is that, tackled properly, they make you strong and invincible in the obstacle-course of life. I would suggest that you simply stop getting exploited in this manner. Tell your relatives politely, but firmly, that you are willing to put in a reasonable amount of work and no

DANGEROUS LIAISONS

Q. I am a 46-year-old lady and I think I am quite liberal in my attitudes but recently when my 23-year-old son told me that he is a homosexual, my peaceful world was shattered. I just cannot face up to the fact and often end up cursing myself. Maybe I was wrong in bringing him up in a liberal manner. Please tell me how to cope with the situation.

A. PRADHAN, PATNA

Quite naturally, the hard realities of facing your son's homosexual proclivities have shattered you. I personally know a few people who have had to face exactly the same situation. After much heartbreak and soul-searching, they ultimately came to terms with the matter of their children's sexual preferences and their mutual relationship has in fact mellowed and improved. Above all, do not blame yourself. Secondly, accept the fact that your son is an adult and an individual. Thirdly, do not be afraid of social pressures, and do not let the "what will people think" factor come between you and your son.

more. If they do not find it convenient, you will seek a part-time job for yourself and that there is always a place under the sun for hardworking people. Start looking for part-time employment elsewhere, it is not as tough as it sounds. When one door slams shut another door opens — so keep faith and stand up for your rights.

STRANGER IN THE HOUSE

Q. I am a student of Class X. I believe I am a pretty mediocre student. This year I am going to give my ICSE exams and my parents, instead of encouraging me, always discourage me saying that I will never be able to do anything worthwhile in my life. Even my brother joins them in taunting me. Though I study most of the time, they can never see me studying. I also have another problem in that I have certain very close friends who are boys. My family members do not seem to like this at all and think that I am having an affair with them. Although I love my parents and brother a lot, they do not seem to understand my point of view. I feel totally alienated in my own house.

NAME WITHHELD, DURGAPUR

The fortunate part is that the cruelly negative attitude of your family does not seem to have affected your common sense. You are an alert and intelligent person, and certainly not mediocre. Continue to believe in yourself, and if your boyfriends reinforce your positive self-esteem, by all means continue to befriend them. All things are possible for those who believe in themselves, and, of course, the reverse stands equally true. Studies are not everything, though, of course, they help to have a focused mind and a steady concentration, which is what studies are all about.

So, do not feel apologetic about yourself. If you really want to shake your family out of their negative attitude, just put in that extra bit into your studies, by believing in yourself and putting in that little extra that makes the difference. That will shut them up and boost your confidence as well!

MARRIAGE BLUES

Q. I am a 27-year- old married woman working in an ad agency. I got married about three years back to a man who I thought was handsome, smart, witty and outgoing. My problem is that I feel my husband is an incorrigible flirt. My husband flirts outrageously even in front of me although he insists that I am reading too much into the matter and also getting jealous. In his own way, I suppose, he loves me, but I can never be satisfied with this sort of a relationship where I feel insecure. Explaining my point of view to him is futile as we end up having bitter fights. Please advise.

S.M. CALCUTTA

As far as I can see, there is no incompatibility between being an incorrigible flirt and a good husband. From the tone of your letter, I feel that you have a good thing going in your marriage. It is just that you are insecure and cannot accept your husband's social ease with women and his habit of showering them with outrageous compliments. Believe me, if he was serious about any of these women he would be much more secretive about them. So take it in your stride and build up a marriage with both sizzle and security.



DARK MEMORIES

Q. I am 25 years old. I have suffered a most traumatic childhood as my parents were killed in a car crash right in front of my eyes while I was travelling in it. I have been having recurrent nightmares about that incident in the past few months, although I had adjusted to the tragedy earlier and somehow forgotten it. Why do you think, I am having these nightmares again? I am in a miserable condition due to this. Please help me.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

The mind has its own defence mechanism and sometimes blocks out events and situations it is not equipped to handle. Post-traumatic stress disorders occur when the mind belatedly admits to the reality it has been blocking out. Nightmares are the subconscious mind's efforts to process what is troubling it. Basically, you have to come to terms with your tragic loss, and the fact of human mortality in general. Dr Sigmund Freud once memorably said that, ultimately, the only therapy is work and love. Keep yourself busy and involved, and do continue to reach out to all the people in your life. You could seek the assistance of a trained therapist to help you work through your feelings of loss. I would also suggest that you consult a good homoeopath to help you cope with the nightmares. Remember, surrender and prayer in any form is an invaluable aid to a troubled mind. ■

MIXED Bag

HIC,HIC, HOORAY

● This is for the guzzlers, and more specifically, London Pilsner addicts. Associated Breweries and Distillers Limited have introduced their premium beer in 330 ml and 500 ml aluminium beverage cans, priced at Rs 25 and 35 respectively. The new package size is geared to supplement the availability of London Pilsner's product that have been offered in glass bottles.



The new cans are being distributed in Maharashtra and will very soon be available all over India. The aluminium beverage cans are said to offer a number of advantages to the consumer, including longer shelf-life, lower refrigeration costs (beverages chill faster in aluminium), lower transportation costs and safer packing compared to glass.

Drink of love



So, they're finally coming out of the closet. In a land where Muslims are not served liquor in public, the musical trio of Junoon are not just drinking publicly but are actually recording the event for posterity.

A harbinger of things to come? Or does it have something to do with Mian Nawaz Sharif's professed liberalism? Or even the fact that Pakistan's music-makers are attracting international attention, for a change, of the right kind? The latest video of the band, *Yaar bina dil mera naiyoon lagda*, has two of the trio, Salman Ahmed and Brian O'Connell, visiting a nautch girl and actually drinking at the *kotha*. The lyricist-composer, Salman, is shown nursing a drink, and in typical Hindi film fashion, trying to pull the girl's *dupatta*. Salman, however, is careful enough to hold the glass in such a way that one cannot see the colour of the drink. But, obviously, it is not of the soft variety because in the next scene he is shown drunk, with Brian trying to help him walk. Finally, he passes out as Brian looks sadly from the girl to the man and back again.

Well, we all knew that Junoon was set to go places. But few thought it would go so boldly where no Pakistani Muslim has gone before.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Wear flowers in your hair.

Play school

Children have never had it so good. First, it was Mahesh Dattani who conducted a theatre workshop for budding actors in Delhi. And now Roshan Abbas, the former radio jockey turned TV star, is all set to do his bit for the mites.

Drawing on the plethora of fascinating experiences he shared with an enthusiastic bunch of teenagers at Encompass' workshop, Roshan hit upon the idea of staging a full-fledged play, starring these kids. The result was a first-ever Indo-Anglian production, *Graffiti Postcards From School*, scripted and directed by Abbas.



There are plans of taking the production to several metros, beginning with Delhi's Kamani Auditorium in August.

The play *Graffiti*... will deal with the trials and tribulations of school life spanning children's experiences from their first to their last day of school. Linked by a series of songs and dances, it will have Shiamak Davar's magical choreography, and is already being touted as the largest teenage production in Indian theatre involving no less than 70 students.

Making men fashionable

There was a time when men's fashion in India did not extend beyond the addition of some drab embroidery on the neck or the hem of a *kurta* to break the monotony of the design. Even when it came to colours, men shied away from the brighter shades.

And then arrived a figure on Calcutta's fashion firmament who changed it all. Men got over their inhibitions and became more adventurous: sporting colourful scripts, paintings of Krishna destroying Kalia, tribal warriors, geometric patterns, scenes from Hindu mythology, Picasso motifs or colonial memories of gaslights and carriages on their backs and *dhotis*.



Thus converted, they swore by the one name who had transformed their wardrobes into a trendy and aesthetic fashion statement: Sharbari Datta. Today, each of Sharbari's creation is an exclusive piece of art for she hand-paints each item, drawing her inspiration from folk as well as urban traditions. Sharbari's clientele includes such names as M.F. Husain, Anil Dharkar, Kapil Dev, Sanjeev Goenka and Anupam Kher.

In recognition of her significant contribution to men's fashion, she was recently honoured by liquor baron Vijay Mallya with a specially crafted crystal trophy in Calcutta to mark 100 years of McDowell. Cheers for the lady who managed to bring colour into men's lives!

It beats any perfume anytime

LES BELLES SANS MERCI

● The latest from the couture house of Nina Ricci, which has brought premier fragrances like Nina, L'air Du Temps, Deci-Dela, Signor Ricci and Ricci Club to the country, is it's newest perfume Les Belles this week. A tangy and feminine eau de parfume for girls between the ages of 15 and 22, this one is said to bottle the spirit of freedom, youthfulness and joie de vivre of the young woman.

Priced at Rs 1,100 (30 ml), Rs 1,300 (50 ml) and Rs 1,800 (100 ml) the fragrances will be retailed out of exclusive outlets in Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore, Pune, Chennai, Indore and Ahmedabad. Bottled in a lacquered glass flacon in a rounded shape and tinted a luminous apple green and crowned with metallic pink, it at once evokes images of an oil, a queen and a chess piece..



WE LOVE
AMREETA CHEEMA

● Her throaty voice and gentle manner conceals an interviewer with skill, intelligence, and the ability to ask hard questions — and then insist that they be answered. But she persists with such a sweet, half-embarrassed smile, that it is difficult to take offense, even if you are the one in the hot seat. Star News on Sunday has improved tremendously ever since she took over as co-anchor. And if the bosses at New Delhi Television (NDTV) had any sense, they would give her a show of her own.

WE HATE
T.N. SESHAN



● How on earth did this man manage to get on television — and as anchor of a full-fledged show, no less? Is India TV really that desperate for talent? Or did Seshan make them an offer that was too good to refuse? The channel would, however, be performing a public service if it yanked his show off the air — by next week, if possible. The former chief election commissioner makes the worst possible anchor: he's rude, he's opinionated, he's loud, and he talks so much that his guests are lucky if they can get a word in edgewise. The only purpose his programme serves is to help mothers put young children to bed. "Go to bed," they say to their little darlings as the hour becomes late, "or Uncle Seshan will come on television."

RASOI

The food column



Where's the Meat?

Jiggs Kalra has something for both vegetarian and non-vegetarian

The great challenge before the Indian kebab is to retain its succulence. Most restaurants operate with a single *tandoor*, which means that other than the small span of time that the clay oven achieves optimum temperature the kebab is either undercooked or dry. The *gilaaf* in the *Gilaafi* is one sure-fire way of ensuring succulence at all times.
The chefs who perfected the dish are *Rasoi* team mate, Raminder Malhotra, and Pankaj Mehra, *chef de cuisine* at The Kandahar, The Oberoi, New Delhi

Chaamp Gilaafi

Serves: 4
Preparation Time: 3 hours
Cooking Time: 10 to 12 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 12 **Chaamp/kid/lamb chops** (3-rib; side ribs removed)

THE *GILAAF*

- 125g/ 4½ oz **Flour**
- **Salt**
- 75ml/5tbs **Milk**
- 2.5g/1/2tsp **Sugar**
- 50g/1/4 cup ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Chotti Elaichi*/ Green Cardamom powder**
- **Flour to dust**

THE FIRST MARINATION

- 6g/2tsp **Red Chilli Powder**
- **Salt**
- 40g/7 tsp **Garlic Paste** (strain)
- 20g/3½ tsp **Ginger Paste** (strain)
- 90ml/6tbs **Fresh Pineapple Juice**
- 3g/1tsp ***Saunf*/Fennel Powder**
- **A pinch of *Zeera*/Cumin Powder**
- **A pinch *Jaiphal*/Nutmeg Powder**
- **A pinch of *Laung*/Clove Powder**

THE BRAISING

- **Cooking oil to sear chops**
- 5 ***Chotti Elaichi*/Green Cardamom**
- 2 ***Moti Elaichi*/Black Cardamom**
- 2 **Sticks *Dalchoori*/Cinnamon** (1")
- 2 ***Tej Patta*/ Bay Leaf**
- **Salt**

THE TOPPING

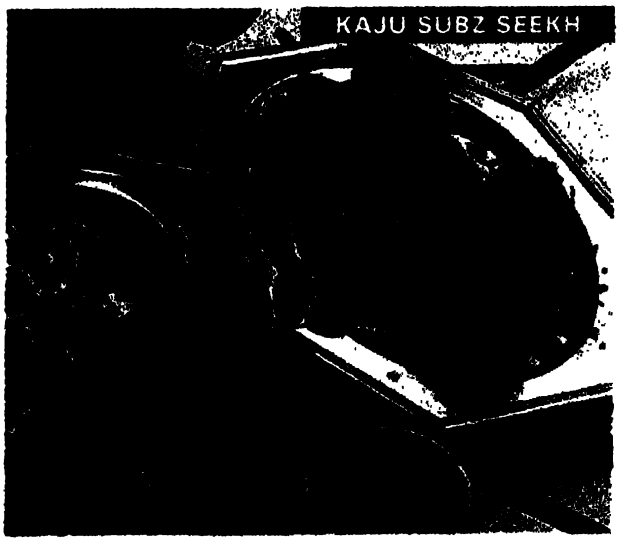
- 120g/4oz **Potatoes** (boil, cool, peel and mash)
- 60g/2oz **Processed Cheese** (grate)
- 45g/1½oz **Onions** (finely chop)
- 4 **Green Chillies** (seed and chop)
- 5g/2tbs **Basil** (fresh; chop)
- 3g/1tsp **Black Pepper** (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)
- **A pinch of *Kaala Namak*/Black Rock Salt Powder**
- **A pinch of *Kasoori Methi*/Fenugreek**
- **A pinch of *Amchoor*/Mango Powder**
- **Salt**

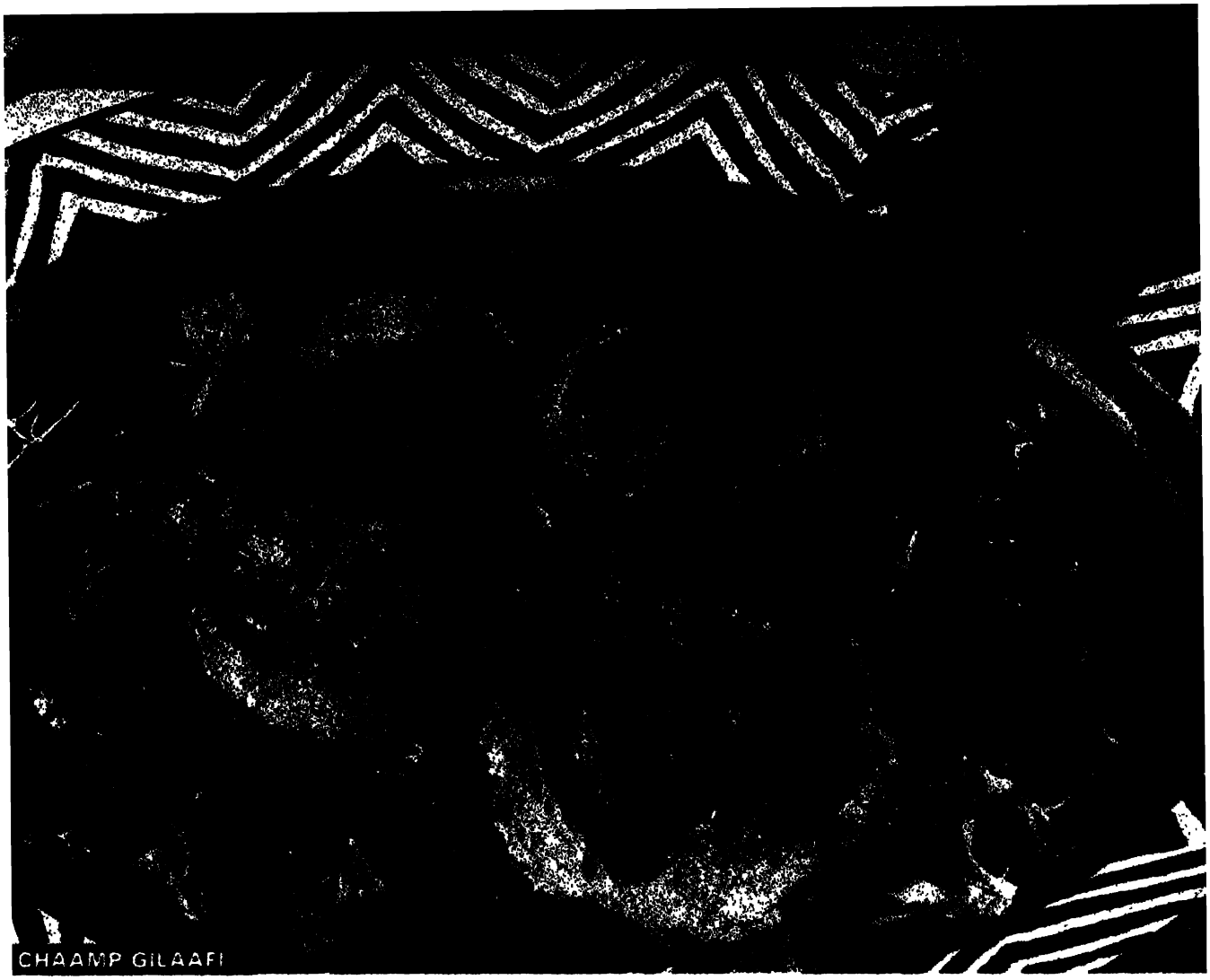
PREPARATION

The marination: Mix all the ingredients, evenly rub the chops with this marinade and reserve for 1 hour.

The *Gilaaf*: Sieve with salt into a *paraat*. Heat milk in a *handi*/pan, when warm add sugar and stir until it dissolves. Melt *ghee* in a bowl, add cardamom and stir. Make a bay in the sieved flour, pour the milk in it and start mixing gradually. When fully mixed, knead to make dough, cover with a moist cloth and keep aside for 10 minutes. Add the melted ghee or butter and incorporate gradually. When fully mixed, knead to make soft dough, cover and keep aside for 10 minutes. Divide into 12 equal portions, make balls, dust with flour, cover and keep aside for 10 minutes.

The searing: Heat oil in a frying pan, add the chops and sear each side over





CHAAMP GILAAFI

high heat for a minute.

The braising: Arrange the seared-chops in a roasting tray, add the remaining ingredients and enough water to cover, and braise in a pre-heated oven (400°F) until the liquor begins to boil. Then reduce oven temperature to 150°F and braise for 30 minutes. Remove and discard the liquor.

The topping: Put all the ingredients, mix well and divide into 12 equal portions. Spread a portion of the topping on one side of a braised chop. Roll out the dough, (enough to wrap the chops), place a chop in the middle of the rolled dough and wrap to cover fully, turn over, arrange in a greased roasting tray and egg wash.

COOKING

Put the wrapped chops in the oven and bake for 10 minutes or until the *purdah* is golden coloured.

TO SERVE

Remove chops to a silver platter and serve, along with the *purdah* as the bread.

Kaju Subz Seekh

INGREDIENTS

- 100g/3oz **Cashewnuts** (finely chop)
- 250g/9oz ***Paneer*** (grate)
- 150g/5oz ***Zimikand*/Yam**
- 150g/5oz **Peas** (boil, cool and mash)
- 150g/5oz **Carrots** (grate, blanch for 30 seconds and squeeze dry)
- 30g/1oz ***Maida*/All-purpose Flour**
- 15g/1"" piece **Ginger** (finely chop)
- 4 **Green Chillies** (seed and finely chop)
- 3.25g/1tbs ***Hara Dhania*/Coriander** (finely chop)
- 1.25g/1/2tsp ***Ajwain***
- 3g/1tsp **Black Pepper** (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)
- 3g/1tsp ***Amchoor*/Mango Powder**
- **Salt**
- **Cooking oil to deep fry**

Serves: 4

Preparation Time: 1:15 hours

Cooking Time: 2-3 minutes/set

PREPARATION

The Yam: Peel and cut into small pieces. Boil until cooked, but not until soft and mushy, drain, cool and grate.

The croquettes: Mix all the ingredients, except cashewnuts and cooking oil, make 16 croquettes, roll in cashewnuts and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

COOKING

Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok, add the croquettes and deep-fry over medium heat until golden. Remove to absorbent paper to drain the excess fat.

TO SERVE

Remove to a platter and serve with mint chutney. ■

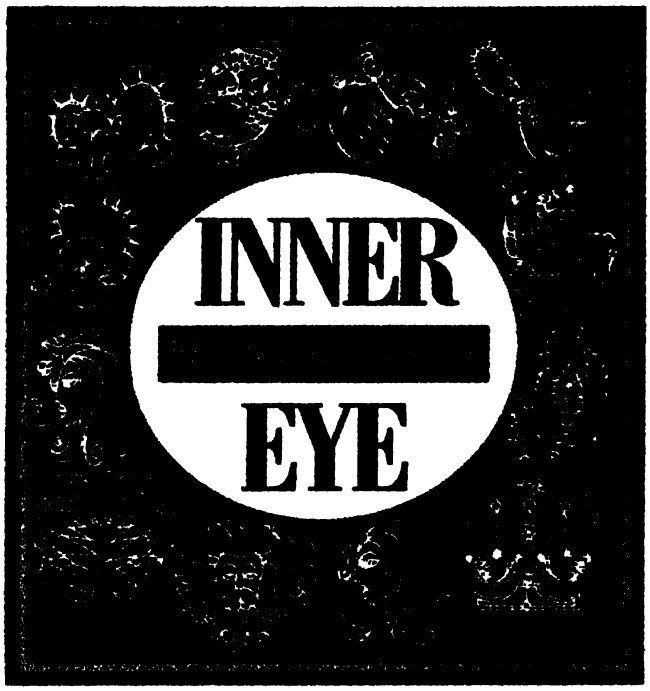
★ARIES, (March 21- April 20) You will have to walk that extra mile if you wish to succeed. Many Ariens will demonstrate a marked interest in religious matters. Ambition will be honed. You might, however, not see eye to eye with your parents, elders and in-laws. You are bound to do well in tests and interviews and this will see you getting the job you always wanted.

★TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) Ganesha says that the new moon makes you very introspective and conscious of your duties and responsibilities. Distant places will have a special attraction for you and possibly, collaborations could be on the anvil too. Liaisons and secret deals are also quite possible. Your health needs attention.

★GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Work with a will and success will be yours because Jupiter and the new moon are superbly juxtaposed for you. This is very definitely action time and you may expect things to go your way. At socials and get togethers, you will make a mark. So, go ahead and have the time of your life. Expect some tension in the domestic front.

★CANCER, (June 21- July 20) More power to your elbow as Mercury-Jupiter become your loyal allies. This does not, however, mean you will have an easy time. It just means that you will, like Faulkner, "overcome". The health of parents and in-laws cause grave concern. It will do you no good, however, to worry too much on that front.

★LEO, (July 21- August 21) You could make a quick killing, make a fast buck, bag a contract, pull ahead of your rivals. Yes, there are pleasing prospects ahead of you. Loans and funds could be secured and that could be invested to a great advantage. Children, outings, romance form a major tripod. Expect good news from the home front.



★VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) There will be the urge and pressure to perform, to outshine and outdo others. Mars will help you considerably to do so. Alliance and paradoxically, separations are emphasised this week because of the new moon. A journey or an outing with a stopover is probable. This will be a week of movement. Neighbours will be of help.

★LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) You will have much to do with loans, finances, transactions and perhaps legal issues as well. Soon, it could be engagement time or even wedding bells for you. Do not be upset by undue pressure, delays or cancellations. You will have cause to remember your ancestors. You will easily sail through the opposition.

★SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) You will be just a wee bit faster than your opponents and that will be the secret of your success. You will be helped by human as well as divine forces. A little bit of loving and lots of laughing is how it will go for you this week. Long distance connections and the luck of the draw are definitely highlighted for you this week.

★SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) Those in research, Government service, education, public relations, teaching, acting, travel and trade agencies do wonderfully well. Mercury makes you curious, alert, active and ready to take chances. You have a chance to win well-deserved plaudits. Be valiant and hope for the best.

★CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) Changes on the home front and property frontiers are predicted. Travel is a distinct possibility and that includes a home away from home. There is a chance to make money but take care to pay rentals and taxes. Do away with inhibitions and squeamishness. Your work deserves primary importance for the moment.

★AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Health causes major concern and you have to be careful. It would be a good policy to invest wisely. On the positive side, you could run into interesting people, who will try their best to charm you. Finances become the fulcrum. Expect some kind of trouble professionally in which you might be bailed out by colleagues.

★PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Ganesha says influence will manifest fully this week. You'll will have much to do with loans and funds, public trusts and money and the consequences should be pleasing. A trip at short notice is likely. A dash of romance, colour and laughter lends gaiety to your life. Inculcate some amount of discipline in your life.



SMALL Talk

Crossing Swords

Seema Goswami on Prince William vs the British tabloids

The provocation: A supplement brought out by *The Mail* on Sunday, which was exclusively devoted to the 16-year-old Prince,included information about the young girls whom William was dating, and insinuated that all his girlfriends were vetted by the Palace.

The young Prince was incensed by his intrusion into his private life. And rather than fume and fret in private like his father, Prince Charles, would have done) or burst into tears in public like his mother, the late Princess Diana, did on one memorable occasion), William reacted in an extremely mature manner. He shot off a letter to the Press Complaints Commission, asking that such invasive reporting on his life be stopped.



It was only a matter of time: Though, before this happened. The tabloids, which had gone into a frenzy of self-flagellation after the death of Princess Diana, vowing to keep away from the stuff of people's private lives, couldn't be expected to remain on their best behaviour for more than a year. And given that Prince Charles is a bit of a bore -- even when he is having his bottom pinched by the Spice Girls — and Prince Harry too young to provide good copy, Press attention was bound to be focussed on William.

Prince William is rich, he's good looking, he's sexy...ideal tabloid fodder, in other words

After all, he's rich, he's good-looking, he's sexy in a boyish sort of way, and he stands to inherit the throne of England in the fullness of time. Ideal tabloid fodder, in other words

So, how does the poor boy cope? : Well, he could ask his father for a few pointers. Prince Charles has lived his whole life — from his first beer in a pub, to his farmland fumblings with Amanda Knatchbull, to his courtship of the lovely Diana Spencer — in the glare of media attention. So, he should know a few tricks about how one can cope with those utterly bloody reporters.

On the other hand: Maybe William will be better off not repeating the mistakes of his father. Remember, Charles was the man who was photographed naked at the window of a stately home; who rode to hounds despite the bad publicity surrounding blood sports; and who, most famously, told his mistress, Camilla Parker Bowles, that he would like to be reincarnated as her tampon.

So, whom should William emulate?: Not his mother, most certainly. It was Diana, after all, who was the Princess of the Photo-Opportunity. She never could resist the lure of a camera, even if it was a tele-photo lens that was aimed at her as she lay sunning herself in the middle of the Mediterranean in a skimpy little bikini.

And William would be equally ill-advised to follow in the footsteps of his uncle, Earl Spencer, who has made a career out of slagging off the tabloids after spending a part of his youth working for an *Entertainment Today*-style American TV show.

What's the young Prince to do then?: That's a tough one. He could, of course, follow the path of least resistance, and not say anything at all, hoping that the tabloids would just go away. But as is clear, tabloids don't, on the whole, do any such thing.

So, what then? Should he protest loud and clear—as he is doing at the moment—hoping that they will be shamed into ignoring him? Yes, that does sound like his best bet at the moment—until the next backlash against the paparazzi, that is.■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 30 years old and have prominent lines on the nape of my neck and cheeks which make me appear much older than I am. Please tell me a natural remedy to make my skin appear soft, healthy, youthful and glowing.

PRIYA RAY, CALCUTTA

It seems you want the remedy for a perfect skin. A problem like neck lines is something totally different from someone who wants healthy, glowing skin. Let us deal with the real problem. Basically, most people tend to pay attention only to their faces and leave out their necks completely when cleansing, toning and moisturising. Just as the rest of the body requires exercise, so does the neck. Start to exercise the neck by stretching it from one side to the other. Also rotate the head slowly and then bend backwards and forwards. Massage the neck with pure almond oil in upward strokes. Apply a neck mask with the following ingredients — fuller's earth, gramflour, egg white and lemon juice. Leave till dry and then wash off. This is to be done thrice a week for two months for best results. A graceful swan like neck is what everybody desires but to attain it, one has to work towards it and there is no better way to do it than the natural way.

I have a lot of grey hair and I want to start colouring it, but I have been told that it is bad for the hair. What do you suggest?

SHALINI CHOPRA, CALCUTTA

I do not think you should ever dye your hair. Dyes always have strong chemicals that can damage the hair and you may even lose your hair. Try using *henna*. If done regularly, it will darken the hair as well as condition it. *Henna* should be left for a minimum of two hours before rinsing off.The regular use of *henna* will not only cover up the grey strands but also make your hair more luxuriant.

I am a 23-year-old working woman. I get a lot of boils all over my feet especially during the summer months. I am therefore embarrassed to wear open footwear. Please suggest a permanent remedy for this.

SAGARIKA SAHA, HOWRAH



FOR DARK ELBOWS

Apply a pack of grated potato, oatmeal, gramflour, milk and honey on them

Please do not be embarrassed to wear open footwear. On the contrary, you need to let your feet breathe in open footwear rather than having them closed in shoes and spreading more infection. Keep your foot clean and if you must wear socks, please wear cotton ones and wash them daily. Dip your feet daily into a tub containing luke warm water to which you should add two tsp of alum powder, two tsp margosa paste and two drops of peppermint oil. The foot needs to be soaked for about 15 minutes and can be done after work in the evenings. Pat dry, especially between the toes, and powder the feet with very fine sandalwood powder.

I am a 28-year-old woman and I have too much hair on my upper lip and chin. Is there any remedy for this other than threading? Please suggest.

SUSHMA VAJPAYEE, CALCUTTA

Most women prefer threading these areas but I would suggest waxing as well. Cold or hot wax can be used. This is easy and effective. Besides this, tweezing can be done.

I am a 34-year-old housewife. I am a victim of freckled skin since my teenage days. I have tried out different medical advice but to no avail. Now I

am worried about my nine-year-old daughter who is beginning to have similar problems. I have heard that it is not curable. I wish to know your opinion about this and whether there is any home remedy for this problem.

AMRITA ROY, DURGAPUR

The skin has its own protective mechanism against sunlight. When it is exposed to the sun, the pigment in the skin increases in order to protect the inner layer of the skin. Repeated exposure to the sun, especially for long durations, cause these freckles. It is more likely in case of fair skins. Freckles are basically an accumulation of pigments. First of all, you must avoid excessive exposure to the sun. Always protect your skin with a sunscreen. It is important to nourish your face with a good massage cream. Make the following face pack four times a week: *multani mitti,* grated potato, fresh cream and turmeric powder. Massage this into your face and then leave on till dry. Wash face first with milk and then with ice-cold water. Keep applying this pack for about a month before you see the results.

I am 23 years old. My cheeks are covered with scars and they appear craggy. Earlier, I used to have a clear skin with no problems. Some time back, my beautician had plucked my acne with a pointed extractor. Could that have caused the scars? I am very depressed. Please advise.

SONIA DAS, HOWRAH.

I do not understand what your beautician is upto. Pointed extractors should definitely not be used on acne, especially if it is filled with pus. The skin has to be treated with care and you must be extremely careful and regular when treating your skin at home. First of all, you need to change your lifestyle. Drink lots of water, indulge in a lot of aerobic exercises, eat salads, fruits and lots of unsweetened dairy products. Say a firm 'no' to fried foods, sweets, chocolates, aerated driks and ice-creams. Make a face pack of the following ingredients:*multani mitti,* sandalwood powder, three ground cloves, lemon juice and *chokker* mixed with ice water. Apply the paste all over your face and neck and leave on till dry. Now dab your face with milk and scrub off in a rotating manner. Wash face with ice cold water. This has to be done daily for a month. Also wipe face several times with rose water.Once this clears up your skin slightly, there are secondary steps to smoothen out the marks which I shall discuss later.

I have dry hair with lots of split ends. How do I get rid of them and what is the best conditioner to use?

MITA GHOSH, PATNA

Split ends arise due to undernourished hair. The fact that you have mentioned that your hair feels very dry also shows that you require to nourish your hair regularly. Mix two eggs, one cup of curd, amla powder, fenugreek seeds and shikakai powder and apply all over your hair. Leave on for about half an hour and then wash off with a mild shampoo. Initially, you can have your split ends removed by a professional. This will help better growth of hair. You must take a well-balanced nutritious diet. Oil your hair regularly once a week followed with turban therapy. A regular hair care programme goes a long way in determining what your hair feels and looks like. So start taking good care of your hair right now and do it the natural way.

I am an ardent reader of your column and have a severe problem of after shave rashes. I use a cologne. Could it be a reaction to that or is it due to some other reason? Please advise.

ABHISHEK SEN, CALCUTTA

After shave rashes can be a reaction to a cologne which might not have suited you but it could also be due to the very sensitive skin that you appear to have. Try to change your cologne and go in for a milder after shave lotion. After shaving, I would first advise you to moisturise your skin and then apply alum all over it.This is an age old treatment that is not used but is very effective just the same.Try to be gentle with your skin. It needs as much attention as a woman's skin. I would suggest that you apply fuller's earth face pack once a week to keep the skin well-toned.

I am 15 years old and have fine lines around my eyes, mouth and jaw. It looks very strange, as if I am aging. Otherwise, I have an oily nose. How should I tackle this?

TUMPA SEN, CALCUTTA

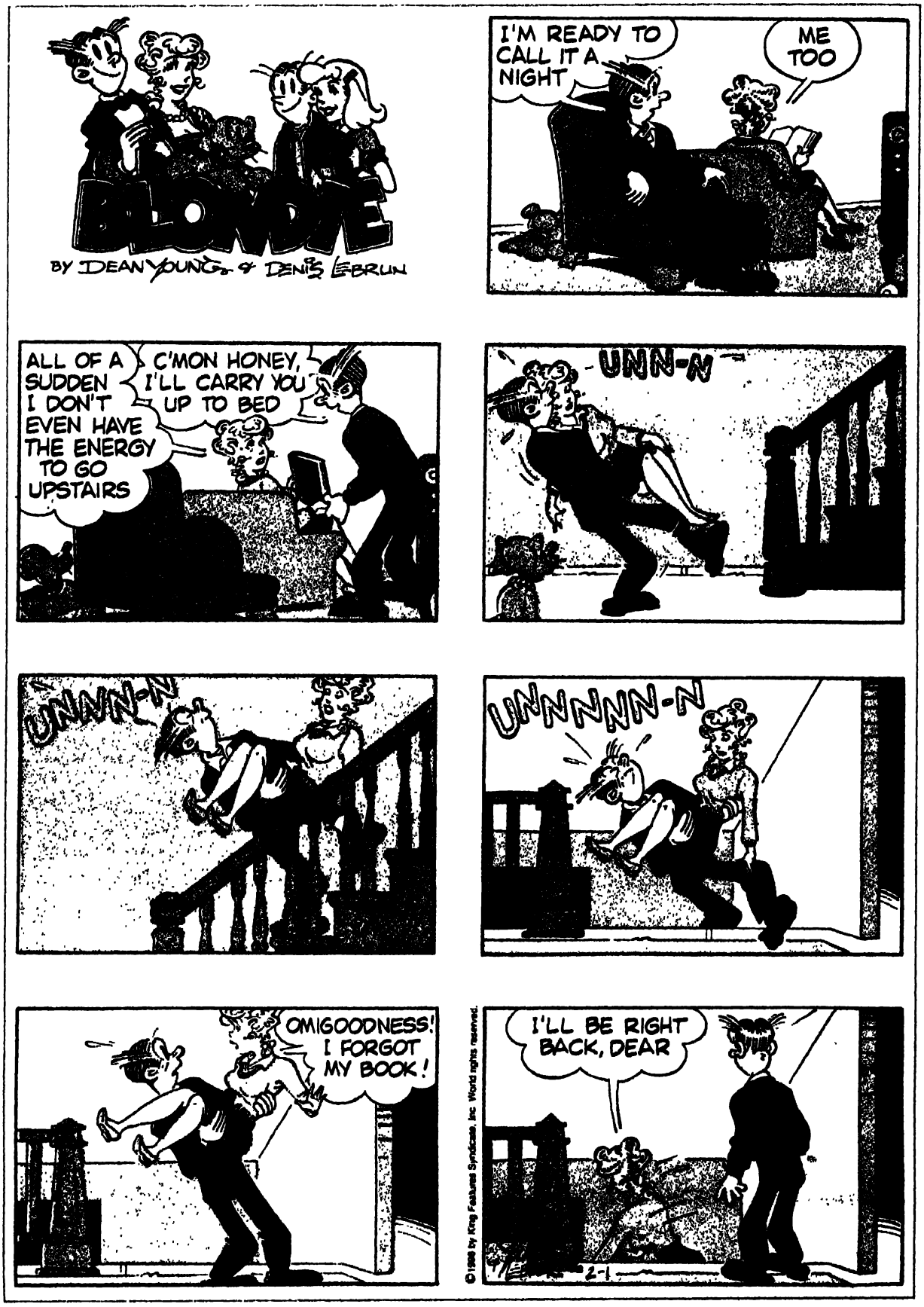
You have a combination skin. What would be ideal for you would be to combine almond paste, lemon juice and two drops of sandalwood oil. Mind you that the oil must be pure in essence. Apply this pack especially to the areas that you feel are developing fine lines. You must also take care to eat right and exercise for at least half an hour every day. This will keep all your muscles well-toned and your skin soft and smooth. It is also very important to drink at least 8 glasses of water for proper lubrication.■

FOR LIMP HAIR

Oil massage followed with shampoo using a glass of beer to rinse the hair would be very beneficial



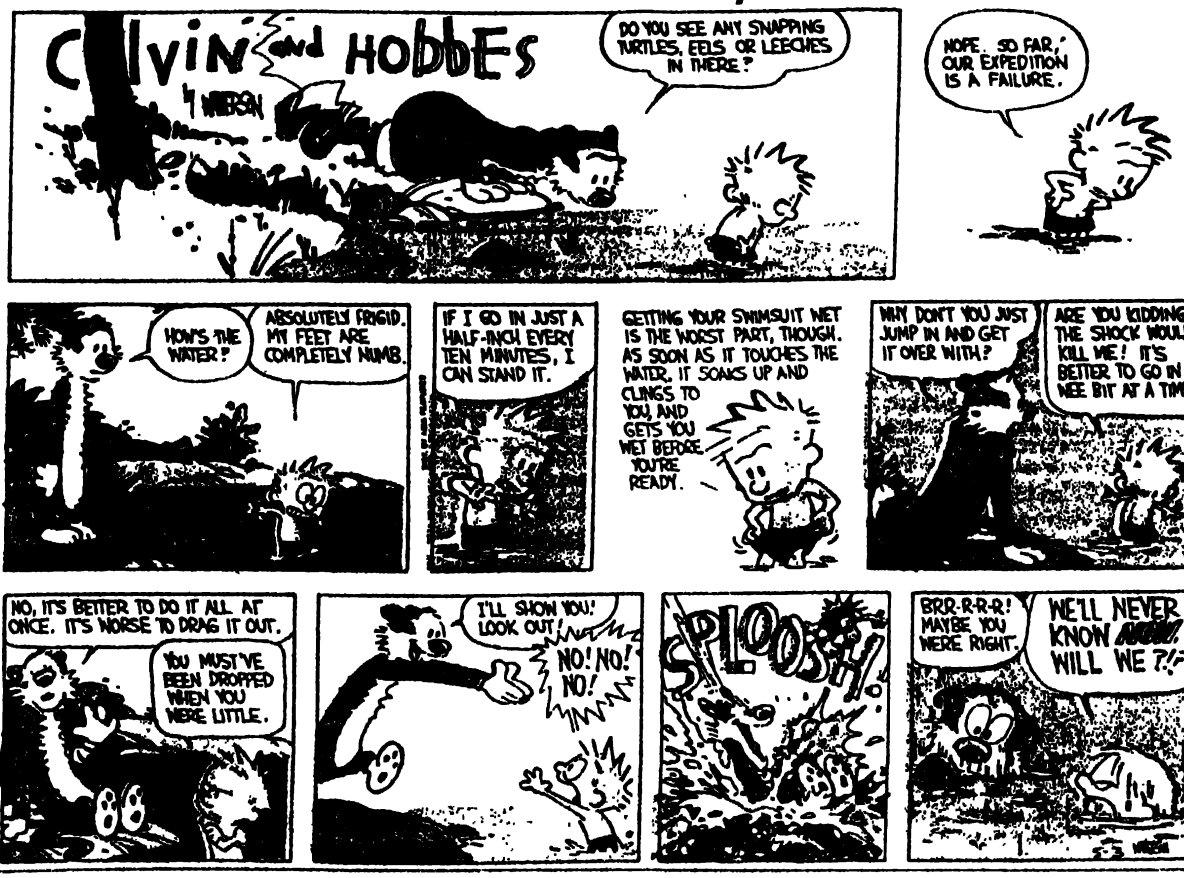
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Watterson



CALVIN & HOBBES by Jim Davis



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2 4 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1 2 5 6	IC-744	1220	1 2, 5 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4 7	IC-744	1620	4 7
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1620	2 4 6	CD 268	2135	2 4 6
IC-715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5 7
■ AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1 2, 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1405	6
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 5	IC 722	1625	1 2 3 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W-512	2125	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 366	1015	2 4 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4 6
IC-765	1900	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
# IC-765A	1750	1 3 5	IC 766A	2250	1 3, 5
■ DELHI					
IC 264	0700	daily	9W 901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC 402	1230	daily	* IC-855	0755	2 6
* IC 856	1115	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD-411	2120	1 3, 5, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3 5 7	IC 702	1440	1 3 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 701	1715	1 2 3 4 5 6	9W 512	1250	1 2 4 6, 7
IC 229	1900	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
9W 511	1340	1 2, 4 5 7	IC 714	1430	4 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4 6
IC-777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2125	daily
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3 5
■ IMPHAL					
CD-255	0540	1 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0915	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W 211	1905	daily
AI-6/9	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
■ PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1 3, 5 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ 185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB 105	1025	2 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

IC-765A/766A till July 10

** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal*

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
■ DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
■ KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
■ LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
■ TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-726	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs & Sun Arr Tues Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon, Tues, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Thurs, Fri, & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon, Tues., Thurs, Fri & Sat Arr Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed. & Sun, Arr Tues & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues, Fri & Sat, Arr Tues, Wed, & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Sealdah Express Dep. Tues Wed & Sat, Arr Tues, Fri & Sat.	06-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun., Mon, Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5659	15-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5660
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon, Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon, Thurs & Fri	7-55	1160
9306	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep. Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr. Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1448	14-30	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1181	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri, Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

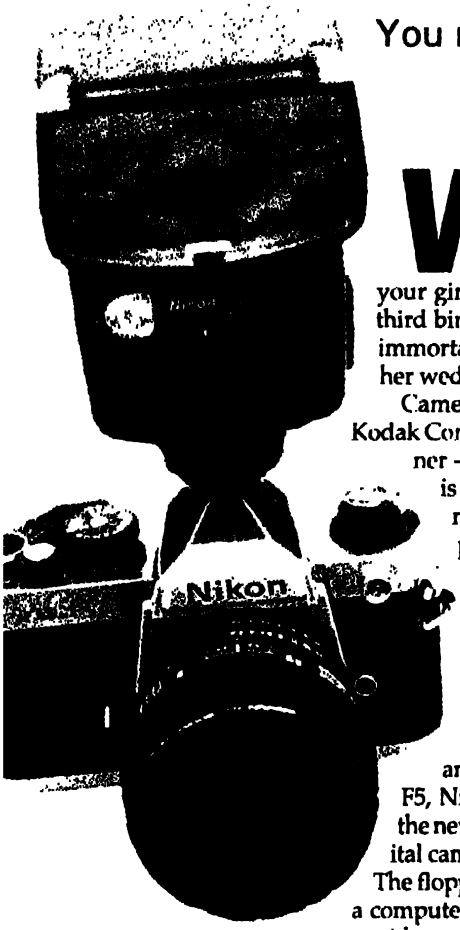
Up	Time	Sealdah	Time	Dn
3141	13-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
5657	6-25	Kanchenjunga Express	20-35	5658
3153	22-15	Gour Express	5-15	3154
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep. Mon & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	8-45	3148
5683	20-00	Kaifiat Express	4-15	5684
3151	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50	3152
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via CBG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	18-20	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-25	3104
5285	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	5286

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep Sunday, Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum BI-Weekly Express Dep & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City BI-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati BI-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah BI-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203546-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203486-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).

THE Best



You need imagination to shoot a good picture; but a

THROUGH

What would the world be like without cameras? Not much fun at all. You wouldn't be able to capture your girlfriend's shy smile, or record the third birthday party of your son, or even immortalise your daughter's beauty on her wedding day.

Cameras — barring the locally made Kodak Corona, which is okay for the beginner — can be quite expensive. But that is hardly a deterrent for photojournalists or even those with a serious passion for photography who think nothing of prices while choosing top-of-the-line brands. Nikon is usually a hot favourite among them followed by Canon and Hasselblad.

The cameras doing the rounds in the Indian market could be anything from a Canon US5, Nikon F5, Nikon F70X and Pentax MZ5N. In the new Nikon F90X, you can load a digital camera system without using a film. The floppy from this system is loaded into a computer/laptop for transmission of pictures without processing them in a lab.

The latest Nikon model is an F5 wonder which shoots 8 frames per second as against the normal 7 frames per second. But not everyone is keen on Nikon. Take the case of Dilip Mehta, who works for several international magazines and modestly calls himself an 'aspiring photographer'. After 18 years he has switched loyalty from Nikon to Canon because of "the incredible design element, very sophisticated technology and superior optics".

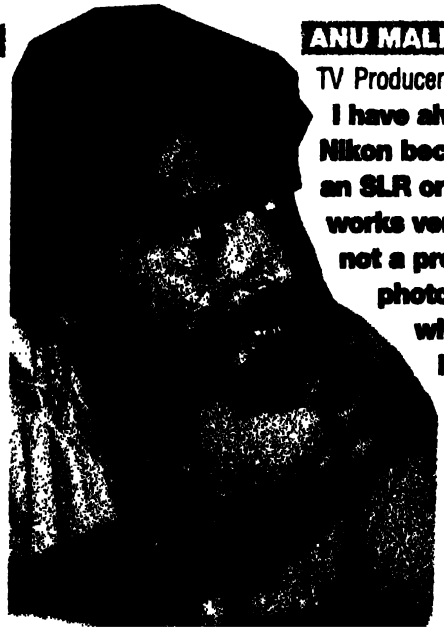
Earlier, most professional photographers wouldn't touch Canon's zoom lenses on the assumption that they were not sharp and smooth. But over the last five years, Canon has developed incredible zoom lenses which make it possible for a photographer to carry six or seven lenses as compared to the earlier 11 and 12 lenses which is "a hell of a lot more convenient", says Mehta.

Most professional photographers enjoy using a Sinar, a Swiss camera, if they can get one. There are others who vie for the traditional motor-driven Hasselblad camera's 553ELX model with remote release capabilities as it is ideal for fashion, advertising and portraiture. The best and the most expensive cameras used to come from Germany. Today, the most expensive camera is still a German one: the

VALMIK THAPAR

Filmmaker

Since I am into wildlife photography, I use my old Nikon FM camera —not the new Nikon automatic ones, and with it, the original Nikon lenses because the eye of the camera is the lens and Nikon makes the finest ones in the market



ANU MALHOTRA

TV Producer

I have always gone for a Nikon because even if one has an SLR or an automatic one, it works very well. Since I am not a professional photographer but click when I go on location, I prefer to use a handy cam-era and not the heavy duty SLR ones

inimitable Leica. But the Japanese have managed to catch up with the German models and have sold their Nikons at very affordable prices while taking care to upgrade them. The quality of their lenses, too, is very good. "That is how they captured the market," points out Madan Mahatta, chairman of the Industrial Advertising Photographers' Association (IAPA), and a pioneer of sorts in being the first to go to England in the Fifties to study professional photography.

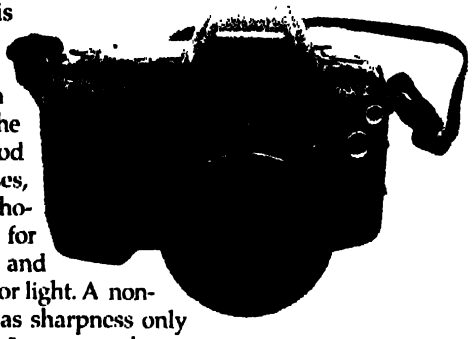
Should one opt for the point and shoot cameras—the ones where you can just aim the camera and click—they will cost anyhere between Rs 800-10,000. Says Avinash Pasricha, the former photo editor of *Span*, "I had once seen an ad showing the finger on the trigger. The slogan read something like 'All that you need is a finger to be a photographer'. But frankly, photography is a lot more than that."

A LENS

In any case, when one is going in for serious photography, the SLR—single lens reflex which enables the photographer to change lenses from a normal to a wide angle to zoom—is extremely useful. "Using it intelligently, the photographer can get the effect he wants. These cameras start from Rs 12,000 to a few lakhs of rupees," says Pasricha.

Thanks to a liberalised economy, the medium format camera from Hasselblad costs less in India (Rs 1 lakh 60,000) as compared to the same model in America (where it is priced at Rs 2 lakh 10,000). "The open market has made it easier for photographers to lay their hands on any international brands within days while earlier it used to take months," says S.Paul, veteran photographer. Even then, quite a few photographers buy their cameras from the grey market to get, what they feel, is a 25 per cent price cut.

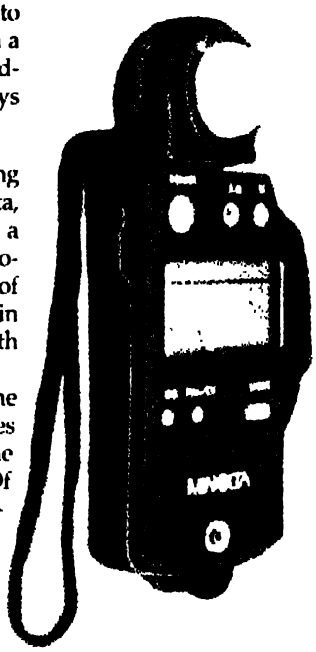
But why is there a need for such a range of cameras? Explains Pasricha, "The needs and aspirations of photographers are different. The cameras are actually an extension of the photographer's personality." In the absence of a larger market, India is dependent on imported brands.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

Part of choosing a good camera lies in the ability to spot a good quality lens. ED lenses, used by professional photographers, are useful for shooting sharp and detailed pictures in poor light. A non-Ed autofocus lens has sharpness only when there is a flash. Lenses can have prices varying from Rs 10,000-Rs 10 lakh.

Do Indians have a feel for good photography? Over the last few years, the easy availability of camera and films coupled with low processing charges have got more Indians into clicking pictures of their family. "Today, even a woman might carry a small camera in her handbag without fretting over its operations," says Pasricha.



Photography on the amateur scale has a long way to go but the professionals, claims Mahatta, "are as good as any in the world". Paul has a different take on this. "Creative amateur photographers in India have a very high standard of work. They are constantly winning awards in national and international exhibitions, with most of them coming from Calcutta."

So what makes for a good picture? "The mood, the ambience, the content of the images and the ability to pre-empt which does not come with expensive equipment," says Mehta. Of course, the better the camera, the more the resolution to produce good quality pictures. But what counts in the end is the man behind the lens and the scope of his imagination. ■



J.J. VALAYA

Fashion Designer

I do a lot of shoots, mostly fashion pictures, using a Canon US1. It's a much faster camera with an ultrasonic lens series which gives a sharper focus but I also have an old Pentax ME Super



RUPINDER SHARMA

MY PERSONAL *Style*

MIX AND MATCH

That's the way Renuka Chowdhury likes to arrange her interiors



And among the things that I have is this tortoise collection of mine People normally have bells or ducks or elephants or Ganesha collections, but mine is something quite different

Home decor is something that I do instinctively Perhaps it is an instinct that I have inherited Even if I am staying in a hotel for four days I like to rearrange and move around the things to put my personal stamp on the room decor

To me home decor means three essential things Lamps plants and books And yes I don't believe in spending exorbitant sums buying designer furniture and stuff A lot of what I like picking up and using is very user friendly which I have put in niches where there is a lot of natural light and ventilation

I don't have furniture of just one particular style or period I have a mix of traditional and new furniture that jells into a harmonious whole I have mixed and matched the antique and period furniture the plants and other bric a brac in a way that lends the ambience of a typical Indian home

And among the things that I have is this tortoise collection of mine Word about it seems to have got around so much that now I have started getting tortoises as gifts from friends and acquaintances People normally have bells or ducks or elephants or Ganesha collections but mine is something quite different

It all began by chance when I picked up two tortoise pieces at a shop Gradually I got to read about their relevance in Indian and Chinese mythology things like gifting a tortoise was like gifting longevity and so on Also, wherever I travelled I found tortoise pieces reflecting the particular craftsmanship of that place I now have about 500 of them from wax to coconut shell to onyx, silver and gold

I had displayed them on this Kutch Jhoola But that made visitors pick them up and toy around with them till one day, my Swarovski crystal tortoise got knocked down Now I have had a special double layered glass table where I keep them in safe custody!

My furniture is something I have collected over the years Whenever I have travelled I have picked up something or the other For instance I had gone for this exhibition where a fabric on show was draped on a chair But it was the chair that I liked more so I bought that instead, much to the amusement of all

At another time, I had gone to a village where my father's friend lived He had an old discarded rosewood corner piece which I liked immensely and suggested that he put it to better use or sell it for a good price

A couple of years later, when he had fallen ill, he sent that corner piece to my father for me because he thought I would take good care of it So that is how I got to build my little collection of furniture and bric a brac

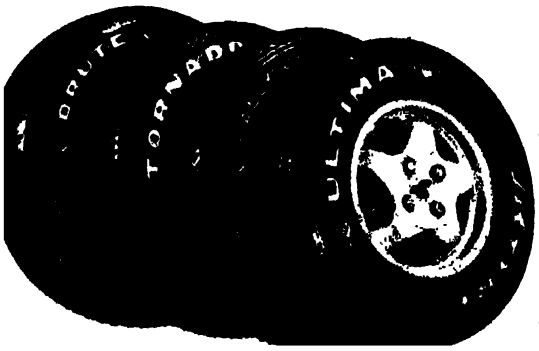
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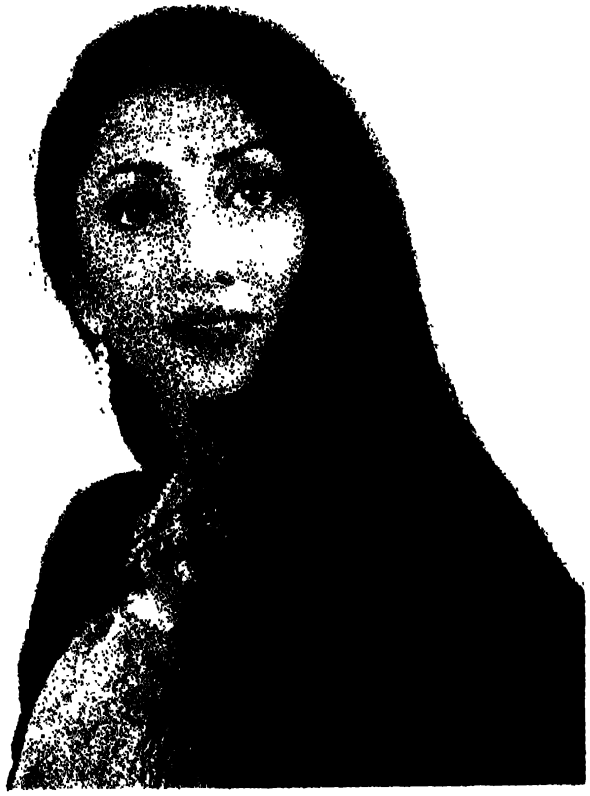
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THE HUMAN TOUCH

Thank you for the cover story "Travels with the President"(June 7). The piece was extremely well written with witty touches. Besides getting an opportunity to traverse through the exotic South American countries, one also got to know about the unofficial and genial side of the President of India, K.R. Narayanan. After all, one usually thinks of presidents and other heads of states as boringly officious. But our President proved to be quite different from the rest.

SUCHANDRA BANNERJEE, CALCUTTA

HEADY HOLIDAY

The cover story "Travels with the President",(May 31) was very refreshing. Reading the article and seeing the pictures, I felt that I was personally interacting with the President, meeting the heads of different states and visiting places as Rio de Janiero, Machhu Pichhu, Uberaba, Lima and Peru-all this for only Rs.3!

P. C. Dasgupta, Dum Dum

Your cover story "Travels with the President" was thankfully different from your usual cover stories on designers, models and fashion wear. All the media persons who travelled with the President should consider themselves very fortunate to see Macchu Pichhu, "The Lost city of the Incas", in Peru. This should be in the 'must-see' list of the connoisseur tourists, as is Pompeii (near Naples) and Colosseum (Rome) in Italy.

Kingshuk Bose, Jamshedpur.

The article on the South American tour with the President provided a humourous insight.One has the general impression that such tours must be quite a glamorous experience but the real picture is always different, isn't it?

Lipika Mazumdar, Calcutta.

BITTER-SWEET

Sai Paranjpe will always be remembered for her touchingly bitter-sweet movies that portray the common man. Thank you very much for featuring her in your magazine ("Mock'n'Tell, June 7). To her goes the credit of portraying characters who are not unidimensional but have positive and negative shades in them.It is indeed a pleasure to behold her films in which people face the predicaments of every day life but can still manage to be warm, affectionate, fun-loving happy folks.

Anjana Bhattacharjee, Calcutta.

The story on Sai Paranjpe was indeed dull. It is creditable for a woman to have achieved so much as a director in Bollywood.But why should a bold woman like Sai who deals with humanity under a magnifying glass be so hedgy when it came to discussing *Saaz*. The film was obviously a part-fiction-part-fact story of the Mangeshkar sisters. After all, it's no crime to dramatise true-life incidents and characters on celluloid..

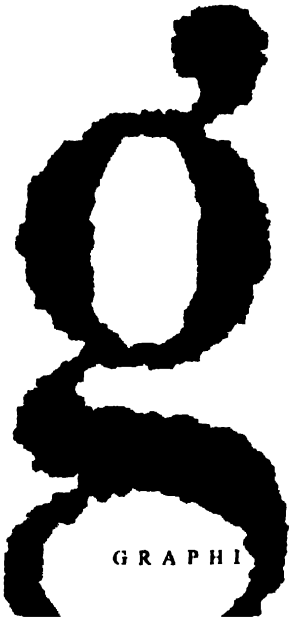
J. Chatterjee, Calcutta

Sai Paranjpe is no longer the director she once was. She seems to have lost her touch and her conscience is no longer on the audience's pulse. Do we get to see the Sai of yore again?

O.P Agarwal, Calcutta

graphiti ★ 12 July 1998

4 VIKRAM CHANDRA Excels at telling tales **10 OUT OF THE CLOSET** Karan Thapar throws open his wardrobe **12 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES** Namita Gokhale tells you how to deal with your personal problems **14 OUT TO LUNCH** Taking Probir Sen out for a a meal proved to be a memorable experience **16 MIXED BAG** **18 RASOI** Jiggs Kalra on the tandoori chicken **21 SMALL TALK** Seema Goswami on the designer wars **22 BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY** **26 TIME TABLE** **28 THE BEST** When it comes to nightwear, the options are endless **30 MY PERSONAL STYLE** Mohit Gujral likes his home to be warm and lived-in

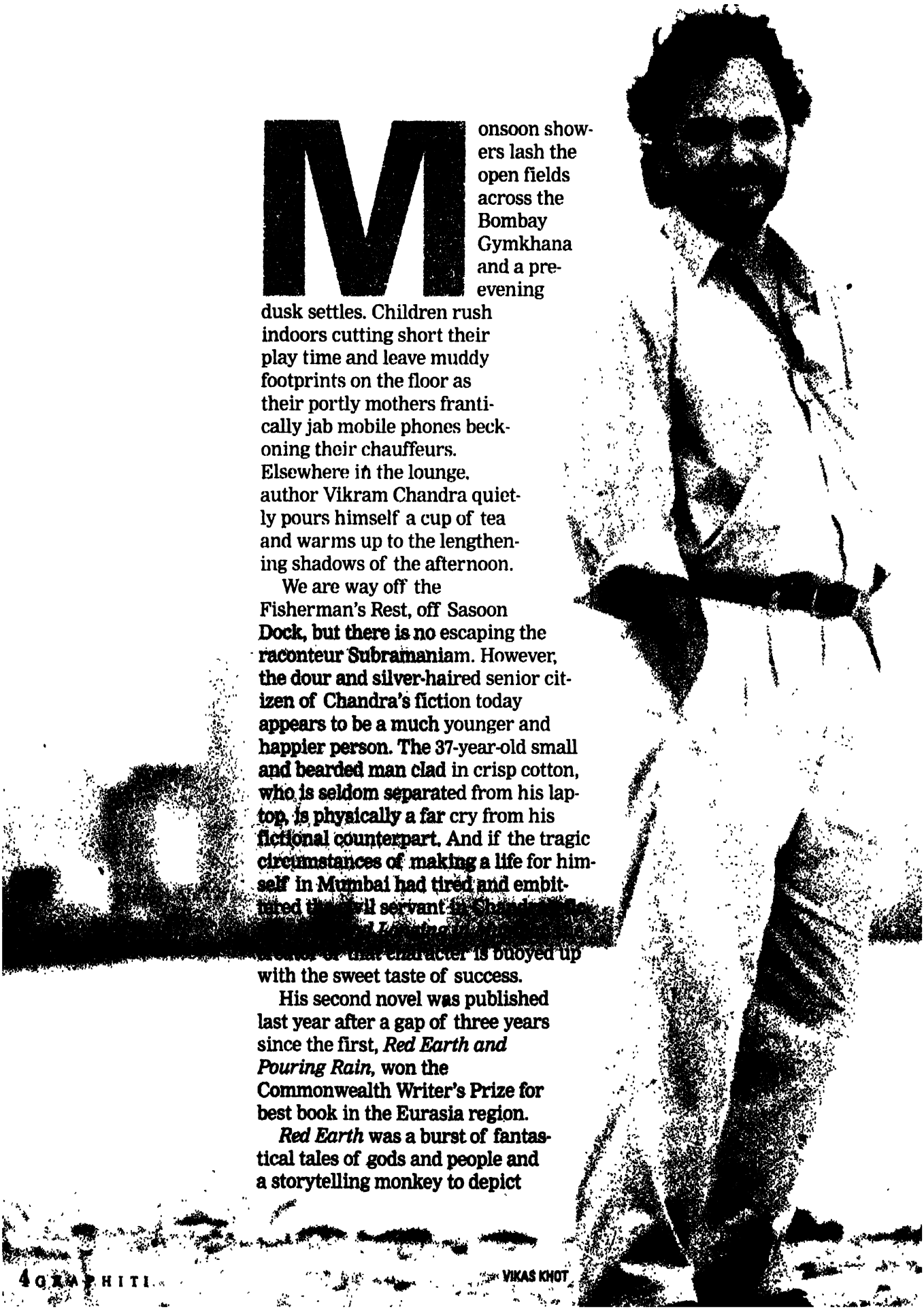


Monsoon showers lash the open fields across the Bombay Gymkhana and a pre-evening dusk settles. Children rush indoors cutting short their play time and leave muddy footprints on the floor as their portly mothers frantically jab mobile phones beckoning their chauffeurs. Elsewhere in the lounge, author Vikram Chandra quietly pours himself a cup of tea and warms up to the lengthening shadows of the afternoon.

We are way off the Fisherman's Rest, off Sasoon Dock, but there is no escaping the raconteur Subramaniam. However, the dour and silver-haired senior citizen of Chandra's fiction today appears to be a much younger and happier person. The 37-year-old small and bearded man clad in crisp cotton, who is seldom separated from his laptop, is physically a far cry from his fictional counterpart. And if the tragic circumstances of making a life for himself in Mumbai had tired and embittered [illegible] servant in [illegible] character is buoyed up with the sweet taste of success.

His second novel was published last year after a gap of three years since the first, *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, won the Commonwealth Writer's Prize for best book in the Eurasia region.

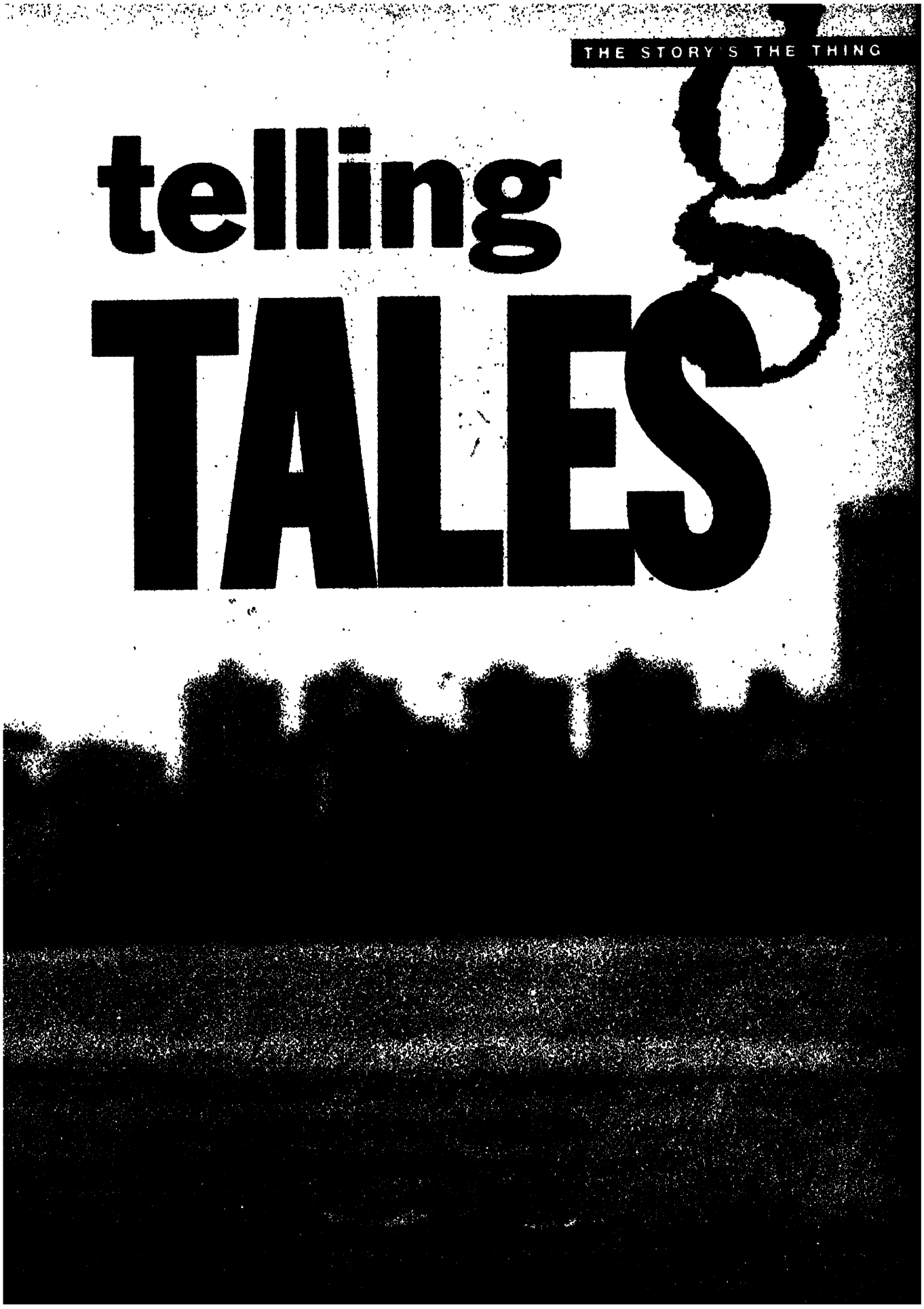
Red Earth was a burst of fantastical tales of gods and people and a storytelling monkey to depict



VIKAS KHOT

THE STORY'S THE THING

telling TALES



the lives of good and bad, high and low, ambitious and muddled people of Mumbai.

If Aymenem, courtesy Arundhati Roy's Booker for *God Of Small Things* has become a tourist attraction, Chandra's Mumbai-bonding offers a deep insight into the sub-cities that constitute the city of Mumbai.

Love and Longing in Mumbai is a collection of interconnecting short stories, strung together by a single narrator, Subramaniam. There are tales of the warring lives of a soldier, an oversexed Jat cop and society grand dames, among others. And although, by the end of the book, the narrator seems to have passed on some of his own urban angst to the author, Chandra, it would seem, hasn't said it all.

So, in these months, on his time off from work in Washington, Chandra is busy putting together his third book — "a full-fledged novel; I am ready for this now" — which takes off from a section of *Love and Longing*. The Jat policeman's character will be fleshed out here in greater detail while the action will shift to the underworld and beyond Mumbai. Mumbai to Dubai? "Shhh. Let's not talk about that. Or I might get an anonymous call warning me off right now," he jests.

"I have a very dim idea of characters when I go about creating them. I found the policeman very intriguing as he grew in my mind, for despite his cynicism and brutality, there is a sense of something that has been lost," explains Chandra. "The next novel will take off from there." Also brewing is a script for a Bollywood film, which he feels will take a while, till the book gets done.

Chandra admits that he is fortunate for having found an enviable job that gives him five-and-a-half months of vacation time every year. He holds creative writing workshops at the George Washington University twice a week, neatly sliced into two semesters a year,



RED EARTH AND POURING SUCCESS
Winner of the Commonwealth Writer's Prize for the best book in the Eurasia region, *Red Earth and Pouring Rain* was a burst of fantastical tales of gods and people and a storytelling monkey

which leaves him to his own devices for the better part of the year. And while at that, he unconsciously sets an example for other aspiring writers who he feels, should learn to buy their time-off as well.

"This whole romanticism about the starving writer is very derogatory," says he. "Besides, it is also illogical since art cannot thrive on an empty stomach. You need to provide the basics in life for yourself to be able to concentrate and develop your art."

Thus, his average day in Washington begins with reading the *Times of India* and *Indian Express* on the Internet, getting some exercise and then some sandwiches ("much to the amusement of my mother") for himself before sauntering over to the campus and staying put till the late afternoon. Then, there are friends to catch up on and finally a strict routine of more work.

"Writing is a craft. It is not about a flash of inspiration that strikes you in the middle of your head leading to a rush of words through your fingertips," he says. "It is all about honing your skills. Writing a line. Then rewriting it. Then adding a comma here, shifting a few words and then adding some more to achieve that right feel." What he needs constantly while writing is a steady dose of Bollywood music. He gets the latest stuff from the Net.

Bollywood is indispensable because he comes from a family that has film connections. His mother, Kamana Chandra, has been a scriptwriter for long, having written such films as *Prem Rog, Chandni, 1942, A Love Story, Bhairavi* and *Kareeb*. One of his sisters, Tanuja Chandra, is a director, *Dushman*, being her maiden venture, while the other, Anupama, is a journalist and is married to Vidhu Vinod Chopra.

So heavily fed was he on films that he was expelled from Mayo College during his secondary school`` when he bunked school to watch Zeenat Aman in *Dharam Veer* the third time. "That was it, I knew that I could not stick around there for long," he remembers. "Because there used to be times when I was told from home to watch certain films and miss school. *Lawrence of Arabia* was one film that I watched bunking school. Here I seemed to be in an unhealthy confinement."

It was also here that his storytelling skills were gradually uncovered in the hostel dorm. Pre-teen boys would huddle around him and have him regale them with tales of people and places. "They were anything between imaginary to real," he says. That was until, of course, he bunked school for Zeenat Aman.

After high school, the prospect of

"You must learn to keep shut to be a good writer, for you can't keep defending your work all the time"

coming to Mumbai and to St Xavier's College was attractive. "After an all-boys camp right through school, finally I saw myself meeting girls," he laughs.

High school and a couple of years into graduation, he began to get restless. So, he cajoled his father to pay for one year of his degree course in America, promising that he would manage the following years on his own. He graduated from Pomona College, in Claremont, Los Angeles, with English and Creative writing and then attended film school at Columbia University, New York. It was here that, quite by chance, he came across the autobiography of Colonel James Sikander Skinner, a legendary 19th century soldier, half-Indian and half-British. This work was to become the inspiration for *Red Earth*.

Chandra left the course mid-way to follow his muse. His debut novel was written over a period of six years at various writing programmes at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Houston. He obtained a masters degree at Johns Hopkins. Alongside, working as a computer programmer and software and hardware consultant for oil companies, non-profit organisations, and the Houston Zoo bailed him out on the monetary front.

"The whole realisation of the great American dream when one gets there is almost negated if one has to pay the price for it by facing the loneliness that accompanies it. First you want to get there to better yourselves in life, make



VIKAS KHOT

IT ALL BEGAN WHEN Chandra's storytelling skills were gradually uncovered in the hostel dorm where pre-teen boys would huddle around him and have him regale them with tales of people and places


THE STORY'S THE THING



BROUGHT UP ON BOLLYWOOD
Chandra comes from a family that has strong film connections; his mother Kamana Chandra being the scriptwriter for such films as *1942 A Love Story*, *Prem Rog*, *Bhalvan* and *Karaan* and sister, Tanuja, directing *Dushman*

the big bucks and then you tell yourself 'Is this what I want to do?'," says he. "It is paradoxical, for a while it was important to distance myself from home and so,getting away from it made me long for it ever more."

And like most Indians abroad, he says, he went about reconstructing his life around the new world and the one that he was familiar with. "And then one goes about trying to find a balance between the two worlds," says he. "I am still taken aback when Americans question me if I am going to live in a hotel when I come to Mumbai, and I try to convince them that since this is my home, it is only natural that I live with my parents here."

He wishes he could live in Mumbai as well. "Only, it is so much tougher surviving here. This is not an easy place to live in. It's too expensive and it is a city of too many distances. And the middle-class has learnt to survive by reinventing their lives around an infrastructure that is ready to crumble around their feet," says Chandra. "What keeps them going is an indomitable spirit."

If the US liberated him from this dismal reality, what strings the two lives together again is the tearing poverty of the two places, be it the man on the footpath sleeping on plastic sheets or his counterpart across the seas scrounging to replace his second-hand black and white television. While the essence of these lives place themselves directly in his fiction, one wonders what twists and turns a film script by him would take.

Songs are too essential a part of life to be ignored," says Chandra, "I find this derision on the part of people towards film music very silly. I mean Bharat in his *Natyashastra* proved how integral music is to human reality," he states. "You cannot deride a certain art form, for the simple reason that its execution is mediocre. I am dying to watch *Satya* for example, to watch a brutally shaking camera and an operatic lyricism."

And if he likes the technique, he might also take this film abroad like he did with another favourite, *Parinda*, and wouldn't be too irritated explaining the finer nuances of this art form to his friends abroad. "*Zanjeer* was perhaps the first in this genre that ably mixed violence with music," he adds, visibly enthused about a subject close to his heart. "The bottom line of an art form, after all, is if it works. If it does, then well, it just does."

To believe in your art is the key to success. If Chandra has learnt this through becoming a writer, then he is out to drill the same into the psyche of his students very early in their lives. Which is why in his class of 15 at the Varsity, when someone's piece of work is being vociferously discussed, if not destroyed, the writer is advised to maintain a stoic silence.

"You must learn to keep shut to be a good writer, for you can't keep defending your work all the time," laughs Chandra. With this also goes down a dose of the most ambitious aspect of being in the field, which is the difficulty of being a full-time writer itself. "Even in America, 99.9 per cent of writers do not make a living out of writing itself. All of them have a job," says he. "And it is a reality that the guys who make it big are literally one in a million."

Chandra grew up on a steady dose of crime fiction, apart from Anita Desai, Khushwant Singh, American and British authors like Dickens, Hawthorne, and Hemingway among others. Down the years, his tastes have veered towards more elegant prose and well-rounded and interesting people. He is re-reading Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* at the moment and is in the process of rediscovering the master writer's "astonishing ability to create a palpable world, the circumstances of the people and the finer details of the world around them".

A slice of this will, perhaps, be evident in his forthcoming book as the action swerves towards the gangland fights, corruptions and seductions of Mumbai, which Chandra calls home on occasions. ■

So heavily fed was he on films that Chandra was expelled from Mayo College when he bunked school to watch Zeenat Aman in *Dharam Veer* the third time

OUT OF THE *Closet*

KARAN THAPAR

Good taste and expensive clothes come together in his designer wardrobe

I lived abroad for about 21 years. I was there from the age of 16 till I was 37. So a lot of clothes that I buy are from there as you tend to acquire and develop your tastes till the age of 35 or so. You know, that is the time you firm up your likes and dislikes. Therefore, most of the places where I buy my stuff from are not in India.

For instance, I buy my shirts mainly from T.E. Lewin at Jermyn Street in London. I like their collars and the cuffs. I always felt that they fit me rather nicely. I have a few from Turnbull and Asser, one or two from Burberrys also, but most of them are from Lewin. I do pick up occasional shirts from elsewhere too during my travels.

I don't go in for stitching at all. I just pick up stuff from the places I have been frequenting for years. Most of my trousers, for instance are from Simpsons and Burberrys. The T-shirts are all Lacoste. I am simply addicted to them. I suppose I have 36 or about 40 of them. Many of them have been gifts over the years. Several of them are very old but I still hang on to them for old time's sake. I wear them on a Sunday or something.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

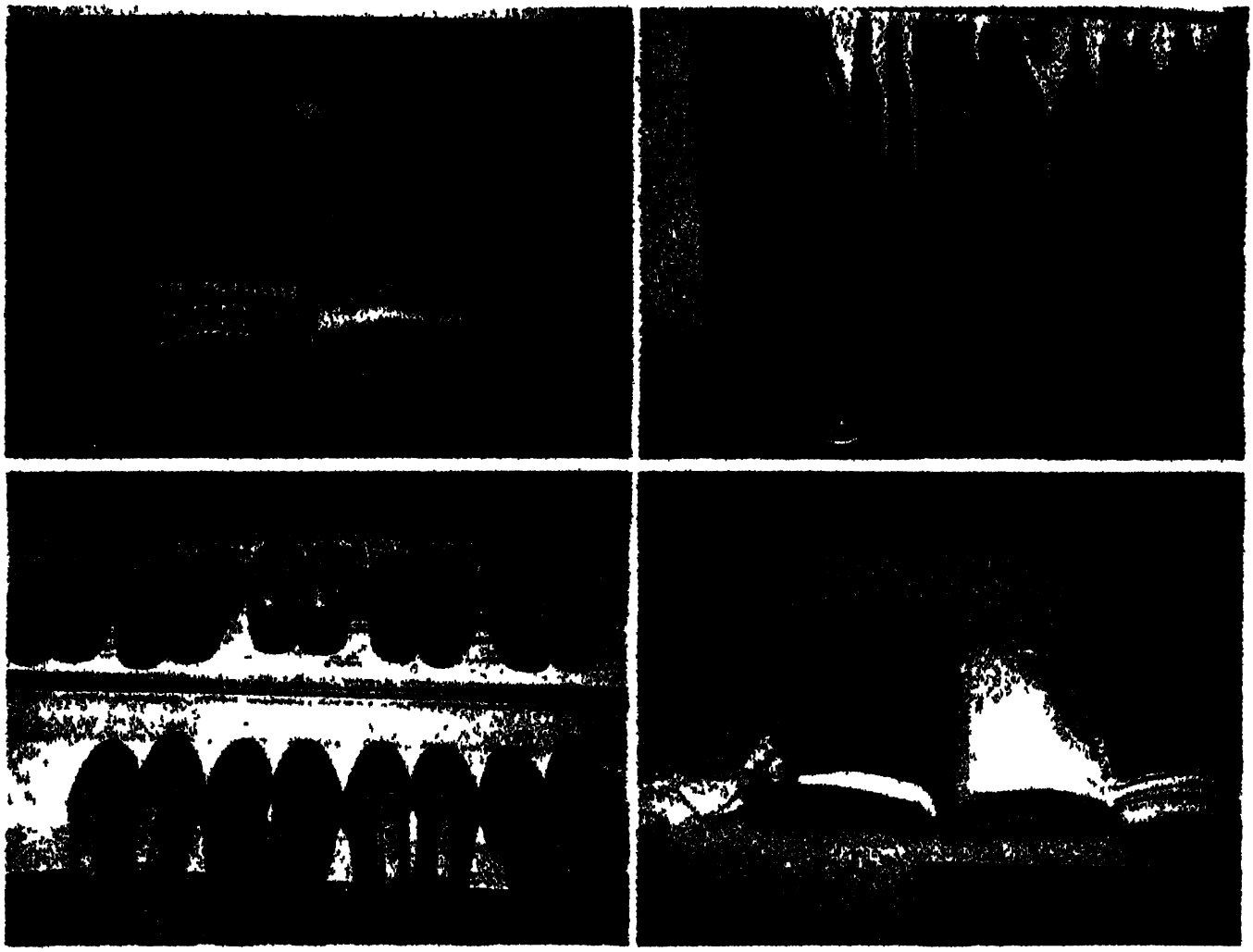
In shirts, I am very fond c stripes. In T-shirts, I have lots c vibrant, solid colours. Most c them are, in fact, single colou polo-necked T-shirts. A few c them are stripes—horizonta rather than vertical ones.

What I buy in India are shawl for my *kurta-pyjamas*, which ar all from Fab India. They hav these wonderfully thick, whit *khadi* which I wear all the time Then I buy a lot of *salwar-kameeze* from Pakistan or friends gift it t me. You see, Pakistan is known for its wonderful cotton. The import it from Egypt. So it is ver nice and very soft. I like wearin them, mainly in the evening. M colour is white, entirely white.

Pakistan also has lovely *jootis* which they call *Salimshahis*. The are very easy on the ankles. Th ones you get here bite into you bloody ankles for weeks.

When it comes to formals, I am very particular about my ties. It' very difficult to wear a tie if it does n't match your shirt. It's an eye sore. What I do tend to do is match my shirts and socks, which li

"One tends to develop one's tastes till the age of 35. That is the time you firm up your likes and dislikes"



something people by and large don't remember doing. I pick my ties mainly from two companies, Salvatore Ferragamo and Hermes.

Among my favourite shirts is this one from Lewin. Not so much for the colour but for the happy memories that are associated with it. That's one reason. The other reason is that I bought this tie about four years back in Hong Kong, quite by accident. But I had no idea what to wear it with. It has this vibrant electric blue colour and I picked it up the moment I saw it. It's only when I came back to Delhi that I discovered this shirt in my closet which goes perfectly with the tie. So it's that surprise combination.

Then there is this other shirt which I quite like because of this herringbone pattern. It's made out of really thick cotton which makes it difficult to wear in the summer but in cooler weather, it is a dream to get into.

For shoes, I mostly go to Church's. You can see the brogues and the shoe-casins there in the second row. There's one from Harrods also and a couple of them from Spain

Then, there is this waist-coat kind of a thing. this one in purple is from Botswana. My sister lives in Africa and she brought it for me It's kind of bizarre I suppose it is a sort of an African *poncho* which you wear with jeans. But I don't wear it with jeans, I usually wear it with *kurta pyjamas* in winter. It is quite warm It was one of those surprises from Africa.

I don't do much to keep my closet as neat as it now appears. It's mainly the work of the woman who works for me Besides, it's just me in the house and so it is really not difficult to manage. What I do most of the time is just take out a lot of shirts when I am trying to decide which one to wear and leave them on the chair. Then they put them back in order. So I suppose the credit for the state of my closet should go them.

As told to Ghazala Wahab

LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR

I buy a lot of *salwar-kameezes* from Pakistan or friends gift it to me. You see, Pakistan is known for its wonderful cotton. They import it from Egypt. So it is very nice and very soft. I like wearing them, mainly in the evening. My colour is white, entirely white

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Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problem

SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY

Q: I am a 23-year-old man studying Law and preparing for several competitive exams as well. I have a 20-year-old girlfriend who lives in a different city. About a year ago, she was raped by a family friend as a result of which she had to undergo an abortion.The strange thing is that though her parents know of it, they still allow the person to regularly visit their house. I feel disgusted with this kind of nonchalant behaviour. I cannot do much as I stay far away from her. Please advise.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Your friend's parents seem to suffer from the ostrich syndrome, where people simply deny any unpleasant event and veil it in a cloak of normalcy. While this may work with very sophisticated and experienced people who have indeed seen a lot, this kind of non-reaction would in my opinion, totally confuse the victim of a traumatic episode.

It is necessary to react, to get angry,to demonstrate one's hurt and displeasure against things that are unjust. You should advise your friend about the legal recourse open to her. I do not personally think that she should take up the rape issue in public at the moment but she should certainly be aware of the grievous wrong that has been done to her. She should express her anger and demand an apology and some form of reparation. She should stop any kind of social interaction with him, leaving the room when he enters and so on. At an appropriate stage, she should move out of this unnatural home. She has to work this trauma out of her system and take care never to succumb to any misdirected guilt or repressed anger on this score.

ONE'S OWN WILL

Q: I am a 65-year-old widow and my problem is that I am treated very indifferently by my son and daughter-in-law. Although they live in a different section of the same building, they seldom, if ever, visit me. I am appalled at their behaviour. I am also wondering whether I should give them all my property in my will or to some more deserving people who would really need it say even to a charity house. What do you feel?

NIRMALA BHASIN, CALCUTTA

You cannot buy the love and respect of your children and nor can you cut them off from what must surely be family inheritance.Of course, their attitude is wrong but there are so many factors that cause strain within intimate family relationships.

I suspect that you do not have much to occupy yourself. I would suggest that you determinedly keep yourself busy

DRIVING MISS CRAZY

Q. I am a 27-year-old married woman, working in a private organisation for the past one year. I am facing a predicament — my boss has started harassing me sexually. Initially, when I had started working, we had an amicable relation, but now his attitude is totally indifferent towards me. I feel very traumatised but cannot leave the job due to personal reasons. Please advise.

J.D, CALCUTTA

Sexual harassment in the work place has become a recurrent motif with the female work force in the country. Be firm and uncompromising in the face of his advances, but try to leave no scope for complaints regarding quality and output of your work. Unfortunately, small private organisations do not have formal work assessment procedures, and the lines between harassment and boss-employee conflict are difficult to establish. If there is any staff member senior to your boss, you could explain your predicament to him in the meantime, do start searching for another job, and stand your ground on this one.

with personal and social activities. Do not allow yourself to feel lonely. Do social work, learn something new and keep on your friendships. While I do not suggest that you disinherit your children, you could certainly deploy a reasonable amount of funds towards some cause or charity close to your heart. Sixty-five is no longer the advanced age it once was, and you have many positive and productive years ahead if you approach things in the right spirit.

TRUE WORTH

Q: My 35-year-old friend seems to be in a peculiar dilemma from where there seems to be no respite. Her family is deeply etched in medievalism and is also demanding and selfish. She has an unsatisfactory job and her recent trauma (of premature menopause) has left her completely shattered. In a nutshell, she is the epitome of deprivation. Will there ever be a change in her life for the better? Will she ever find a soulmate who will recognize her true worth?

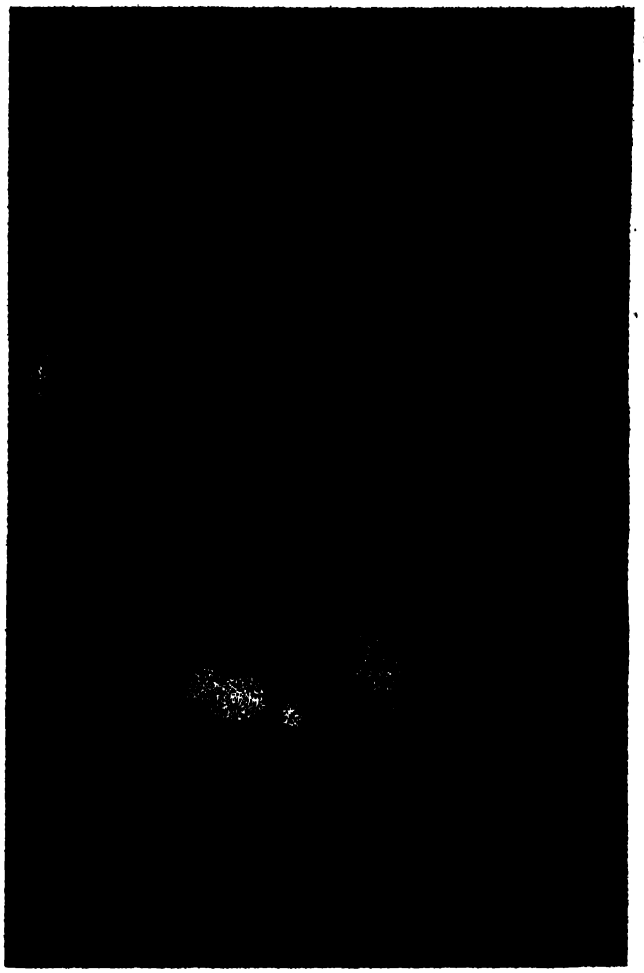
NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

It is difficult to comment in a general manner about your friends' problems, which seem to generally stem from low self-esteem and a lack of assertiveness in a stifling home atmosphere.The way out of this situation is obviously to search for a job opportunity in another town where there may be a scope for developing personal relationships. Strangely enough, it is wonderful people who are usually trampled upon and exploited by the world at large. I would suggest that you advise her to start standing up for herself occasionally. In this day and age, one has to aggressively assert one's right to happiness.

According to Chinese astrology, your friend was born in the year of the Tiger. Tigers are generally strong and self-sufficient people who can cope with life's travails, and I am sure that your friend will come out on top at the end.

A FRIEND IN NEED

Q: I am a student of a central Calcutta college and have a very close friend whose father is the point of concern. My friends' father is a teacher in a well-reputed school.



He is a homosexual and often picks up young boys and exploits the boys who go to his place for tuitions. We came to know this as he tried to molest a good friend of ours. I feel very sorry for my friend as I know that most people gossip about him and his father behind his back. Do you think I should disclose the facts about his father to him. If so, how?

R.S., CALCUTTA

I am sure your friend has some idea of his father's distressing behaviour. There is no need to state what he may already be suspecting. In case you know somebody in the school where your friend's father teaches, it may perhaps be in order to give a hint of what is happening as this molestation of young children can cause untold damage and trauma and must be prevented by any means. Do, however, let your friend know that you are a friend of his no matter what, and that his father's behaviour is no judgement upon him.

BITTER SWEETHEART

Q: I am a 24-year-old girl from Delhi. I had been seriously involved with a man for the past six years of my life. We had even made grand plans of getting married. We used to communicate with each other over the phone, e-mail and through letters. My boyfriend used to speak very affectionately over the phone and write long love letters to me. Now that I have come to Calcutta, he says that he has already got married to somebody else. His friends deny this and say that he is going to get married later this year, of course to somebody else! I am, as you can understand, totally shattered. I am so livid that I do not know what to do with myself. I am suffering from low self-esteem, depression, anger and feel like taking some sort of a revenge on a person who has treated me so shabbily. What should I do?

NAME WITHHELD.

You have only one course of action open to you, which is to forget what happened and move on. You are just 24, you have the rest of your life ahead of you. As they say, living well is the best revenge. Forget all the negative things that have occurred and concentrate on the good and positive. Spend time and money on your clothes, your looks, pamper yourself and sustain an upbeat tempo. Work at making new friends, keeping in mind that positive attracts positive. Keep depression, anger and thoughts of revenge out of the range of your consciousness. A broken heart is merely one of the many rites of growing up.

OUT TO *Lunch*

WITH **PROBIR SEN**

The Bengali *bhadralok* is very much at ease in his `club'

You can tell a man by his club, they say. And Probir — Bantu to friends — Sen's club in Delhi is the Chambers at the Taj Mansingh, where membership can be attained by invitation only. He can be seen there at lunch all too often, very much home in the wood-panelled, discreet surroundings of what is one of the most select dining rooms of the Capital.

But the problem is that P.C. Sen, chairman-cum-managing director of Indian Airlines and chairman of Air India doesn't like the Capital too much. In fact, not to put too fine a point on it, he hates Delhi. No sooner has he settled down in his comfortable chair, Campari soda and nuts at hand, than he begins to explain why.

It's the inexcusable crudeness of the city, and its inhabitants, that he can't bear. "Even going to a shop can be such an unpleasant experience," he says. "Either the shopkeeper ignores you because he doesn't care. Or he recognises you and is all over you. Both of which are quite disgusting."

The *maitre de* proffers the menus. There is a Continental and Chinese section. And at the Chambers, members can order food from any outlet in the hotel, including the roof-top French restaurant Longchamp, where two-star Michelin chef Richard Neat is hard at work.

But no, Sen doesn't want the sauteed *foie gras*. He wants a Chinese meal, but is undecided between the shredded lamb and pepper chicken. Finally both of us decide to go for the Chinese, and order both dishes, with the intention of sharing them.

The food will take another 10 minutes, and Sen uses this time to come back to his favourite theme: the decline of Delhi. "The problem," he says, "is that this is a city of people on the make. It all began when the Punjabi refugees came in from Pakistan, and needed to get on in life. Since then, the entire culture of the city has been to make a quick buck."

That's not all, though. The scenario is further aggravated by the fact that most people in Delhi — be they businessmen, bureaucrats or diplomats — are merely transitting through the city. So none of them has an abiding love for Delhi. "The people of Calcutta love their city," says Sen. "You can't say the same for the people of Delhi."

> "Ever since I have become the managing director of Indian Airlines, I keep getting calls from people I haven't seen or heard"

Sen himself, despite being the archetypal Bengali *bhadralok*, has never lived in Calcutta. But he has close links with the city — in which he has spent many wonderful holidays — nonetheless.

His grandfather, Justice A.N. Sen, was a distinguished judge of the Calcutta High Court, who was held in high regard by Jyoti Basu. His father, Pratap Sen, who worked for Burmah Shell, was a contemporary of Siddhartha Shankar Ray and Satyajit Ray.

He died at the young age of 41, however, from coronary thrombosis, leaving behind his 39-year-old wife and three children. Probir was then 17, his sister was 15, and his youngest brother was only four. His uncle, the Communist leader Mohit Sen — Potla to friends — took the kids under his wing, and became Probir's mentor.

Given that Pratap Sen's was a transferable job, the kids had moved around from city to city. But Probir was sent off to Mayo College in Ajmer to complete his Senior Cambridge. The young teenager was miserable at boarding school. "I couldn't relate to most of the people there," says Sen now. "Most of the students there were Rajputs and they were very different. And what I hated most was having no time to



KAUSHIK CHAKRABORTY

CHINESE DILEMMA
Probir Sen wonders about a thing or two over shredded lamb and pepper chicken

nyself. It was a highly regimented life, ınd I loathed it."

After Mayo, things improved, hough. Probir went off to Cambridge – Burmah Shell, his father's old com- ıany, picked up the tab; they even ffered him a job later, but Sen had ıther plans — and thoroughly enjoyed ıimself. But despite the fact that his utors thought the world of him, Sen vas a self-confessed 'bad examiner' and nly emerged with a second.

After Cambridge, though, the world vas open to him. So, why did he decide n the civil service?

We pause as the waiter serves up the lakka noodles and pepper chicken. ien impales a bit of the chicken on his ork and says, "There has always been a radition of public service in my fami- y," he explains. "And after I finished ıy graduation, I even thought serious- y of joining the Ramakrishna Mission, r even teaching." (Later in life, Sen as offered the job of headmaster of fayo no less than three times; each ime, he declined regretfully.)

Politics was another option that Sen xplored, and then gave up because he lidn't speak any regional language flu- ntly enough'. Civil service was the ext choice, because as he explains, "Even if 90 per cent of your time is spent in doing things that serve no socially useful purpose, the other 10 per cent gives you the opportunity to do a lot more."

As a civil servant, Sen has earned the reputation of being an officer of high integrity and rare ability. He has also been described as a man who 'walked around with his resignation letter in his pocket'. The moment a minister or a senior bureaucrat tried to put any pressure on him, out would come the resignation letter.

One reason Sen could afford this sort of insouciance was that money has never mattered to him. "I have always had a negative bank balance," he says, "but I have never wanted for anything. When I needed an air-cooler, I could buy one. When I needed an air-conditioner, I had one."

In fact, confides Sen, he was even offered a job by a private airline, which would have given him a salary of several lakhs, but he was never tempted. "I do get a bit insecure," admits Sen, "when I see people of my generation going into hospital and incurring huge expenses. But thankfully, in the IAS we are covered by medical insurance."

But even if his current job doesn't bring in big bucks, it does make him very influential in Delhi. Suggest that to Sen, though, and he just laughs over a mouthful of steamed rice and shredded lamb. "Ever since I became managing director of Indian Airlines," he says, chuckling, "I keep getting calls from people I haven't seen or heard of in several years. They call and begin making polite conversation — how's the wife, how are the kids? I just have a standard reply, 'PNR please'."

That's only fair, given that all these people want is to get their tickets confirmed. And Sen, who has successfully turned Indian Airlines around, is the best man to do that.

But while IA has revived under his stewardship, the international carrier, Air India, still languishes in the red. Yes, admits Sen, but the new managing director of the airline, Michael Masceranhas, has big plans for it. In fact, he's scheduled to attend a meeting at Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, where he will be apprised of these plans, in the next ten minutes.

So, shall we skip dessert? Of course, though a nice, hot cappucino would be nice. ■

MIXED Bag



LENS IS MORE

● Bausch & Lomb, one of the world's leading vision care companies, has recently launched a single-bottle lens solution, which removes protein deposits from soft lenses. The new solution called ReNu MultiPlus is said to deproteinise soft contact lenses in addition to cleansing, rinsing and disinfecting. Currently, contact lens wearers across the world have to follow a multi-step cleaning regimen of lens maintenance. The new single solution can be used to clean, disinfect, store as well as deproteinise the contact lenses, thus, simplifying the lens care regimen. The solution is available in two separate quantities of 120 and 360 ml, priced at Rs 119 and Rs 229 respectively.

Moment of Euphoria



Music lovers waiting to hear a classical singer sharing musical notes with a rock band will have to wait till August, when the Delhi-based rock band Euphoria releases its debut album. The album, *The Hind Rock Album*, features nine songs in Hindi and Urdu with music by Archies. One of the numbers, *Dhoom Pichuck*, a folk song has a four-line filler and an *alaap* towards the end by noted vocalist Shubha Mudgal. The filler, from a Bhatiali folk song with an East Bengal dialect —*Oh Majhi Rey, Tohar Bina Moar Jibon Nahi Manee*... is all about love and separation.

For Shubha, it has been a learning experience to work with a rock group, "specially one which is creative down to penning its own lyrics." As for Euphoria, says its lead singer Palash Sen, a doctor-turned-singer, "Having her sing for us was not just a Euphoric experience but an honour specially since many people don't take a rock band seriously."

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: After applying your make up

Down the Primrose Path

Maneka Gandhi released a book, *Evening Primrose Oil* by Judy Graham at the Claridges Hotel in Delhi recently. *The evening primrose* promises to be one of the most fantastic finds in plant and medical history. Strictly speaking, evening primrose is not a rose at all. It is so called because it blooms in the evening and its bright yellow flowers resemble the colour of real primroses. This wild plant can be used in the treatment of benign breast diseases, brittle nails, pre-menstrual syndrome (PMS), multiple sclerosis and other diseases.



The book is a treatise on its pharmacological properties and how they work in different conditions. The subject of something like 200 medical trials worldwide, evening primrose oil sells like the proverbial hot cakes in health food shops. Considering the drug Sunova Etarelle uses primrose oil in its natural solution for PMS, the book is a step towards creating awareness of the oil in alleviating physical discomfort in women. The paperback version is priced at Rs 60.

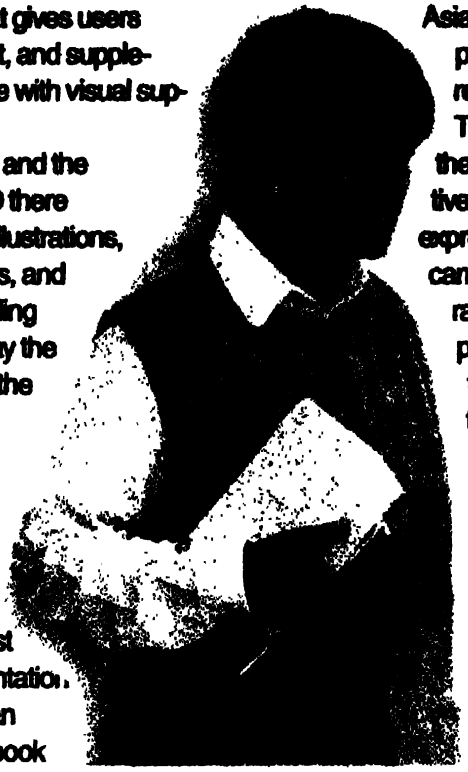
The Possibilities are Endless

If her biography, *I Dare* ran into four reprints within the first year of publication, Dr Kiran Bedi hopes that the first book penned by her will evoke a similar response. *It's Always Possible...* slated to hit the stands in July comes with an add-on: a CD ROM that gives users excerpts of the text, and supplements the narrative with visual support.

Between the book and the accompanying CD there are photographs, illustrations, documents, graphs, and clippings from leading journals that portray the holistic process of the transformation of Tihar inmates — from criminality to humanity.

It's Always Possible...(Sterling Publishers) is a first of its kind documentation by a serving woman police officer. The book takes a candid look at every aspect of prison management, the prisoners and their rehabilitation.

And Bedi should know, having served as Inspector General Prisons and leading Tihar, the largest prison in Asia-Pacific, through a pioneering process of reformation.



The CD that comes with the book makes for evocative viewing with prisoners expressing their feelings on camera. Powerful visuals range from the Vipasana programme to the festivities in jail, educational programmes organised for the inmates and visits from prominent NGOs. Browsers can also scan the written petitions of the inmates, their poetry, paintings, arts and craft on their computer screen.

spray your face lightly with water; that will help it set

LOOK, NO SEAMS

● UNDERLINES, a lingerie store chain, recently introduced a T-shirt bra as part of its summer range. The product was launched at the Shoppers Stop chain of stores in Mumbai and Bangalore. It is also available in select stores in Delhi.

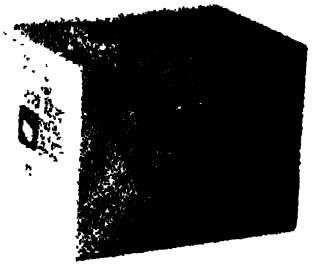
The T-shirt bra is popular worldwide and is worn under fitted dresses, sheer fabrics, tanks or T-shirts. It is a seamless product with a moulded cup that does not reveal unsightly seams through the outer garment and is designed to provide a smooth shape and moderate control with a light foam lining to create near perfect contours. Available in shades of pink, skin and ivory, the Underlines T-shirt bra comes in sizes 32-36 (A,B,C cups), and is priced at Rs 660. It is manufactured from stretch lace and lined with cotton which hugs the body like a second skin. The foam lining in the cup gives maximum cleavage support under T-shirts and takes away the embarrassment of wearing fitted T-shirts or dresses.



WE LOVE OLIVE OIL



● This is probably the most healthy cooking medium you can find in the market these days — especially if you can't stand the smell of mustard oil. But if you're cooking, don't bother with the extra virgin variety; its flavour doesn't quite survive the heat. But if you're making salads, then just sprinkle some extra virgin olive oil on it just before serving for an authentic Mediterranean flavour.



WE HATE BUTTER

● This may taste lovely — especially if it is smeared liberally on toasted bread or even parathas — but is like poison if you eat too much of it. Not only will it make you put on weight, but it will even clog up your arteries with unhealthy cholesterol, which might eventually lead to a heart attack. So, if you must eat it, use it in moderation in your diet. And use the unsalted variety if you can.

RASOI

The food column



Green and Saffron

Jiggs Kalra uses both and other hues to enliven his recipes

The *Murgh Tandoori* comes in many an *avatar* good, bad and ugly The dish that Kundan Lal Gujral made a global favourite has been recast well and terribly — by nearly every *tandooriya* in his own image Sadly, many a skewer wielder master and hack continue to use a horrendous and carcinogenic red colour to make the King of *Kebab* blush We can live happily with the saffron version

Pankaj Mehra the new chef at the Kandahar, at The Oberoi, New Delhi, started his stint with a *Kebab & Biryani* Fest recently, and the recipes below are ample proof that his heart is where his girth is

Subz potli

INGREDIENTS

THE RED DOUGH

- 60g/2oz ***Atta*/wholewheat Flour**
- 30g/1oz ***Maida*/all-purpose flour**
- 15ml/1tbs **Beetroot puree** (cooked)
- 5ml/1tsp **Cooking oil**
- **Salt**
- **Flour for dusting**

THE GREEN DOUGH

- 60g/2oz ***Atta*/wholewheat flour**
- 30g/1oz ***Maida*/all-purpose flour**
- 15ml/1tbs **Spinach puree** (cooked)
- 5ml/1tsp **Cooking oil**
- **Salt**
- **Flour for dusting**

THE YELLOW DOUGH

- 60g/2oz ***Atta*/wholewheat flour**
- 30g/1oz ***Maida*/all-purpose flour**
- 0.25g/1/2tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron**
- 5ml/1tsp **Cooking oil**
- **Salt**

Flour for dusting

THE MUSHROOM FILLING

- 225g/1/2lb **Mushrooms (finely chop)**
- 12.5g/1tbs **Butter**
- 1g/1/2tsp ***Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- 15g/1/2oz **Onions (finely chop)**
- 5g/1/2" piece **Ginger (finely chop)**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp **Red chilli powder**
- **Salt**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Chakriphool*/star anise powder**
- 3.25g/1tbs ***Taaza dhania*/coriander** (chop)
- 1 **Green chilli** (seed and finely chop)
- 15g/1/2oz **Cheddar/processed cheese** (grate)

THE *PANEER* FILLING

- 150g/5oz ***Paneer*** (small dices)
- 12.5g/1tbs **Butter**
- 15g/1/2oz **Onions** (finely chop)
- 2.5g/1/4" piece **Ginger** (finely chop)
- 30g/1oz **Tomato** (chop)
- 12 **Green Peppercorns** (drain the brine)
- 1.25g/1/2tsp ***Ajwain***
- **A generous pinch of *Kasoori methi*/dried fenugreek leaf powder**
- **Salt**

THE MIXED VEGETABLE FILLING

- 60g/2oz **Carrots** (brunnoise)
- 60g/2oz **Cauliflower** (small florets)
- 60g/2oz **Peas** (boil)
- 25ml/5tsp **Mustard oil**
- 1g/1/2tsp ***Dhania*/coriander seeds**
- **A small pinch of *Saunf*/fennel seeds**
- **A small pinch of *Rai*/mustard seeds**
- **A small pinch of *Methidaana*/fenugreek seeds**
- **A small pinch of *Kalonji*/onion seeds**
- 8 ***Kari patta*/curry leaf**
- 45ml/1½oz **Fresh tomato puree**
- 1 **Fresh red chilli** (seed and finely chop)
- **Salt**

THE "STRING"

- 1 **Leek**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 3:30 HOURS

PREPARATION

- The Red Dough Sift flour and salt into a *paraat* or a tray or on to a work surface and make a bay Put the beet root and oil in the bay, mixing gradually When fully mixed, knead to make semi-soft dough, cover with moist cloth keep aside for 10 minutes. Uncover, divide into 4 equal portions, make balls cover with moist cloth again and keep aside for 5 minutes. Dust the work surface with flour and roll out each ball with a rolling pin into a disc of 10" diameter

- The Green Dough. For this, put the spinach puree and oil in the bay and start mixing gradually. The rest of the procedure is the same as for red dough.

- The Saffron Dough: Crush saffron threads with pestle or back of spoon, reserve in 15ml/1 tbs of lukewarm water and then make a paste. The procedure is the same as for green dough, except the saffron paste replaces the spinach puree.

● The Mushroom Filling: Melt butter in a frying pan, add cumin, stir over medium heat until it begins to pop, add onions, sauté until translucent and glossy, add the ginger, *bhunno*/stir-fry until onions are light golden. Then add red chillies — dissolved in 15ml/1tbs of water — stir for a minute, add mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, until the liquid has evaporated. Sprinkle the cardamom and star anise powders, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning. Now add coriander, green chillies and cheese, stir to mix well and keep warm.

● The *Paneer* Filling: Melt butter in a frying pan, add onions and ginger, sauté over medium heat until onions are translucent and glossy, add *paneer*, pepper and *ajwain*, stir for a minute, add tomatoes and stir to mix well. Remove, add the remaining ingredients, mix well, adjust the seasoning and keep warm.

● The Mixed Vegetable Filling: Mix turmeric with tomato puree. Heat oil in a frying-pan to a smoking point. Remove, cool, re-heat, add coriander, fennel, mustard, fenugreek and onion seeds, and stir over medium heat until they begin to pop. Add curry leaf, stir until they stop spluttering, add the tomato puree mixture and stir until a sheen appears on top. Then add peas, carrots, cauliflower and red chilli, stir for 2-3 minutes, remove, adjust the seasoning and keep warm.

● The "String": Carefully separate the leaves of the leek from the bulb, discard the bulb, wash the leaves and blanch in salted boiling water for 30 seconds. Drain and keep aside. (This is done to make the "string" pliable).

COOKING

Heat a *tawa*/griddle and bake the discs to make *roti*. Place equal quantities of the mushroom filling in each of the four red discs, the *paneer* filling in the yellow discs and mixed vegetable filling in the green discs. Then bring together the edges to form a *potli* (pouch) and tie with a leek "string" to retain the shape.

TO SERVE

Serve one *potli* of each colour with *chutney* of your choice.



SUBZ POTLI



KESARI MURGH TANDOORI

Kesari Murgh Tandoori

INGREDIENTS

● 8 Breasts of chicken (make 3 angular and deep incisions)

● Butter for basting and greasing roasting tray

THE FIRST MARINATION

● 60ml/1/4 cup Apple vinegar

● 30G/5/⅛tsp Garlic paste (strain)

● 15g/2½tsp Ginger paste (strain)

● Salt

THE SECOND MARINATION

● 125g/1/2 cup *Chakka dahi*/yoghurt cheese/hung yoghurt

● 60g/2oz Processed/cheddar cheese (grate)

● 60ml/1/4 cup Cream

● 0.5g/1tsp *Zaafraan*/saffron

● 25g/4tsp Garlic paste (strain)

● 25g/4tsp Ginger paste (strain)

● 3g/1tsp Yellow chilli powder

● 1.5g/1/2tsp *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder

● 0.75g/1/4tsp *Javitri*/mace powder

● 0.75g/1/4tsp Rose petal powder

● Salt

THE TANDOORI MASALA

● 1.5g/1/2tsp *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder

● 1.5g/1/2tsp *Amchoor*/mango powder

● 0.375g/1/4tsp *Saunf*/fennel powder

● A generous pinch of *Kasoori methi*/dried fenugreek leaf powder

● A pinch of *kaala namak*/black rock salt powder

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION TIME: 1:15 HOURS

COOKING TIME:—

IN OVEN: 10-12 MINUTES

IN TANDOOR/ON GRILL: 7-8 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The First Marination: Mix all the ingredients in a large bowl, vigorously rub the chicken with this marinade and reserve for 30 minutes.

● The Second Marination: Whisk yoghurt in a large bowl, stir-in cream and keep aside. Crush saffron threads with a pestle or back of a spoon, reserve in 15 ml/1 tbs of lukewarm milk and then make a paste. Mash grated cheese with base of the palm in a *parraat* or tray, add the yoghurt-cheese mixture, saffron and the remaining ingredients and mix well. Remove chicken from first marinade, hold aloft to allow excess marinade to drip off, vigorously rub the chicken with this marinade and reserve for 30 minutes in the refrigerator.

THE OVEN: PRE-HEAT TO 350°F

● The Skewering (if roasting in the *tandoor* or using the grill): Skewer the chickens from tail to head and keep aside. For the oven, grease a roasting tray, arrange the chicken on the backbone and keep aside.

COOKING

Roast in a moderately hot *tandoor* for 3-4 minutes. Remove, baste with butter and roast again for 2 minutes. On a charcoal grill, it'll take approximately the same time. In the pre-heated oven, roast for 10-12 minutes, basting at regular intervals.

TO SERVE

Arrange the chicken in an oval serving dish, sprinkle *tandoori masala* and serve with salad.

★ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Personal equations will clamour for a solution — love, marriage or even a business partnership. July 15-17 are for intense, hectic activity. That's the time to exploit your powers of creativity and clairvoyance. Give your intuition a free rein. Be concrete and focussed for achieving goals. Children will be a source of pleasure.

★TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) Plenty of behind-the-scenes activity; cross currents of friendship and animosity will be strong, so best to take it in your stride.Good time to go through a financial overhaul. Do take chances, be your best, get work done and find time to relax and enjoy.Your system needs it. Use your imagination and you will get what you desire and expect.

★GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Many of you will be taking a decisive action and fortunately for you it will be the right one. You may rewrite your contract, make new commitments, upgrade and thoroughly modernise machines and more importantly, your own mind and ideas! Shortly, you will be at ease. This is also the time to think about your personal life.

★CANCER, (June 21- July 20) Romantic linking, business collaborations, travel, trade and wedding bells are predicted for Cancerians this week. Many are in for a change of direction, both in the personal as well as professional life. It will be for the better.Time to think of the future and leave the past behind. Avoid putting your fingers into too many pies at the same time.

★LEO, (July 21- August 21) Clarify all information you receive and you will receive more than you can chew. It is absolutely certain that work pressure to perform will be really overbearing.This could tell on your health. Otherwise all is fine and dandy. July 14-16 will be particularly important for progress. There might be some good news on the family front.



★VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) Money and family are the twins who ride you hard and spur you to glorious achievements. Buying, selling, leasing, borrowing, funding hold the key to a happy you. While romance is possible, it will be sporadic and sudden. You might be hosting parties, dinners or functions. You are on the verge of partnerships at all levels.

★LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Work in secrecy and reserve your ammunition for your foes and rivals. Conflict of interests are likely. Agreements may have to be amended or modified. Do a look-nice-job and give things a second glance before you sign and agree. Your resources, creativity and ingenious ideas should turn things around for you.

★SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) The focus will be on family values, finance and personal relationships. Children, hobbies, creative pursuits snatch your heart away. This week and the next, you will experience the truth of it. It is time to ask for favours, so step out in style. Great things are foretold for those in advertising, journalism and television.

★SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) A big project can materialise this week. Noble ideas succeed when they are backed with staying powder and bullheadedness. Be positive, because that is your natural inclination. Be honest to yourself and surrender sweetly to the demands of romance, love and idealism. July 16-17 is the best time for new ventures.

★CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) An excellent week to travel, publicise your wares, burnish your image and that of the company you represent. Yes, a good time to sail forth and be with the world. Matters related to house, family, property, shop and business will receive a great fillip. The timing is just right to take a quick decision now.

★AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Many of you will find your bearings, be aware of your potential and power, and be able to move fast and get what you desire. Yes, you can start something new and different and exciting as the time is right. Those in communication, publicity, PRO, sales, teaching, films, painting, photography, and research do wonders.

★PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Loans and funds will be up your street. It is time to angle for them provided you are interested. Work pressure will decrease giving you time for travel and pleasure. A foreign trip or collaboration is on the cards. A promotion, job-switch, will keep you busy. Romance is in the air for many of you.



bazar 127/1A, B B Ganguly Street Phone 227 7272/7221 Chowringhee 83, Chowringhee Road Phone 223 8082/7974 Gariahat 40C, Gariahat Road Phone 475 8734/8

SMALL Talk

Crossing Swords

Seema Goswami on the designer wars

What kind of design are we talking about here?:
Why, high fashion, of course. You know, the sort I'm referring to, don't you? All those overpriced, voluminous *salwar kameezes*, over-the-top *zardozi lehngas*, and even the odd Western outfit in imported fabrics with a hint of embroidery. And not one of them below Rs 15,000 - that is, if you're lucky.

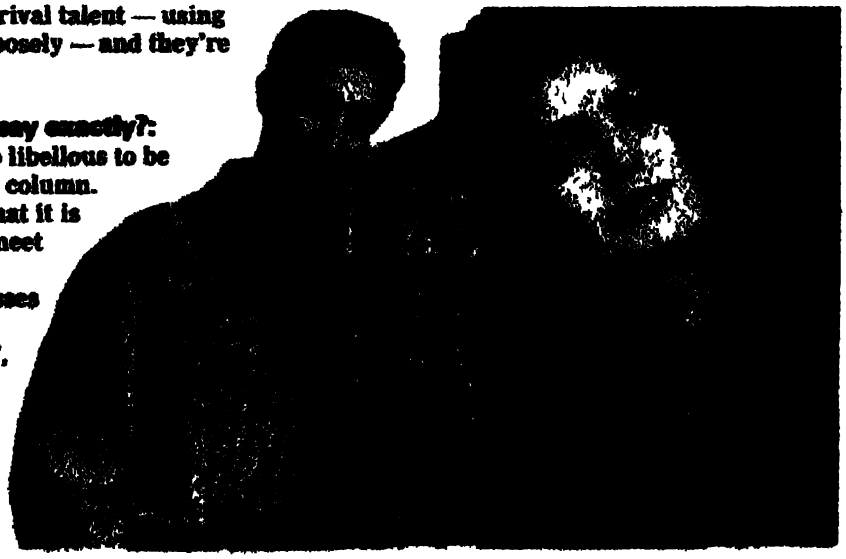
And the wars?:
Well, they're waged by the designers themselves, those media-savvy creatures with beautifully gelled hair, who use their motor mouths to greater effect than they do their motorised sewing machines.

The weapons are?:
Words rather than clothes, because alas, their outfits are rather dumb — that is, they don't speak too well of their talent. But boy, can these designers shoot their mouths off! Just mention a rival talent — using the term very loosely — and they're up and going.

What do they say exactly?:
Most of it is too libellous to be repeated in this column. Suffice to say, that it is strong stuff. Suneet Varma, for instance, dismisses Ritu Beri as a 'media creation', using the fact that he has never seen her clothes ("I mean, where are her clothes?" he asks plaintively.)

Is Suneet the only culprit?:
Not by a long shot. Far more indiscreet is Sandeep Khosla — who partners with Abu Jani to dress the Beautiful Women of Mumbai, most of whom by some wild coincidence, happen to belong to the film industry — who damns Rohit Bal with faint praise, claiming that he really admires Bal's 'flamboyance'. Not his clothes, you understand, just his flamboyance — a bit like saying that you admire Sonia Gandhi for the way she drapes her saris.

Suneet Varma, for instance, dismisses Ritu Beri as a 'media creation'



Nobody escapes lightly:
No, not even Tarun Tahiliani, who is derided by some little-known designer called Ranna, as making clothes that only his wife and Nina Pillai can wear. Given that Ranna's last spring-summer collection was inspired by lingerie (not the most wearable of looks) this was a bit like the crackpot calling the kettle black

The sore point evidently is:
Plagiarism. Speak to any designer, and he will tell you tearfully how his designs are forever being ripped off by his colleagues (makes me wonder who exactly is the copycat, given that everyone appears to be a victim). And anyone who saw Rohit Bal and Suneet Varma's print collections this summer will know that not all of this is idle talk.

So who are the winners of these wars?:
Strangely enough, it is those designers who stay far away from the battle-front, and concentrate on their clothes instead. David Abraham and Rakesh Thakore, for example, who maintain a very low profile and let their clothes speak for them at such tony retail outlets as Ogaan (Delhi) and Browns (London). As a strategy this is near perfect. But then, who said that Indian designers were anywhere near perfection?

BEAUTY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I have very smelly feet and the problem gets aggravated during the summers, when one tends to sweat constantly. I try to take care of my feet by washing it constantly and even applying deodorant. The problem however, persists. What else can I do?

AMIT BHASIN, CALCUTTA

The best way would be to avoid wearing closed footwear for some time specially during the summer months Drink lots of water, at least 10-12 glasses a day Keep your footwear out in the sun once every two days and avoid smelly footwear Soak your feet in a tub of cold water to which you have added two tablespoons of alum powder and the juice of two lemons You can add a few drops of your favourite cologne if you like Keep them soaked for about 10-15 minutes and pat dry specially between the toes Powder your feet with sandalwood based talcum powder Avoid synthetic socks Wear cotton ones and wash them daily Soon you will find a difference in your feet

My 2-year-old daughter has very good, soft skin but during summers she tends to perspire a lot and this causes tiny rashes all over her body. Please advise.

HAMIDA BANO, MURSHIDABAD

Baby-soft-skin can also get affected by prickly heat And the best way to avoid this is by regularly spraying your baby with cool rose water which has been kept in the fridge Apply an *uptan* of sandalwood and rose water and then bathe her Dust a sandalwood based talcum powder to prevent prickly heat Giving her cool things to drink like *nimboo paani, lassi* and cold milk will also help solve the problem

I applied *mehndi* on my hair after hearing about its benefits from your column. I used a good brand. However, after applying it on the scalp I developed rashes over my scalp and it really itches a lot. What can I do to get rid of the itches? I will of course never apply *mehndi* again.

SEEMA GANGULY, GUWAHATI

of a step towards a global consciousnes of moving back to nature. It is not necessary that one will not react adversely to anything natural, after all one could be allergic to a particular natural product. People are allergic to walnuts, prawns, honey, dust, pollen, a particular type of fr or grass. It could be just about anything. Since you have reacted so adversely to this, I would advise you to always test an product on your hand before applying it and wait for at least half an hour. This is t both skin and hair.

As for the itchiness, unfortunately, many times even market brands contain chemi cals in henna which is why I am suggesti that you first take a patch test The itchiness will go if you apply coconut and almond oil mixed together and massage into the scalp Wash your hair with fullers earth mixed with cold water This should b done at least three times a week for two weeks to cure the problem completely.



Wash eyes with cold water and use cucumber slices or an ayurvedic eye cleanser

It is unfortunate that your scalp reacted adversely to henna and I am glad you have written back to me. I could have avoided answering the question, but this is not a commercial based column and more

I am rather confused about what beauty products to buy for my skin since the market is flooded with all kinds of herbal products. Please advise me on

what criteria I should buy these products. I have normal to dry skin with no specific or major problems. Can you suggest a basic beauty routine for me?
SHALINI, CALCUTTA

You are lucky to have a normal skin to look after. The basics behind your beauty routine needs to be moisturising and nourishing the skin Pick up beauty products with extracts of honey, almonds, avocados, etc which are all oil giving natural products. A home-made nourishing scrub made of figs, powdered almonds, fresh cream and lemon juice is excellent for your skin type A nutritious, high protein and high fibre diet is also a must. Avoid using strong chemical based products as these have a drying and damaging effect on the skin Wash your face with cold milk as this is also an excellent nourisher

I have a line on my nose which I simply detest. It runs from one side of my nose to the other and gathers a lot of dirt. Please advise me on how to get rid of the line or at least lighten the line so that it isn't prominent?
ANURADHA SEN, DURGAPUR

It is unfortunate that you have not mentioned as to how the line got there in the first place. Is it a scar or is it a mark left over from some acne problem? A dermabrasive method has to be used and I would suggest that you show it to a beauty expert who can see how much the skin damage there is. At home, wipe the area with rose water frequently Make a scrub of green pea, powdered cucumber seeds and lemon juice Massage this into the skin and wash off with cold milk. This is to be done daily for a month for lightening results

I used to indulge in a lot of nail biting earlier but I have managed to get rid of the habit now. The problem is that my nails are of very bad quality now. They are wafer thin and flake easily. Please suggest a natural remedy to improve the quality of my nails.
MADHUMITA SENGUPTA, BANKURA

Did they taste good? Anyhow now that you are over the munching habit, its good that you're worried about the way you look. Perhaps its because they are there and not in your tummy. Quite commendable I must say! Take a teaspoon of gelatin daily for two weeks. Just swallow it down with half a glass of water Also rub lemon peel onto your nails daily and see the results very soon It is important that you include calcium rich food in your daily diet and these include plenty of milk, yoghurt and buttermilk Fresh fruits, salads and herb teas must be included in your daily diet

I am a 27-year-old woman and the problem is that I suffer from bad breath. I use mouth wash and regularly brush my teeth but to no avail. Please advise.
RITU BANERJEE, KALYANI

Use cold rose water, milk or a good cleanser to clean your face. It is important to follow a regular cleansing routine



Very often it is not the teeth but the gum that require extra attention I suggest you see a dentist immediately Also mouth odour could be a result of constipation Check to see that you have a clean stomach and if not, include lots of spinach and warm milk in your evening meal plan Isabgol is also good for cleaning the stomach
You can make a mouth rinse by boiling the following ingredients — aniseed, cardamom, cinnamon, clove and mint. Boil for about ten minutes until the quantity of water is halved Store in an air-tight bottle and rinse out the mouth whenever you feel it is smelling This done regularly alongwith an internal checkup of gums and stomach will definitely improve the situation within no time Also, gargle regularly with listerine mouthwash not only after brushing your teeth but also after every meal It is also very important to drink atleast 8 glasses of water a day for proper lubrication



With Vatika Henna Conditioning watch your hair shine more with every wash!



The Henna Conditioning of Vatika Shampoo gives each hair strand a natural shine Every wash leaves your hair silkier softer and more lustrous. It is also enriched with the natural goodness of green almonds and shikakai. Better still, it does not contain any harmful chemicals

So use Vatika Henna Conditioning Shampoo regularly. And watch your hair shine more with every wash.

To know more about the goodness of Henna Conditioning, read the booklet attached to the bottle or write to us at Vatika Shampoo (Telegraph) P.O.Box 4939 New Delhi 29

Vatika

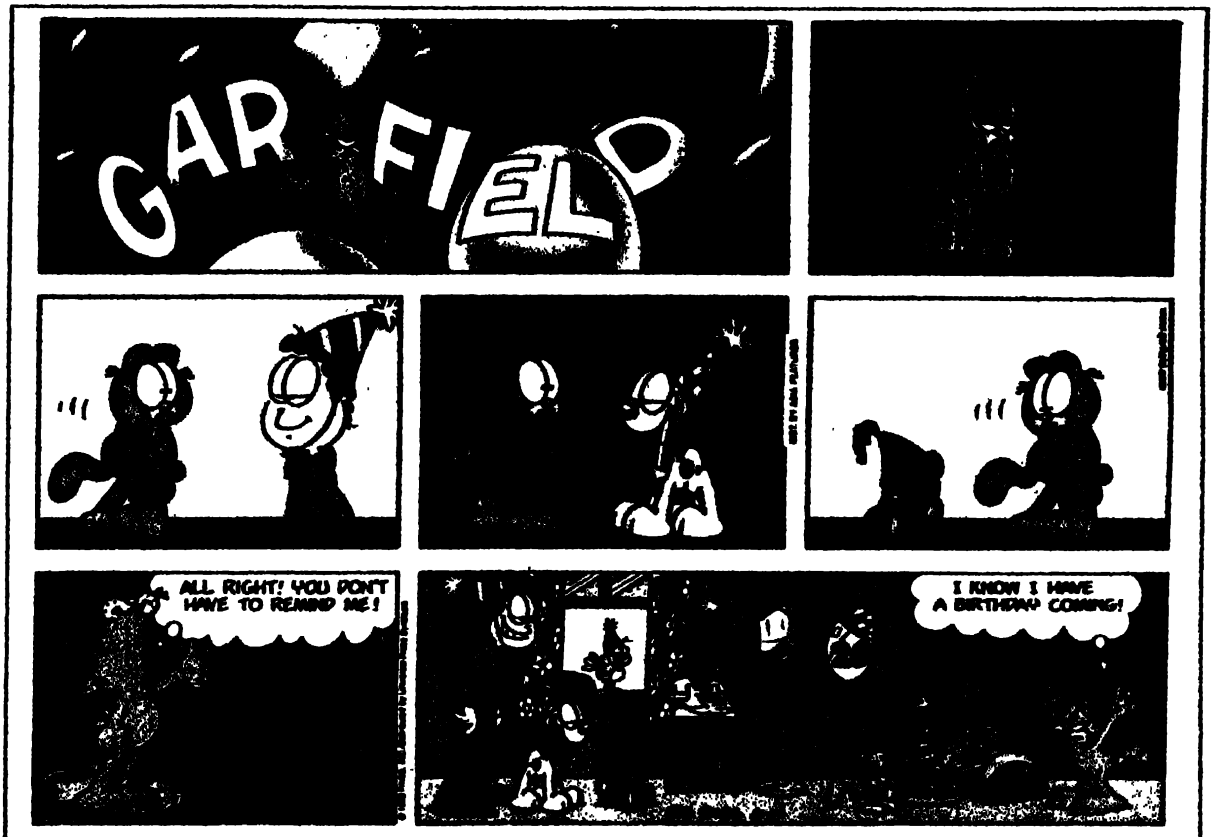


Let Nature Shine in Your Ha

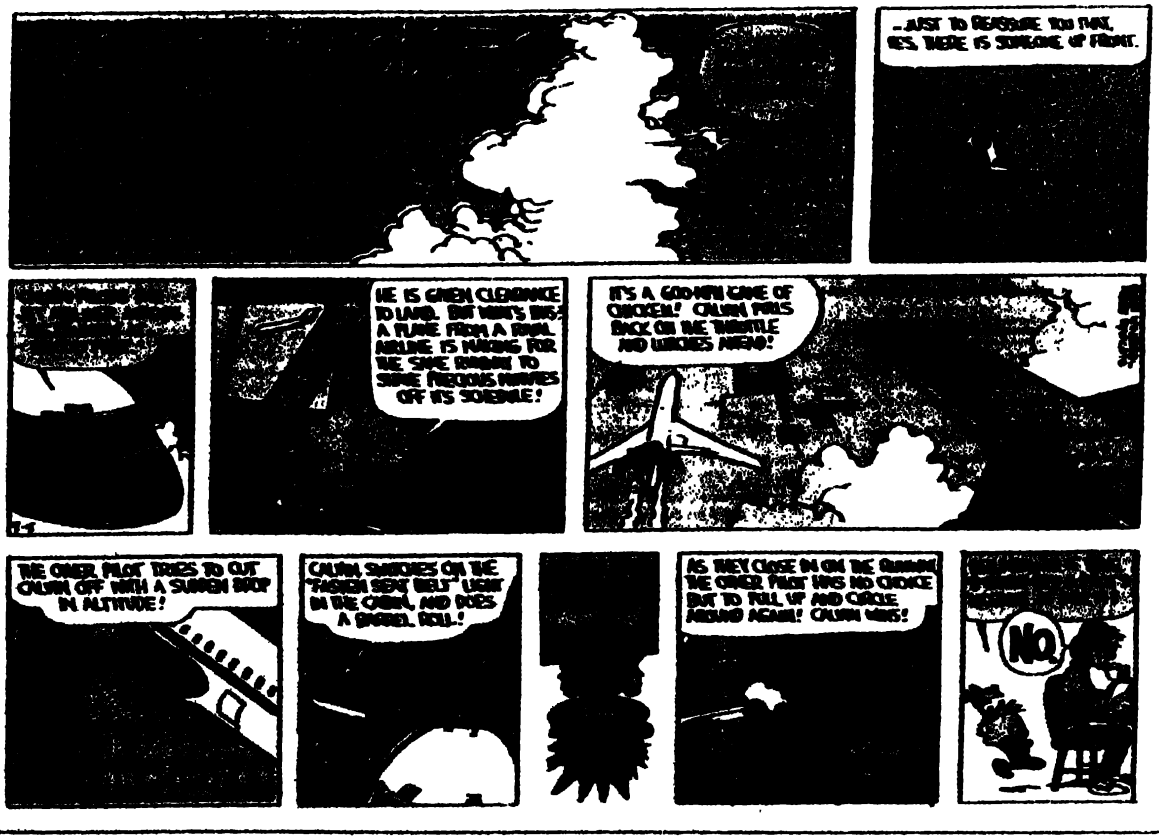
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY .

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC-743	1600	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1520	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ AIZAWL					
IC 701	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 702	1625	2, 4, 6
			IC 702	1655	1, 3
			IC 702	1805	5
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1750	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC 471	0615	daily	IC-472	1150	daily
9W 511	1340	daily	9W 512	2125	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1915	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
# IC 765A	1750	1, 3, 5	IC-766A	2250	1, 3, 5
■ DELHI					
IC 901	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W 902	0840	daily	AI 677	0925	1
IC 402	1130	daily	* IC 829	0755	2, 6
* IC 846	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2230	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1130	1, 3, 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 701	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 221	1030	daily	IC 702	1405	6
			IC 702	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-702	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1000	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1340	daily	IC 779	0910	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2125	daily
CD 572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD 571	1655	1, 3, 5
■ IMPHAL					
CD-256	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC 204/202	1655	1, 3
■ LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 702	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W-701	0915	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-712	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W 711	1905	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
■ PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-164	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL 476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1935	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

26 **# IC-765A/766A till July 10** *** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC /24	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
■ DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3 6	BI-108	0730	4 7
■ KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0930	1, 2 3 5 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2 3, 5 6
RA 214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2 6
■ LONDON					
BA-147	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU 538	1120	4	SU 537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ PARO					
KB-106	1000	2 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4 7	BI-107	1940	3 6
SQ 415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2 5
IC-727	1450	2 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
■ TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
■ YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2 6	IC-726	1030	3 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep. Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr Tues., Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun.	16 15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun., Arr Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	8-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep: Tues., Wed & Sat, Arr Tues., Fri & Sat	09-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr. Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-35	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-35	3020
3021	18-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
5684	16-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5680
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-41	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3035	18-00	Asansol Express	8-45	3036
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	8-10	3072
3015	9-05	Sainthia Express	15-40	3016
3017	8-00	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep. Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr: Mon., Thurs & Fri.	7-05	1160
9805	15-10	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr. Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9806
1447	14-10	Shalimar (Jabalpur) Express	4-30	1447
1161	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri; Arr: Tues	7-55	1162

Sealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3141	19-40	Tinsukia-Toofan Express	8-35	3142
3143	19-15	Darjeeling Mail	8-45	3144
3111	20-15	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3112
3053	8-05	Kanchanjunga Express	20-55	3054
3161	22-15	Gaur Express	5-15	3162
3147	21-15	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep: Mon. & Fri.; Arr. Wed. & Sun.	8-45	3148
3001	20-00	Kalka Express	4-45	3002
3003	11-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	14-30	3004
3133	20-55	Mughal Sarai Express via SRG Loop	12-30	3134
3103	15-30	Bhagalpur (Lalgola) Express	10-05	3104
3009	12-40	Ganga Sagar (Kanchipur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-25	3010

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
8003	20-15	Madras Mail	6-55	8004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
2860	12-25	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8033
8030	10-45	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-20	8029
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-20	2842
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-50	Jajpal (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rajagada Express	5-50	8006
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-35	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2822
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	12-05	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep. Sunday Arr Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5628	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr: Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

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THE Best

Silk, satin and cotton: all the luxurious fabrics that go to make nightwear. **Ghazala Wahab** reports

SWEET DREAMS ARE



ARKO DUTTA

BODY BEAUTIFUL
Indian women are becoming more conscious of their nightwear and would not mind paying more for something really special to sleep in

This is the stuff dreams are made of: lace, silk, satin, and the finest of cotton. Sleep may be important for the mind and the body but it's equally important what you sleep in.

An old run-down *salwar* suit, or *kurta pyjama* won't do any longer. At a time when inner wear is often more expensive than outer wear, nightwear has finally grown out of its infancy. Though most nightwear, both for women and men, is unbranded and gets sold from small shops, costing as little as Rs 200, a few international brands have been making gradual but steady inroads into Indian bedrooms.

"Call it an increase in purchasing power or the Western influence as a result of satellite television, the fact is that Indians in general, and women in particular, are paying more attention to what they sleep in," says Atul Suri who is marketing Yorkshire-based Panache Lingerie in India.

Panache entered India in February 1998 through Resources International Private Limited. Right now heavily into lingerie, they will soon be launching a range of nightwear for women. Priced between Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000, this will come in a range of cotton-rich fabrics, and in micro-fibre which is lycra blended with cotton.

According to Suri, the market for nightwear, still a part of Rs 500 crore lingerie market, is huge but largely unorganised. There are very few Indian brands and hardly anyone buys nightwear because of the brand name. Most of the specialised retailers have their own manufacturing units where they copy designs from foreign catalogues.

"A lot of families have been involved in this business for generations with the third and more enterprising generation taking charge of the business now," says Suri. "They travel abroad, pick up designs and materials from there, and try to develop it here. So, even as the design is international, the quality is not."

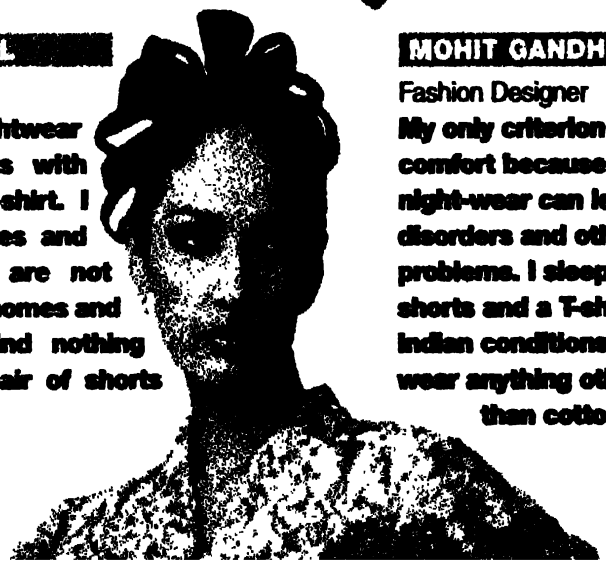
Suri gives an example of Ishan Singh, Sobha Singh in Mussoorie, who have been manufacturing and retailing nightwear for



OMAR DUGGAL

Model

My idea of nightwear starts and ends with shorts and a T-shirt. I don't like nighties and negliges. They are not suitable for our homes and in summer I find nothing cooler than a pair of shorts and a T-shirt



MOHIT GANDHI

Fashion Designer

My only criterion for nightwear is comfort because uncomfortable night-wear can lead to sleeping disorders and other related problems. I sleep in loose boxer shorts and a T-shirt. I think, in Indian conditions one cannot wear anything other than cotton

the last three generations. People travelling to Mussoorie make it a point to visit the shop.

"Most people who are into nightwear manufacturing import, cut pieces and assemble them here," says Gurpreet Kaur, marketing manager, Underlines, the lingerie boutique, the first one to bring popular foreign brands to India in an organised way. "But because it is very difficult to match the right accessories with the fabric, the choice of colours and designs," she says.

Underlines has launched a range of assembled nightwear in polysatin. But as Kaur says, because of import constraints the range is a limited one with few designs and colours.

Though, according to Gurpreet, all that will change in July when they plan to launch a new range of nightwear in cotton and polysatin priced between Rs 600 to Rs 2,000. But only for women.

"We cater only to women," says Gurpreet. "In any case, men are not brand or even product conscious. In fact, in most cases, men don't even buy their own undergarments. Their wives or girlfriends buy for them," she says.

According to her, the popular fabrics are cotton, polysatin, voile, and georgette mixed with satin. Silk is not very popular and the bulk customers for silk comprise foreigners. Says Gurpreet, "In India, the concept of sleeping in silk is really alien to us."

But Anmol, the first label to retail designer nightwear from the Hyatt Regency hotel in New Delhi, specialises in pure silk and pure cotton nightwear. Says Deepa Sahay of Priapree International which sells Anmol, "We have an image of purity and excellence and that is what our products project."

But this comes for a price. Nightwear at Anmol can cost you anything between Rs 1,150 to Rs 3,400. Understandably, most of their customers are foreigners or as Deepa puts it, "discerning women." Unlike other brands they also keep night suits for men.

Despite this consciousness about nightwear they sell most during the wedding season when the trousseau of a girl is being put together when the price factor is also negligible.

The popular colours remain pastels with light delicate prints though there is an increasing demand for dark colours. Says a salesperson at Underlines, "So far we have only colours like peach, cream and blue but there is a demand for black, maroon and so on."

The younger customers like knee-length nighties with housecoats or night shirts without *pyjamas* but mothers and aunts still like the ankle length nighties with housecoats. Says Gurpreet, "We experimented with all sorts of nightwear. Surprisingly, housecoats sold very well. It seems women will wear any nightwear but in the morning they like to have a nice housecoat to wrap around."

However, nightshirts did not become very popular because the idea of sleeping in nothing but shirts without a *pyjama* did not appeal to most.

Almost 80 per cent of the nightwear market is dominated by local brands. The rest is divided between a few international brands which have come in over the last few years. Of the branded market the lion's share belongs to Lovable, a foreign brand which is now manufactured in India. It is readily available and competitively priced.

But even as the market for women's nightwear is increasing at a rapid pace, the choice for men remains nightsuits and boxer shorts though some prefer track pants during the winter months.

As Suri says, "Indian taste for nightwear is not fashion-driven. It is comfort and Western imagery driven. And this applies more in case of men than women." That explains why men will have to do with *kurta pyjamas* and bermuda shorts for a little while longer. ■

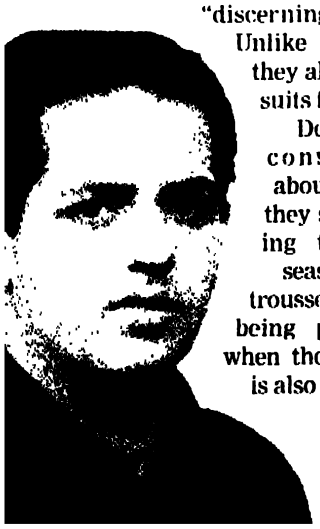
PEACHES AND CREAM

Pastels with light prints and colours like cream, peach and blue remain popular in nightwear though now there is a great demand for darker colours too

MADE OF THESE

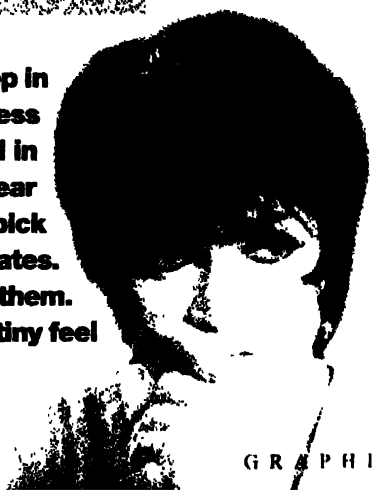


ARKO DUTTA



Hair Stylist

Ideally, I would prefer to sleep in nothing at all. Because the less you wear, the cooler you feel in this heat. But honestly, I wear Shamon satin nighties. I pick them in bulk from United States. I feel most comfortable in them. They give me a very silky, satiny feel at night



MY PERSONAL *Style*

WARM AND WELCOMING

That's the effect Mohit Gujral has tried to achieve in his dream home



S KUNWAR

GUT FEELING:

A lot of one's design principle has to come from the gut. It has to be based upon one's needs and instincts, reflecting one's taste all the way

I have played with all kinds of colours in my home decor. There is, in fact, not a single white surface. I have also experimented with light, doing up my flat in such a way that there is a lot of natural light. My study, for instance, is very bright because of the amount of light that keeps streaming in. It looks very masculine and the walls are painted black. My living room, on the other hand, is green and salmon and the furniture is a mix of vivid and vibrant colours like red, blue and green.

I believe in a rich use of colours mixed with artefacts. There are paintings and sculptures, both modern and old. They are eclectic and have been picked up from anywhere and everywhere. My bedroom is parchment and green and my kid's room is done up in lemon hues.

As soon as one walks in, he will notice the bright splash of colours all around the flat. It immediately enlivens the mood. There is an abundance of light wood, dark wood, carpets and plenty of rugs which give a kind of warm and cushy look to the place.

I live in an apartment where I am surrounded by treetops. Maybe, that's why I have never felt the need for curtains. As it is, I don't crave for privacy, so why bother at all? All I see is the green around me which really perks up my mood.

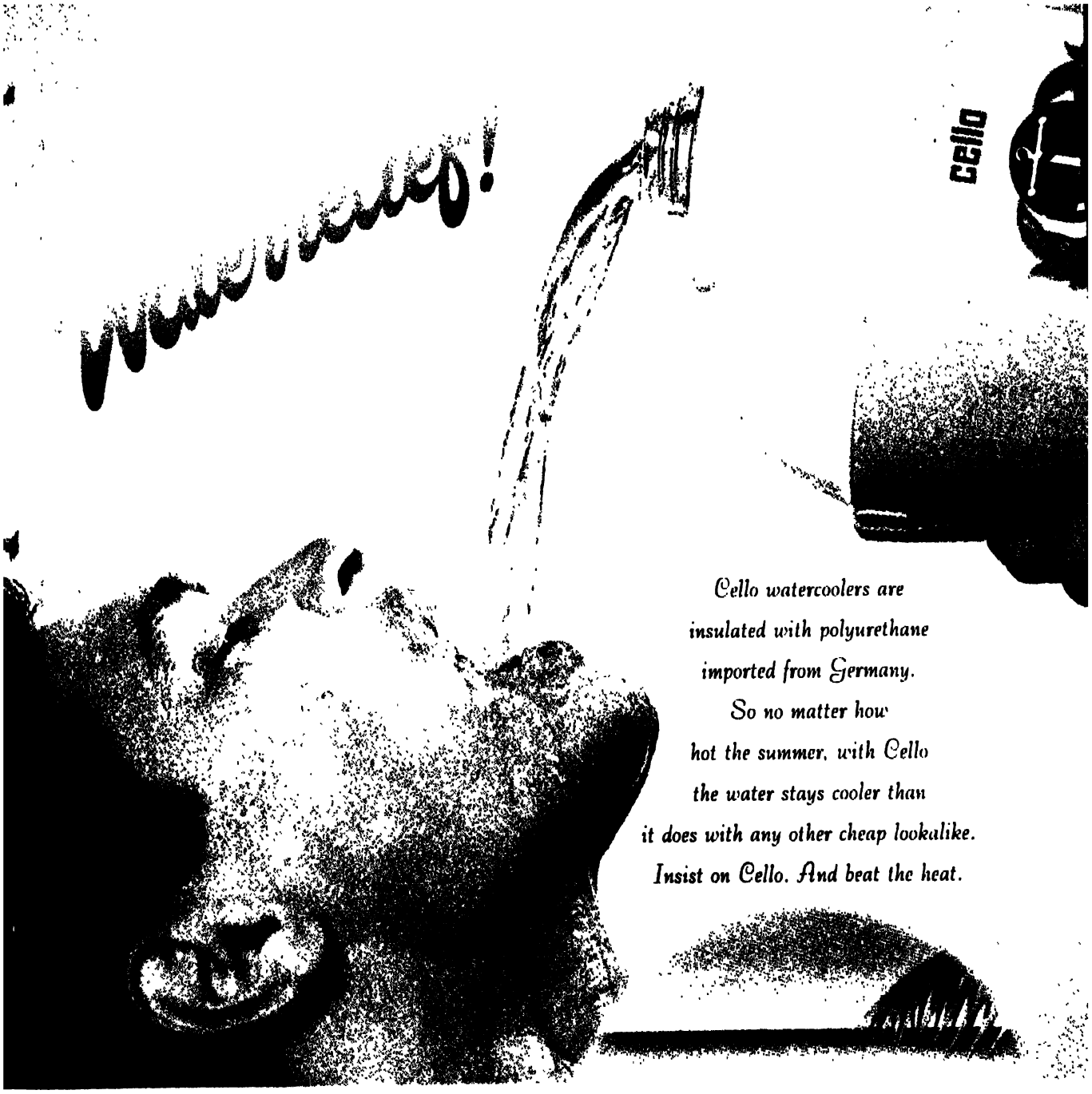
The upholstery is a mix of leather, cotton and mixed fabrics, based on natural cotton and synthetics as well as a little bit of silk. Quite a matrix, I should say.

My apartment is not Rajasthani or British. It is basically a contemporary home which has an Indian touch to it. I bought a lot of the furniture from exhibitions that sell some old ones which looked really good to me. I have had the rest made from different local manufacturers. I use a dark mirror on the doors to give an illusion of space. In a flat, that is something one has to learn to create.

A lot of one's design principle has to come from the gut. It has to be based upon one's needs and instincts, reflecting one's taste all the way. When I design for my clients, I interact a lot with them to know what exactly they want. The final results are never a solo effort. When it came to doing up our house, my wife Feroze had as much to contribute as I did. Maybe, she was just like one of my clients, guiding and adding her bit to all that I did and said.

So what does my home feel like? It is warm and looks very lived-in. Everything is child-friendly. There is nothing picture perfect about it. That's what makes a home a home and not an exhibition hall.

As told to Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya



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WRITE IN



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SAY CHEESE

Thank you for the cover story on fashion photographers ('Picture Perfect', June 7). When we take into account the hype associated with the fashion industry in India, we tend to forget the contribution of these men behind the lens. It is they who make the models appear so breathtakingly glamorous in print. It is also praiseworthy that you have focussed on some of the female fashion photographers as Sumita Murgai Nanda. She is among the few women who could really make it in this profession.

SHYAMAL GHOSH, CALCUTTA

HOTSHOT

The cover story on fashion photographers was very readable. One usually tends to take the work of these men and women with frivolity. Little do we realise that this profession calls for so much of hard work, creativity and perseverance.Fashion photography has come of age in India at last and should be considered as an excellent career option for our talented youth, given the *moolah* and the glamour that it bequeathes.

S. Agarwal, Calcutta

Oh no, not again! We are really tired of the number of articles related to the fashion industry. Surely, there are other equally absorbing topics to write on in your magazine. Leisure stories need not be only on these clothes horses or the ones who are creating them. Please do not spoil our Sundays like this!

M. Chatterjee, Asansol

ALL WORK, NO PLAY

In the write up, 'Work Less, Play More' (June 21), it is stated that all workaholics would be well advised to follow this dictum.Some hate office while many are work addicts.Both extremes are best avoided.

Mahesh Kapasi, Delhi

WHAT'S UP, DOC?

Should medical practitioners come under the purview of the Consumers Protection Act or not has already created a lot of discussions, debates and protests till date ('Doctors in the Dock', June 21). You have rightly said, there is perhaps not a single law in India which does not have the potential for misuse or which has not been misused by vested interests. One would like to find out whether doctors are really above law. The answer is obvious. If they wish to be

graphiti ★ 19 July 1998

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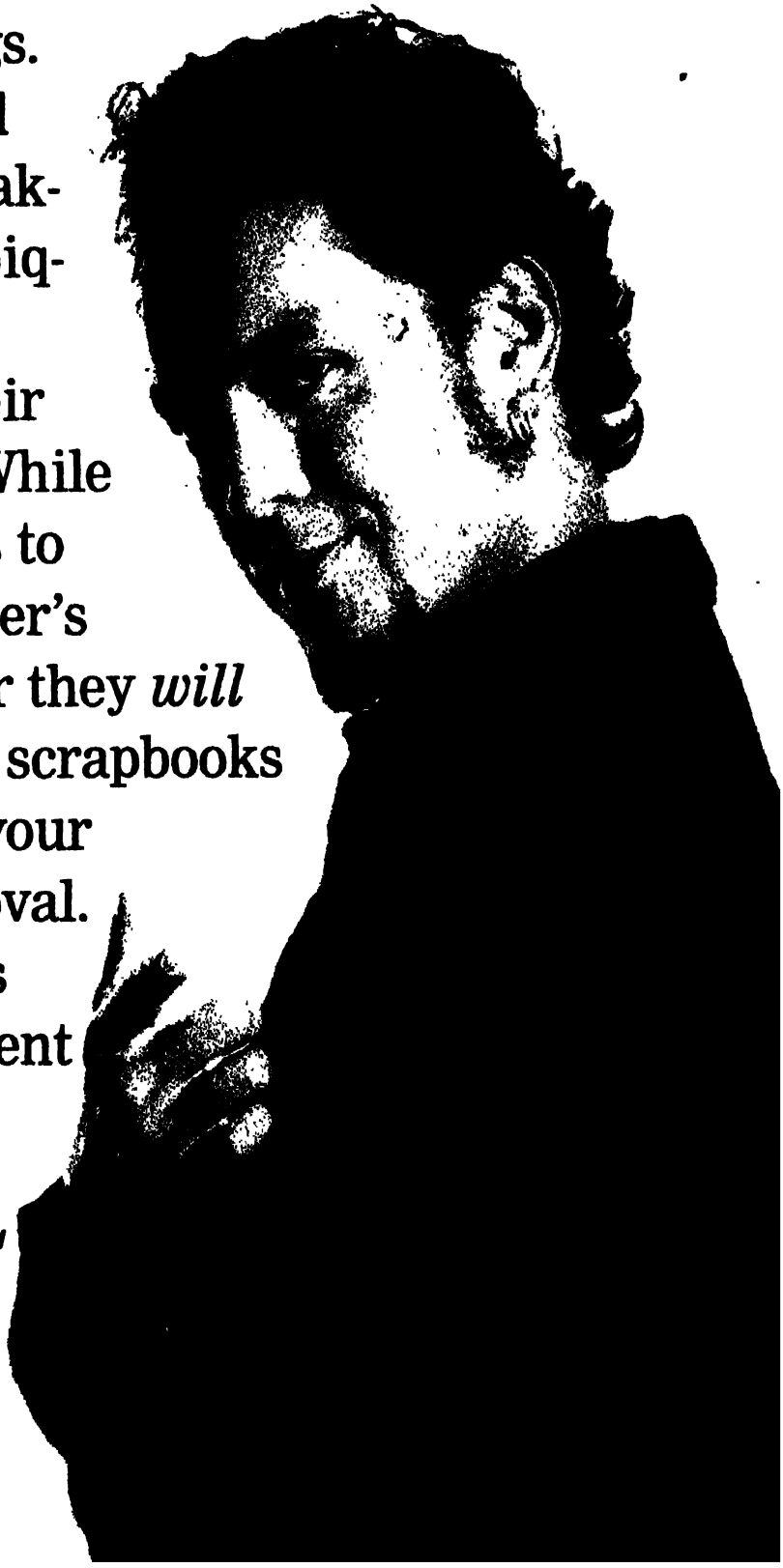
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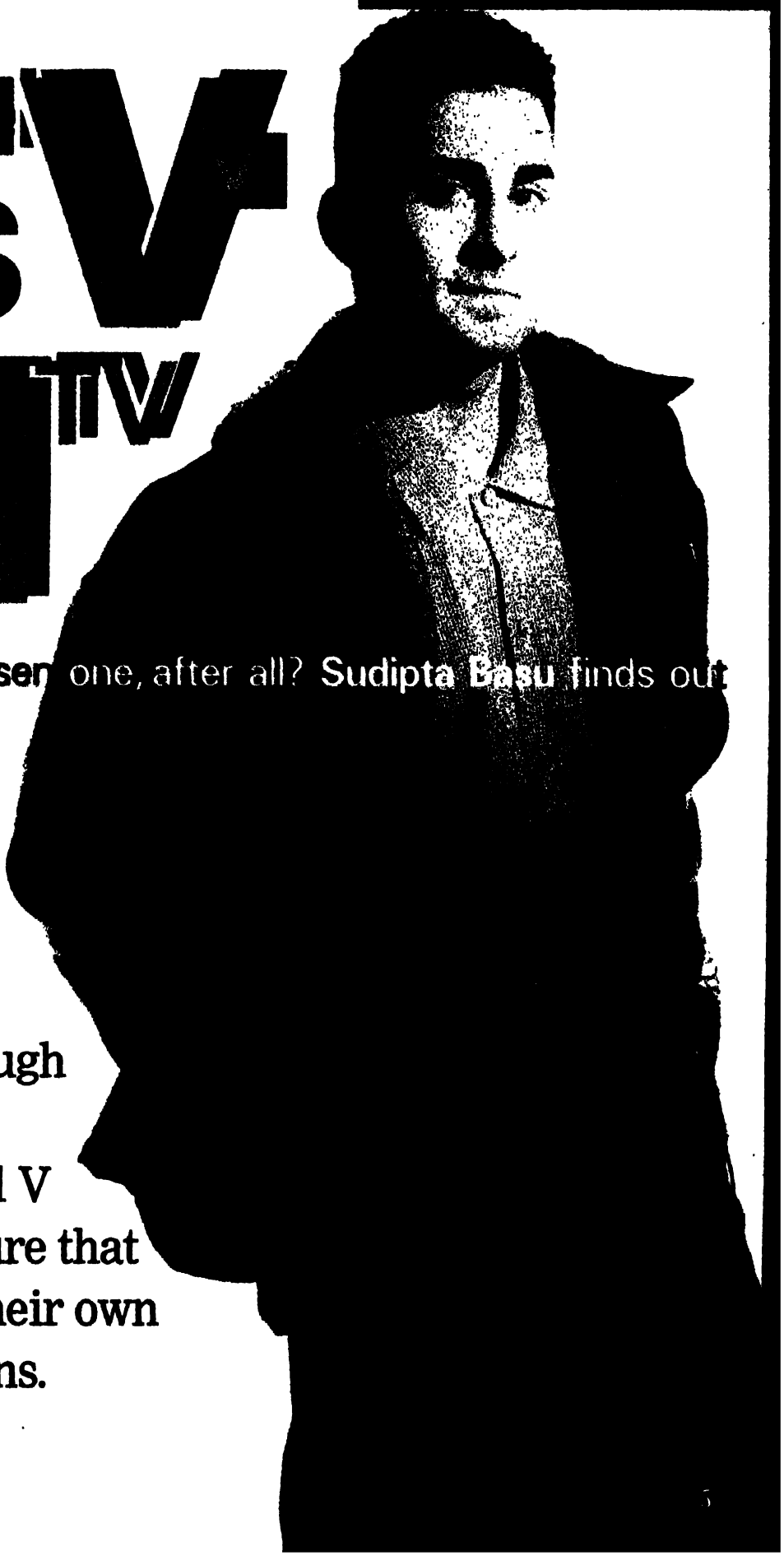
You can't really tell one from the other. In fact, they could easily pass off as siblings. And speaking of siblings, a ubiquitous rivalry has soaked well into their growing up years. While one sometimes tries to snatch away the other's prized lolly, together they *will* push their personal scrapbooks persistently under your nose for adult approval. Then, at other times they are pretty content playing their own



THE ALIEN LOOK
MTV thrives on the bold and the bizarre; be it the grungy style of Danny McGill or the clean-shaven, smooth-talking Mike Kasem

Channel V vs MTV

So, who's the chosen one, after all? Sudipta Basu finds out



games.

Yet, despite the surface similarities, there is enough of a difference between Channel V and MTV to ensure that they both have their own bands of loyal fans.





THE RIVALS
Sunil Lulla of MTV (top) likes to 'Indianise, humanise and humorise' while for Jules Fuller of Channel [v] (below) the philosophy is 'reflect and affect'

If some swear by *MTV Most Wanted*, others rate *BPL Oye* as their favourite programme. If some are die-hard fans of Cyrus Broacha, others consider Udham Singh to be a cult figure. So, both channels have their own following, and can legitimately claim to reflect the tastes of the Indian youth.

At the House of V in Khar, in suburban Mumbai, the atmosphere is pretty upbeat following the roadshow in Bangalore, where the young Jamaican Diana King regaled a delirious audience with her latest chartbusters, and the general manager (GM) of V, Jules Fuller, strummed a solo guitar.

Similarly, at the office of MTV in Tardeo, the mood is young and vibrant. GM Sunil Lulla — as also his team of young professionals — takes a break sometimes by dribbling a basketball in the office. People yell out to each other in times of serious crisis, in a lingo that is characteristically their own, and pretty much similar to the moving images that run over and over again on 24-inch screens strategically perched around the office.

Both Channel V and MTV, a couple of years apart from one another in age, derive the material for their scrapbooks from the same source. Two years after MTV returned to the country as a 24-hour network, the motto of both the channels remains very much the same: to target the youth of India.

But in this battle for the hearts, minds, and sound systems of the Indian youth, MTV — following its relaunch after a long hiatus — has an edge over Channel V, albeit by a small margin. According to an ORG MARG survey of the two channels in the last week of March '98, in the 15-35 target group in the cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Lucknow and Kanpur, MTV grossed on an average 0.92 points as against V's score of 0.58.

Jules Fuller, GM, Channel V, takes exception to their reported downward slide. "On the contrary," says Fuller, drawing a graph to illustrate his point, "they (MTV) have risen from the bottom to touch us here. As to where they got the audience to increase their numbers, I reckon it has been ATN."

Sunil Lulla, GM, MTV, ascribes his channel's success to their aggressive attempts to address the youth of India. Says Lulla, "Music flows through the lives of the people, but we package all of this to reach out to the heart of the Indian youth, by understanding their anxieties and frustrations. And all this is made relevant through promos and interactive VJs."

But while the channels are busy coping with the war against each other, their influence has spilled over in other areas as well. Switch to any channel, from Star TV, to Sony to Music Asia, they are flooded with tacky clones of MTV/Channel V shows. So, in that respect at least, both channels have been equally successful.

To cut to the past a little, when music television first came to India via 24-hour MTV, for insular *desis* it was nothing short of Nirvana. They now knew what was hip and cool — they spoke and dressed like one another, each aiming to outdo the other in aping their favourite rock stars and VJs. The concept of entertainment among urban Indians itself saw a sea change.

Curiously though, following this cultural invasion, MTV did not trickle down to the masses. The ratings remained static and soon disputes between Viacom and the Hong-Kong based Star TV — that was beaming the signal to India — erupted. In '93, the licensing agreement between Star TV and Viacom was discontinued. And having understood the tremendous reach that music (and consequently a music channel) has in this country, Star TV decided to float its own music channel — Channel [V].

To combat the alien look of MTV, Channel [V] sought to envelop the 'real Indian' into its folds by lending the station some local colour. The formula was simple. The veejays would be of Indian origin as far as possible, even if they did speak with foreign accents (having for the most part being brought up abroad). There would be room for the odd (very odd, indeed) Danny McGill, but that was about it.

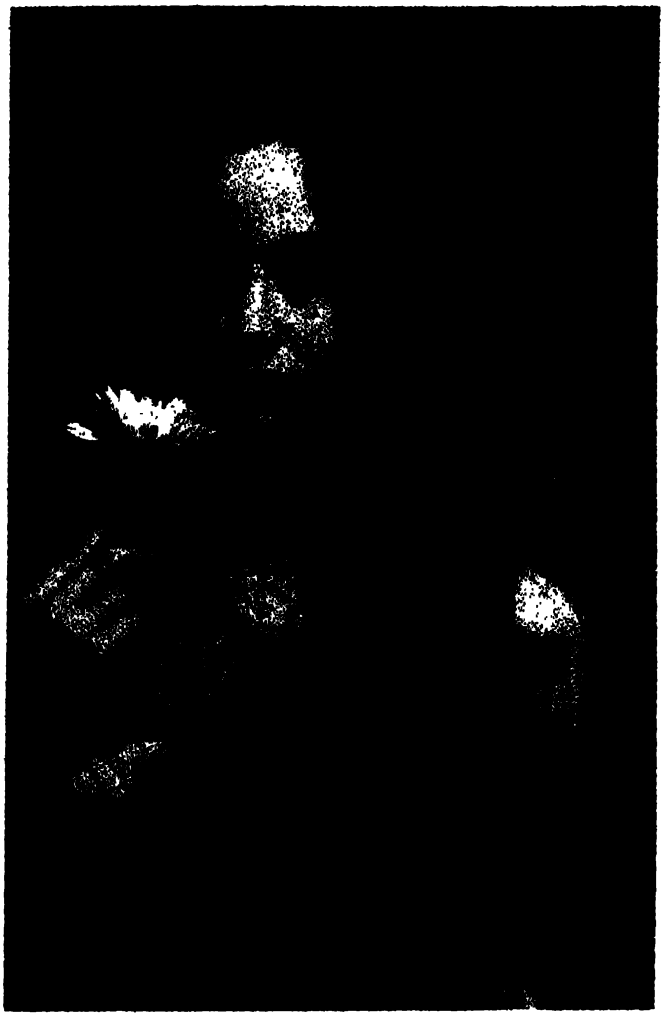
The music itself would be *desi* to a great extent. Film-based programming would make an appearance (with a salutary effect on the ratings) and the channel would try and turn Indian pop artists — Alisha Chinai, Shweta Shetty

and the like — into *bona fide* stars.

The formula worked like a dream, and soon every Indian teenager worth his Sony walkman — and his mom and dad — were tuning into the channel to hear everything from hip hop to the latest Hindi film hits.

But Channel [V] wasn't left in a monopoly situation for long. A couple of years later MTV re-entered the country again, having tightened its belt to focus on the *dharkan* of the youth.

If Diana King reached out to the youth of India recently, in the past there have been *desi* pop icons like Sukhbir, Suchitra Krishnamoorthy and Alisha Chinai who mingled freely with the masses on [V]'s roadshows. The Colonial Cousins, on the other hand, became the first Indians to make it on *MTV Unplugged*. The group then went on to win the Video Music Awards' Indian Viewers' Choice in New York.



VERY HIP AND VERY COOL
VJs like Natasha are the right mix of Hollywood and Bollywood, representing the hip Indian crowd

The song-and-dance routines on both channels remain basically the same. The game of one upmanship is restricted to constantly reinventing oneself. And here's where the creative teams come in with their wild ad breaks, graphics, logos and self-deprecatory humour. The visual language is laced with humour, while the core remains music. And as the music gets crazier, so does the humour.

MTV's VJ hunt is another exercise to lessen the gap between the viewer and the anchor. "It's a two-way traffic," says Lulla. "No longer is the viewer in complete awe of the VJ. Since both interact with one another on screen, it is imperative that the VJ be given a chance to rise from the masses itself, as it were. The key balancing factor here being the presence of glamour in the person, which might egg more people to aspire to be there."

Spurning its rival's method of the 'hunt', Fuller and his team would much rather hang out at parties and pubs to locate young people aspiring to be on television. "Many a times I am tempted to approach a bubbly and good-looking girl while at a pub, and have her audition with us. But friends warn me against such a casual approach, fearing that I might literally end up with egg on my face," laughs Fuller. "But it works. Most of our VJs are literally the ones spotted by us, rather than hunted out."

And the result? Sophiya, Laila, Meghana, Nikhil, Maria, Malaika, Amrita, Cyrus, Suchitra, Nafisa... (five others might have sprouted by the time you read this). Very hip and very very cool indeed, they seem to have imbibed just the right measure of the Hollywood-Bollywood mix within themselves. They almost represent the hip Indian crowd. But to tell them apart from the other would be a hair-splitting task.

The bosses don't mind trying, though. "While Meghana is chatty, Sophia is sophisticated," attempts Fuller. Lulla continues in a similar strain, "Cyrus,

Spurning MTV's method of the VJ hunt, Fuller and his team would much rather hang out at parties and pubs to locate young people aspiring to be on television

All the VJs fit to air

1. JAAVED JAAFERI
The quintessential upper class tapori, he offers an irreverent mineful on Hindi film classics. Also ends up playing his screen persona at every show he comperes off-screen.

2. SOPHIYA
Nice legs. But after over four years in the country wish she could pronounce Sanjay Manjrekar's name correctly.

3. SUCHITRA PILLAI
After the idli and dosa, the most successfully marketed regional fast food across the country, *Simply South*, was simbily waiting to happen. Suchitra can at once play *amma* and babe to go with the musical flavours from Madras, B'lore and Cochin.

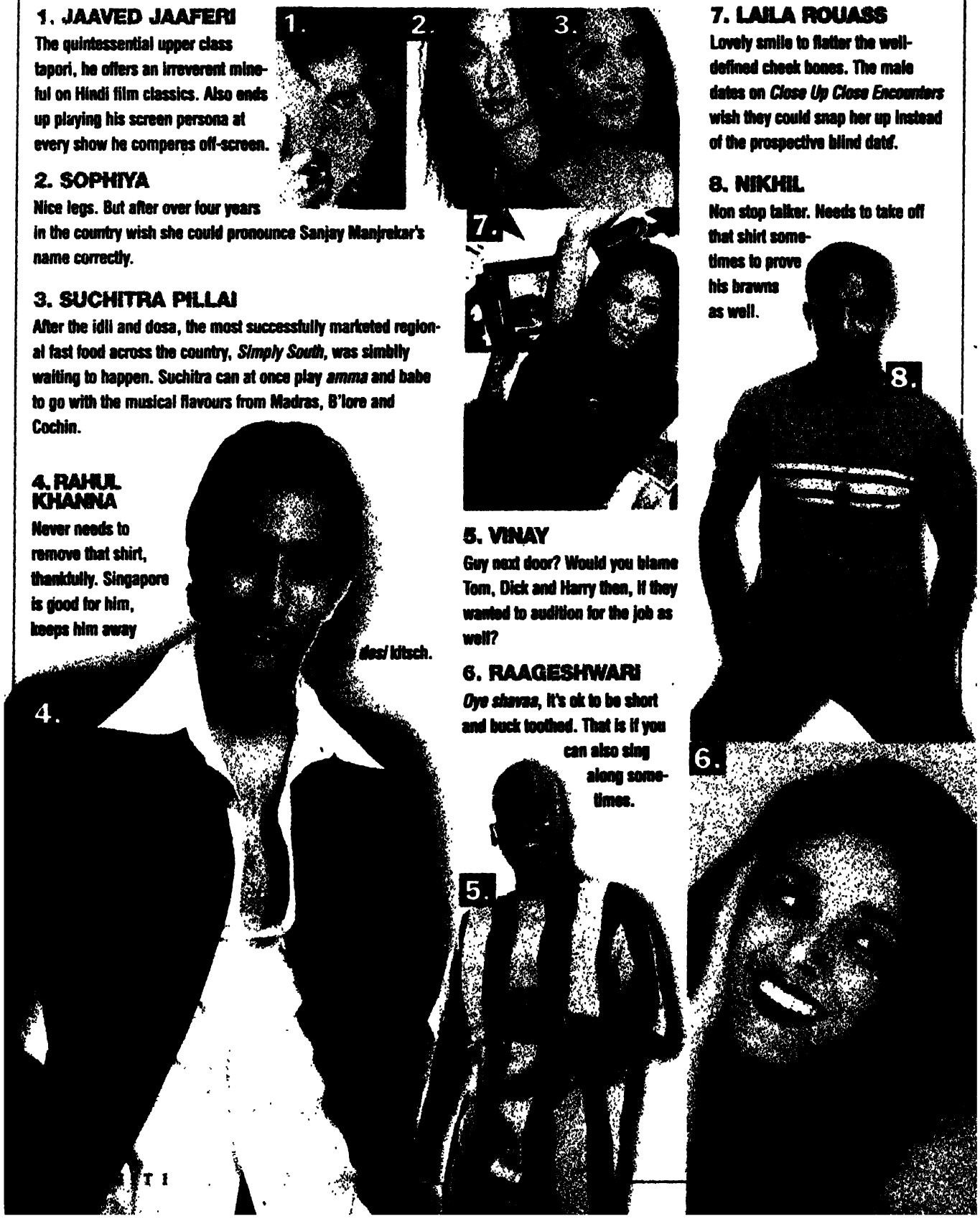
4. RAHUL KHANNA
Never needs to remove that shirt, thankfully. Singapore is good for him, keeps him away des/ kitsch.

5. VINAY
Guy next door? Would you blame Tom, Dick and Harry then, if they wanted to audition for the job as well?

6. RAAGESHWARI
Oye siawaa, it's ok to be short and buck toothed. That is if you can also sing along sometimes.

7. LAILA ROUASS
Lovely smile to flatter the well-defined cheek bones. The male dates on *Close Up Close Encounters* wish they could snap her up instead of the prospective blind date.

8. NIKHIL
Non stop talker. Needs to take off that shirt sometimes to prove his brawns as well.



Nikhil and Malaika know their music and are extremely glamorous and fashion conscious, the two key areas of interest to the youth. Nafisa on the other hand, is an environment activist, and so brings forth a positive message to the youth."

"For the youth of today, Michael Jackson is no longer the idol. It is Bill Gates. It falls upon us to synergise these ideas with our credo to Indianise, humorise and humanise. All of this goes into creating a relevant product," asserts Lulla.

"The challenge in localising the product exists in doggedly veering away from the hackneyed Western image of the country, that of snake charmers and jasmine on the walls," says Cyrus Oshidar, creative director of MTV. "There are more urgent problems of pollution, women and employment. But since we are here to bring about awareness, rather than educate, humour was the right vehicle for this. Humour is the greatest leveller."

MTV's *Rock the Vote* was a case in point. Aired just before the general elections, it lampooned the political system, but had a message for the youth — if you have an opinion, you have a vote. This was followed by VJ Cyrus Broacha's on campus AIDS campaign, or a simple picture of the peaceful Ganges shown to hold forth on the problem of pollution, or a serene Dal Lake juxtaposed against a riot in Kashmir.

Added to these, fresh slots on MTV like *Filmi Fundas*, a Bollywood dictionary, taking a fun look at certain sections of a film, have become as identifiable with the channel today, as the happy boy-*chaiwalla* who jostles for space with the Snakes and Tea man, the Men in Slacks and the '*Mooch nahin to kooch nahin*' barber shop channel promos. "We are young and irreverent and laugh at ourselves," says Oshidar. "Do the jokes sound cliched? Well, what the hell, they are funny so they work."

Jules Fuller of [V] however, feels that there is no fixed recipe for success. About the Indian youth, he says, that they are a stronger filter than their counterparts in the UK and US. "They switch brands more easily and are very clear about what they want. They also pretty much rule the world here," says Fuller.

And hence, at [V] the philosophy is that of 'reflect and affect'. "It's like making a curry for an Englishman. One does not know exactly how much spice to add. You add a dash of it, then you lessen it, add a bit of something else, till you get the right flavour," says he. "But we have been on the right track from the beginning. All the others are our followers," he insists.

Ruby Bhatia maintains that MTV and she are good friends and she quit [v] without any differences

Channel V is identifiable with promos like the Space Khalasis – the two clay sardarjis with their one-liners on space — and Quick Gun Murugan. "How we reinvent our shows is a trade secret," laughs Shashank Ghosh, creative director of [V], who is busy cleaning up his drawers now to move out of the channel soon. "But we have been tragically successful. Everything we do gets cloned."

Udham Singh, he feels, has been a winning recipe, to off set the more sophisticated people like Sophiya and Trey. "He is a sharp wit like a typical Jat, earthy and humorous," says Ghosh. "He can get away with talking about anything, including sponsor's money." He feels that to incite the viewer's curiosity, it is important to show them their reality.

"The battery of cool dudes with gelled hair on the other channel seemed too strait-jacketed. We wanted to be less aspirational and far more informal. The man on screen encapsulates the spirit of the streets — the postman, the ear cleaner, he's practically your neighbour," states Ghosh. Ghosh's Quick Gun Murugan, he feels today, has become his own killer. "Everything I aspire to do stops at Quick Gun," says he.

That, he thinks is reason for him to bid adieu from the channel. "This is the house of youth. This is no place for a 35-year old," says Ghosh.

Others who have preceded Ghosh have been all-time favourites Ruby Bhatia and Raageshwari. Raageshwari has moved to rival MTV, while Ruby has her own serial on Star Plus, *Yeh Hai Raaz*.

"Channel [V] and I are the best of friends, but I want to keep experimenting with everyone. Tomorrow you might see me on DD," explains Raageshwari about her move. Ruby though maintains that MTV and she are good friends and she quit [V] without any differences. "My contract with [V] was over and both of us thought better of renewing it. I was very young when I stepped into [V], four years hence I am a much mature person," is all she will reveal.

Ghosh feels that the older lot like him hit a crisis point when the young 'uns start looking up to them. "They have the cutting edge and represent the street reality which needs to be represented on the channel. I'd love to have youngsters walk in and say hey let's do a flick on disco desai," says Ghosh. "Who knows, after souping myself up, I might return here after a few years."

Of course, the channel may have changed completely by then. Because when it comes to music television — and we're using the term generically here — rapid-fire change is the name of the game. After all, we all know how short the attention span of most young people is. And that, at the end of the day, is the target audience of both these channels. ■

DESIGN *Corner*



SITTING PRETTY

Chairs can be utilitarian or luxurious, simple or ornate, but they must be comfortable at all costs, says **Ghazala Wahab**

DESIGNER LOOK

From being symbols of authority, chairs now are objects of art, imagination and elegance



KALYAN CHAKRABORTY

When Emperor Alexander came to India, he brought with him, among other things, a strange four-legged object called a chair. While the courtiers and the natives sat cross-legged on the mattresses, the Emperor sat on the chair, which was formidable but quite uncomfortable also. The Emperor, too, at times sat cross-legged on it.

The natives revered the chair as much as they revered the person sitting on it. For them, it symbolised power – simple, unadulterated power. Paeans were written on it, so much so, that it became idiomatic. The chair and power became synonyms of each other. This was reflected in the designs also. The chair was not merely a piece of furniture, it was a symbol of authority. Comfort was a mere consideration. So chairs were ornate, oversized and heavy. In fact, the weight of the chair was commensurate with the power and position of its owner.

Then came the British and spoiled all the fun. The chair was reduced to being a mere piece of furniture, purely utilitarian. Design was still important, but comfort was the most important consideration. After all, the *sahibs* and *babus* had to spent the whole day on it.

Since the chair came from the West, designs were copied from there furiously without any thought to the weather and living conditions here. The result: poor imitations which had hardly any role in Indian homes where sitting on the floor was customary.



Gradually, with the colonial influence, Western furniture found place in Indian homes, too. The concepts were borrowed and it reflected in the designs. Quality, and consequently beauty, of the furniture were determined by its price. So a good piece of furniture meant elaborate sculpture, ornate work and silk or brocade upholstery. The fate of the chair was similar.

Unfortunately, all this did not take comfort into account. Comfortable chairs were usually dowdy, formless pieces of wood or aluminium. Apart from the Western influence, another was Mughal furniture, which again, was huge and ornate. It was definitely not suitable for less affluent people who had smaller houses.

However the 20th century changed all that. Breaking away from old, conventional designs, European architect-cum-designers like Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Frank Lloyd Wright and Gerrit Rietveld started designing ultra-modern furniture which gave a lot of emphasis to form instead of ornamentation.

They shunned everything which reeked of historical or traditional value. To affirm their belief in the modern they often just put pieces

of wood together to make a cohesive whole without merging one with the other. The idea was to emphasise that furniture does not require ornamentation to look beautiful. In most cases, elegance comes from simplicity.

The middle class was just emerging out of the wrecks of the world wars, and apartment flats instead of sprawling mansions and chateaux were the new necessity. There was no place for heavy ornate furniture in these cramped living spaces. Besides, very few had the means to buy expensive furniture. It was this clientele that modern designers were trying to address.

This was the period when the chair also got a character of its own, finally emerging out of the shadow of the other members of the furniture family. Designers like Mackintosh, Wright, Rietveld proved that a chair can, by itself, be complete. The kind of chairs available also varied. Apart from dining room ones, there were study chairs, lounge chairs, chaise lounge chairs, reclining chairs which became famous as Queen Anne chairs and occasional chairs.

In India, modern designer chairs made their formal entry in the 1980s when chartered accountant Ashok Singh discovered his latent talent of furniture designing. He made exact replicas of Mackintoshes, Wrights and Rietvelds exhibiting them in his first show in Mumbai in 1990. "The idea," says his widow Uma Singh (Ashok Singh died in 1994), "was as much to expose Indian sensibilities to the Western taste as it was to try and replicate these Western designs using Indian techniques. In that sense he was really a pioneer."

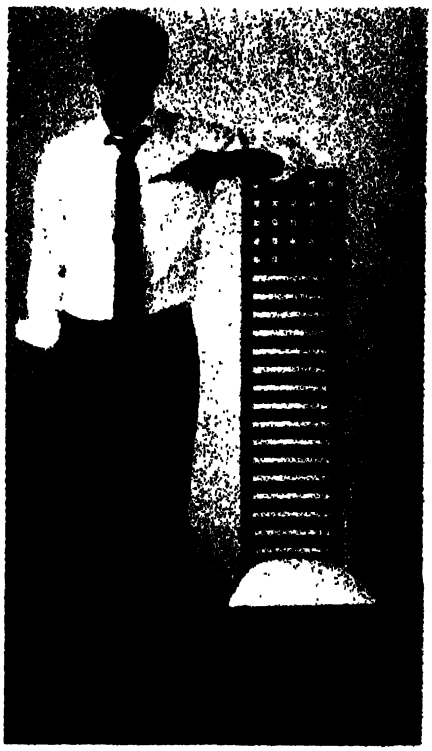
Inspired heavily by these path-breakers, Singh's original designs were also minimalist. "For him the most important aspect of a chair was comfort, everything else was secondary," says Uma. The challenge, for him, lay in the fact that an extremely comfortable chair had to be made beautiful. It was precisely for this reason that he sold his products under the name Art Furniture, as each piece was a work of art.

"He never sat on a chair unless it was comfortable and most often he would only sit on his own designs. His dictum was 'if you can't be comfortable, you might as well stand.'" One of his famous chairs is a lyre-inspired one with a curve-and-a-straight line synchrony. It curves outwardly for the shoulders and inwardly for the small of the back. The comfort part aside, the chair is a beauty to behold as it has the gracefulness of a Wright chair. But comfort and beauty together come for a price. Each lyre-back chair is for about Rs 9,000.



But not all contemporary designers follow Singh's motto, as far as the chair is concerned. Now the main criteria for a chair seems to be sturdiness, form, design and comfort, in that order. As Punam Kalra of I'm, a contemporary design shop in New Delhi, says, "You know, one has to have one's priorities right. We are not into office chairs where one has to make sure that one is ergonomically right. These are designer pieces, so the emphasis is on the design itself."

Apart from wood, of which teak is predominant, wrought iron is another very popular medium for chairs. Though they have a few advantages, like they are more sturdy and turn out to be relatively cheaper, wood, according to Kalra, has a timeless appeal. Agrees Payal Kapoor, an interior designer, "Wrought iron chairs look good but they give a very cold, unwelcome impression unlike wood."



Other mediums which have been around for a while but have always remained at the periphery are cane, wicker, metal, fibre, brass and copper clad chairs.

Apart from this there are various kinds of finish available now which can transform the complete look of the chair. Polishing is no longer the only option. "You have staining, antiquing, line-wash finish, powder coating and toned polish also," says Kapoor.

Kapoor does not buy the argument of the contemporary look. "Some people like it, but I feel only classical and colonial furniture has the kind of warmth and grace that can transform the house."

For the regal look, a lot of people opt for Indian chairs like Sanghaneri and Bengali chairs which go well for low-seating areas or in places where people want the ethnic look.

Then there are chairs which have no utility whatsoever.. Hugely expensive, they are used in the living room corner or in the lobby.

Says Kalra, "People like having these as some kind of a statement. They are rarely, if ever, used."Whether it's a tall, absolutely vertical chair, or a low-backed round chair, or sculpted colonial chair, it comes for a price. Most chairs have a starting price of Rs 2,500 per chair and go up to around Rs 25,000. But for some people it is not too great a price to pay for a look that is individualistic and, of course, different. ■

KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

BEAUTY AND COMFORT

Modern designer chairs made their formal entry in India in the Eighties when designer Ashok Singh made replicas of Mackintoshes, Wrights and Rietvelds where the stress was on comfort (top). But for others like Punam Kalra (below) of I'm, design and form are more important

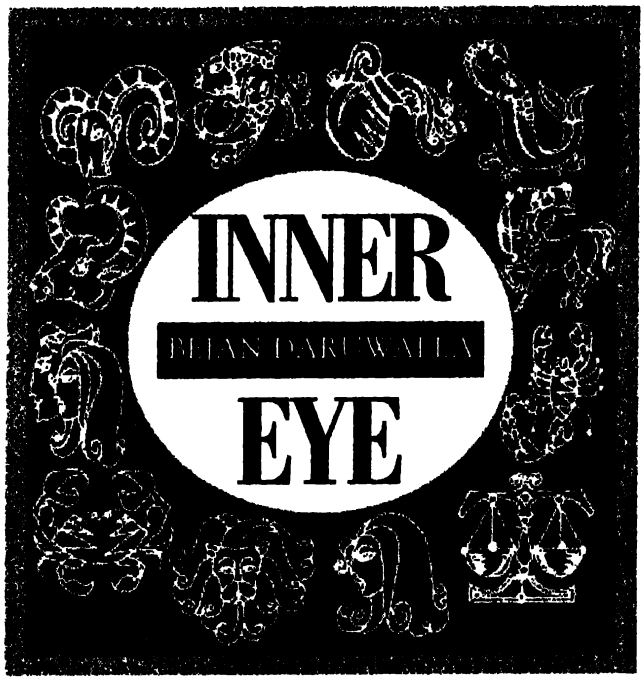
★ARIES, (March 21- April 20) The Moon's quarter enables you to reach out to people, specially where work is concerned, be it for business or job. You will be busy and will make considerable progress. Time to expand or launch a new venture. Loans,funds and capital formation will be important. A trip, a journey at short notice is on the cards.

★TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) The outstanding features of this week are an official engagement, marriage, a job switch, promotion, perks, travel, trade, education, research, collaborations and ties. Travel is likely with a possible stop-over. Make the most of your relationship with your colleague who could get amorous. Time for romance and also children.

★GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Now you can fuse pleasure and profit, something you are good at. It's advisable to cover a lot of ground in your work and area and even take on extra responsibility because of the advantage you will have and the gains you will possibly make. Those in government service and large corporations will make things really hum.

★CANCER, (June 21- July 20) You will have to deal with people, work and play at the same time. Accept all invitations to parties, dinners, plays, social gatherings and lectures which come your way. Romance is in the offing with a colleague who will reciprocate your feelings. A very fine and exciting week. Expenses will mount but all for a good cause.

★LEO, (July 21- August 21) Mars in your sign, according to Western astrology, gives you the pep and push you need to go for your goals. Health safeguards are essential for Leons. Changes on the homefront are absolutely certain. You will fuse practicality and originality well. A fin week for artists and scholars as new projects fall into your lap.



★VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) You will be communicating and contacting with rare imagination and fervour. Your wishes will finally be fulfilled and you may have to shake off lethargy.This is an ideal time to get romantically involved. You will be wining and dining in style. Your mother's health will improve. A family get-together is on the cards.

★LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Venus, your main planet, conjuncts Jupiter, the money planet. The obvious interpretation would be avenues for making money; inheriting and acquiring money would open out for you. This should have pleasing consequences. Librans will seek new goals and most certainly diversify. A good week, in short.

★SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Venus enables you to slay others with your charm, wit, intellect, creativity and personal magnetism. On the work front, spectacular developments can be anticipated. Many of you will be taking a decisive action, and it will be the right one. The moon's last quarter favours taking a few chances.

★SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) You will notch up success in whatever profession you may be in. Ganesha says you will have time to indulge yourself because of the powerful placing of Jupiter.Those in journalism and other allied creative fields will earn well-deserved plaudits. You will be romantically inclined and will find love.

★CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) A good week to ask for favours, move ahead with plans and projects, start a campaign and spearhead a movement. Friends and well-wishers will help you. This month and the next will be a watershed period. Children could cause both worry and happiness. A favourable week for love.

★AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Jupiter and Mercury help you turn the tables on your rivals, win plaudits and help you to be persuasive, artistic and thus, get more mileage out of life. A time to harmonise yourself to the world, gear up for new beginnings and prepare actively for a better life, and succeeding too. Safeguard health.

★PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) .Those in sales, teaching, medicine (which is your forte), banking and statistics do a superb job and win well-deserved plaudits. Writers, artists, actors emerge successful. Avoid depression and melancholia. Journeys, joint finances and loans are emphasised. The wild flower of romance blooms.



SMALL Talk

Crossing Swords

Seema Goswami on Amitabh Bachchan's battles with the film industry

The new battle

It hinges on the fate of *Major Saab*. And of course, *Major Saab* is probably the most important film of Bachchan's career, more important even than *Zanjeer*, the film that launched the 'angry-young-man-with-a-centre-parting'.

Bachchan says that the film has done well. The film trade says it hasn't. And battle has been joined. Bachchan alleges deliberate sabotage. The trade says: why bother the old boy is long past it.

The story so far

As is well-known (unless you've spent the last decade on Mars), Bachchan's films began nosediving at the box-office once the Bofors allegations gained currency. Manmohan Desai hit rock-bottom with *Ganga, Jamuna, Saraswati*, and Prakash Mehra made the execrable *Jaadugar*.

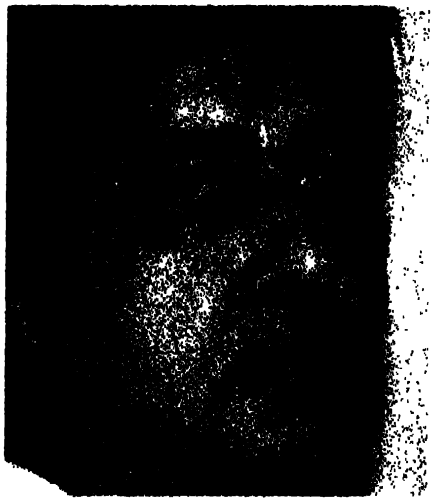
Then Bachchan was cleared on Bofors and his first release, K.C. Bokadia's trashy *Aaj Ka Arjun*, became a superhit. But Bachchan had pinned his hopes on *Hum*, which featured the hit *Jumma Chumma* number.

When *Hum* was released, Bachchan declared it was a superhit. But many film trade publications declared that it had flopped. An ugly shouting match ensued, and the general consensus was that Bachchan had won.

Even though his follow-up, *Khuda Gawah*, was only a moderate success, Bachchan was able to go off on a sabbatical claiming that he had recovered his box-office credibility.

The new crisis

By the time Bachchan returned to the screen, he had thrown away the torn *banian* that made him famous, changed into a designer suit and was playing the savvy corporate head of his over-hyped



Bachchan is a lonely figure in the industry which sees him as too sophisticated and would love to see his career fail

eponymous corporation. Alas, he chose as his comeback vehicle, Mehul Kumar's *Mrityudata*, possibly one of the worst films ever made. Shortly after *Mrityudata* bombed, so did the corporation. That designer suit was beginning to look distinctly tatty. Now everything depended on *Major Saab*.

So, is it a hit?

The short answer has to be, yes. The film was sold relatively cheaply (for a Bachchan film) at between Rs 75 lakh to 1.25 crore per territory. It was released in scores of cinemas in each city and took what the trade calls a fantastic initial, that is, people saw the movie in the first week on the strength of Bachchan's name alone. Consequently, by the second week, everybody involved had got their money back. Everything the movie earned after that was pure profit.

So why the controversy?

That's complicated. For one, the movie has not done very well in the Bombay territory. And that's where the industry is located. Secondly, it is a hit but it is not a superhit. And the Bombay industry takes the line that Bachchan should make only superhits.

And finally, there's the sabotage factor. According to Bachchan, jealous rivals have bought tickets in bulk in Bombay territory and sent *goondas* to occupy these seats. Halfway through the movie, the *goondas* get up and shout things like 'picture *bundal hai*' and ostentatiously walk out. The trade is swayed by such displays of disdain and the Bombay Press declares that the movie is a flop when this happens.

Who is doing this?

Good question. Bachchan is not taking names. Even during the *Hum* controversy, he left it to others to name Boney Kapoor as the saboteur. But now, Bachchan and Boney are pals, so it can't be him.

What is beyond dispute, however, is that Bachchan is a lonely figure in the film business which sees him as being too sophisticated and upmarket and would love to see his career fail so that it can dance in the ruins.

What happens next?

Not much. *Major Saab* will be accepted as a respectable grosser. Then next month, *Lal Badshah* will be released and will flop.

And we'll all be back to square one. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

DARK SECRET

Q : I am a 50-year-old married woman sexually abused in my teens by my father and other male relatives. I've kept this a secret all my life and haven't been able to open up in spite of my husband being a very caring and affectionate person. I realise that I've been unfair to him all these years by denying him the love he truly deserves. But then everytime I've tried to start life afresh, the memories of the past rear their ugly head. I wish to erase the past and live the remaining years of my life in peace. Please help me.

NAME WITHHELD, CHENNAI

The sexual abuse of a young and vulnerable person by those in a position of responsibility and moral authority is one of the worst abuses of human relations. You have displayed rare courage in attempting to come to terms with this primary trauma. Young people are not equipped to understand, withstand and condemn the perversion and sexual power-play that authoritarian family figures display; they are not equipped to stand up for their rights, so they internalise their trauma, and often even mislocatedly feel guilty for what has happened. There is also the burden of secrecy, of not letting the mother or other female figures of authority know how they have been violated. If these accounts sound familiar, understand that you are not alone in your dreadful and sordid past.

I would suggest that you keep a diary, wherein you let the floodgates of memory exorcise themselves. This will be painful but ultimately therapeutic. After all, life has proved to you that not all people are as depraved as your natal family. Your husband is a good person: it is upto you to judge whether you should share your bitter heritage of childhood pain with him, or battle it alone. The process of coming to terms with the past will doubtless be a painful one, but ultimately you will find yourself liberated from the ugliness and emotional violence that has been inflicted upon you.

GAY AND FANCYFREE

Q : I am a 27-year-old homosexual man working in a reputed organisation. A female colleague at my workplace has of late made known her interest in me. How do I convince her otherwise?

XYZ, CALCUTTA

If I were you, I would very tactfully indicate my situation to her. You could tell her in whatever manner you please, that due to certain delicate personal circumstances you are not in a position to take an interest in the opposite sex. But it is indeed quite possible that she has not been sending sexual signals at all, and that you are misinterpreting a friendly human interest. I suspect that you are also somewhat attracted to her, so go ahead and be friends — you have nothing to lose, and an asexual friendship is one of the most rewarding of human experiences.

ALL AT SEA

Q : I am a 26-year-old woman married to a Merchant Navy officer. Since my husband is always away at sea, sheer loneliness had drawn me towards my brother-in-law. In a moment of weakness, I ended up having sex with him. Now he is threatening me with exposure unless I give in repeatedly to his sexual demands. I am in a fix and do not know what to do. I wish to get out of this mess and I am even contemplating suicide. Please advise.

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA



Nobody can be sure who instigates a sexual relationship. Military strategy dictates that offence is the best form of defence. Why don't you turn the tables on him? Stage a walkout from your house and make it subtly clear that your modesty has been outraged and give a hint of your brother-in-law's dishonourable behaviour to your husband. Never appease a blackmailer — always take them head on. In any case, there is no reason for you alone to feel guilty for your joint misconduct — and now instead of repairing the situation, he is troubling you even further. I think your brother-in-law is a despicable person and you should pre-empt him by his own strategy. Don't worry, people have been in worst spots before and got out of them. Just don't lose your nerve.



PEEPING TOMS

Q: My husband and son indulge in peeping into our neighbour's household trying to catch a glimpse of their young daughters. They pry into their activities, nocturnal or otherwise. As you can imagine, this infuriates me no end. How do I instill in them a respect for privacy?

A. CHATTERJEE, CALCUTTA

It's a sure fact that your anger and outrage will only provoke them into further voyeuristic tendencies. You must understand that the pleasure they derive from their silly activities is directly related to their being forbidden to do this, at least it is socially frowned upon. While this must be affecting your sensibilities as a woman, it would strategically be best to ignore their behaviour, after making it more than amply clear that you heartily disapprove of these inanities. A tactful hint to your neighbours that their privacy is possibly being invaded and abused would also be in order. Of course, you can do it only if you are sure that this will not result in any harmful or unpleasant repercussions.

SILENT LOVE

Q : I am a 28-year-old single woman in love with my colleague. Initially he had reciprocated my feelings and made known his love for me. But of late, he seems to have retreated into a shell and on the few occasions that we do meet, there are long uneasy spells of silence. I am beginning to doubt his feelings for me. He is a bit of a loner and is a man of few words. How do I gauge his feelings for me? Do I get under his skin and make him feel at ease or do I watch, wait and hope?

A. NANDI, CALCUTTA

Perhaps your colleague is ready for friendship but is fighting shy of any deeper involvement or commitment. You should withdraw for a while, grant him some space and privacy for a while and then resume your friendship on a lower key.

If he is a loner, give him a long rope but let him know that you are always there for him. It is not necessary for every relationship to culminate into an exclusive male-female commitment.See how it goes. Good luck!

ROLLING STONE

Q : I am a 32-year-old married man. I have this compulsive habit of switching jobs, which has brought about a marital discord. As long as I keep the home fires burning, I don't see why my wife should be unhappy with such a state of affairs. How do I make her accept me the way I am? Please advise.

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA

Your wife like most other wives, seeks security and predictability in her home life. She is quite right in that job mobility can weaken the foundations of trust in any organisation. Of course, if you are switching from promotion to promotion or scaling new heights with every job, that is a different matter altogether.I would suggest that you put a bit of money in trust for her so as to give her the requisite sense of security. It would also be a positive step to take her into some degree of confidence regarding your career plans and compulsions. Why don't you encourage her to start doing something of her own, this will get her off your back like nothing else will. ■

MIXED Bag

CANDID TALES

This mother-daughter duo is far from unknown. The daughter, Arpana Caur, is a noted and acclaimed self-taught artist and the mother, Ajeet Caur, an eminent writer of Punjabi fiction. Between them, it is the younger Caur who has often stolen the limelight with her brilliant canvases.

This time around, however, it is the mother who has bagged attention with the publication of the first volume of her autobiography, *Pebbles in a Tin Drum*. Marked by her characteristic flair for intimate interlocution with the reader, the autobiography is a candid and searingly honest account of her life. From her life in pre-Partition Lahore, the book moves on to her first true love, lost on account of a trivial misunderstanding, a bitter marriage and several unsuccessful love affairs.

The autobiography, published by Harper Collins, also reveals that Caur had a second child, also a daughter, whom she lost in a tragic fire accident in France.

Candy, as she was called, was studying abroad. One day as she was making tea, her clothes caught fire and she died a few days later in hospital. For Caur, who was not allowed under strict hospital rules, to sit by her daughter's side as she died, the pain is far from over. "Every time I look back, I can see an extremely beautiful girl who looks like a flaming torch rushing down two flights of stairs," she writes.

Originally published in Punjabi as *Khanabadosh* in 1986 when it won the Sahitya Akademi Award, the autobiography has been translated by Masooma Ali.

Smart, smarter, smartest

Finally, Microsoft has announced the availability of Windows 98 in India, the personal computer (PC) operating system that "works better and plays better". According to Sanjay Mirchandani, managing director, Microsoft India, "We have brought personal computing to a broad range of people by, among other things, increasing performance and adding innovative features that the users want. "Windows 98, with its enhanced performance empowers you to spend more time enjoying your PC and less time managing your system. Windows 98 builds on the breakthrough features of Windows 95 to offer improved performance and reliability and improved ease of use through internet integration.

There's more good news. The software ushers in a new range of hardware and entertainment functionality. All those games that you love to play will run better on Windows 98-based PCs than on game console devices.



Additionally, your Windows 98 could provide you with television broadcast capabilities allowing your PC (if it comes with a television tuner card) to seamlessly receive and display television broadcasts.

It doesn't end there. Microsoft has also announced the worldwide availability of Microsoft Plus! 98, the consumer companion for Windows 98. Plus! 98 extends the advanced functionality in Windows 98 by adding new utilities, desktop themes and games to let you further manage, customise and enjoy your PC.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Wear sandals rather than shoes

Spirit of Hope

How do the young artists of India perceive the 50 years of India's Independence? To catch a glimpse of their vision, Gandhi Smriti in Delhi is hosting a collection of their works from July 1-August 30. The Indian tricolour is the dominant leitmotif of most canvases against which are set vignettes of the Indian freedom struggle interspersed with contemporary themes. "One can easily notice that the youth are hopeful," says Dr Sabita Singh, whose brainwave it was to bring



Wild side of life

Imagine a huge camel sitting pretty on your Persian carpet in the middle of your living room; baby camels adorning the armrests of your sofas; lifesize parakeets in green, blue and red draped on your walls and a couple of tigers under your side tables.

Scared? Or thrilled? Those who are comfortable with the idea can now realise their fantasies of sharing their living quarters with the wild. Pot Pourrie Creations, which started in Calcutta about 10 years ago, has opened shop in Delhi also. They call it "art that touches your heart."



Brainchild of S.N. Datta, an architect, Pot Pourrie uses clay as the medium. Chemicals imported from Germany are mixed with clay to harden it, after which it is subjected to heat treatment to make it rock-hard. It is then sculpted for table bottoms, beds, statues, lamps, corner pieces, wall pieces and so on. Vegetable dyes are used for colour.

Says Raja Tiwari, manager of the Delhi outlet of Pot Pourrie, "It is a lifetime investment. These are art pieces. You won't find another one." They also make made-to-order furniture if somebody wants a particular design. In that case, isn't there a slight contradiction? If somebody wants to replicate a particular design then won't there be repetition?

"No," says Tiwari, "because we don't work out of a mould. So even if it is a same design, it will not be identical." Anyway, this art for life comes for a price. You pay as much as Rs 1 lakh plus for a sofa set, Rs 8,000 plus for small Ganesh statues, Rs 30,000 plus for corner pieces, and Rs 2,000 plus for a pen stand.

ensure that your feet don't stink in this weather

their expressions to the fore.

Consider Girish Chander's depiction of the wheel rolling on the matrix of the Indian flag; the prize-winning entry of Manish which projects how the common man has been fooled; Deepa Jain's portrayal of shady politicians who try to present a clean public persona; Lim Su Young's protest march etched in hues of the Indian tricolour; Izhar Alam's confluence of religions and Pallavi Jain's 'Walking to Freedom' echoed through the footsteps of the Mahatma.

While children are aware of today's gruesome reality, they tend to see life through a silver lining. Chand Mohammed's painting reflects the desolation of a boy whose world is dark but for the vibrant streaks of blue. Agrees Dr Singh, "True to their youthful energies, these artists were honest in their expression to recapture and celebrate the spirit of Freedom 50. They depict both the seamy and promising side of life in sharp contrast to the scepticism that dominates the world of elders."

A SHOWCASE FOR SHOES

It was a show for shoes. But all one could see were pretty girls in beautiful clothes. No matter how hard choreographer Rashmi Virmani tried to play up the main product, the clothes continued to distract. But then, how exactly does one do a ramp show for shoes? Organised as part of the annual shoe, and shoe component fair at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, in the first week of July, the show had only six participants this year. Interestingly, there was no Liberty, no Bata, no Woodland. Instead one saw Drish Shoes, Dawar Exports, Capsons Company Ltd, Spunters Reeboks and a collection of *mojris* by National Leather Development Project. It was nice for the simple reason that it was different. Among the models, one could see Ruchi Malhotra, Annie Thomas, Rahul Dev and Priyanshu. Despite the disappointment, one thing was clear: the show had come a long way from the first one in 1993. The emphasis this time was on elegant eveningwear and sportswear. And for that reason, the organisers steered clear of drama. Even in the winter range, one didn't see thigh-high boots and the like. The shoes were basic: wearable and practical. Something one cannot say for most of the clothes on the ramp.



RASOI

The food column



Eating like a King

Jiggs Kalra on the noble Hyderabadi cuisine

In an era when the nobility never dined at a public place, the khwan bridged the gap between the formal dastarkhwan and casual dining.It also fed the sub-continental penchant for sending and receiving gifts of food. This set off an ongoing 'culinary competition' among epicurean patrons and provided great encouragement to their rikaabdaar to excel and outdo one another. This, perhaps is the secret of the outstanding quality of Hyderabadi cuisine. This fine tradition has been revived in a contemporary manner at the Dum Pukht, Hyderabad in the Welcomgroup Grand Kakatiya Hotel by cuisine consultant Javed Akbar.

Safaid Dum Gosht

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Kg/2 1/4 lb ***Dasti*/shoulder of kid/lamb**
- 250g/9oz ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 250ml/9oz **Yoghurt** (whisk)
- 16 flakes **Garlic** (peel)
- 100g/3oz **Onions**
- 36 **Black peppercorns**
- 5 **Chotti elaichi/green cardamom**
- 4 **Red chillies** (de-seed)
- 2.5g/1tsp **Shahi zeera/black cumin seeds**
- **Salt**

THE GARNISH

- 24 **Roasted pistachio**
- 15g/1/2oz **Almond flakes**
- 0.5g/1tsp **Saffron**
- 4 **Fresh red chillies**(seed & cut into strips)

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1:30 HOURS

PREPARATION

- The Kid/lamb: Clean, bone, cut into 1" cubes, wash and pat dry.
- The Onions: Peel, wash, cut into roundels and separate the layers to obtain *lachcha*/rings.
- The Garnish: Crush saffron threads with pestle or back of spoon, reserve in 6ml/1/4 cup of lukewarm milk for 20 minutes and then make a paste. Reserve almond flakes in the saffron.

COOKING

Heat ghee in a *handi*/pan, add onions and saute over medium heat until translucent and glossy, add the meat, increase to high heat and *bhunno*/stir-fry to seer until it becomes pink (approx 3-3 1/2 minutes).

Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in yoghurt, return *handi*/pan to heat, add the remaining ingredients and water (approx 1.5 litres/6 1/4 cups), increase to high heat, cover with a lid, seal with *atta*/dough and boil for 10 minutes, shaking the *handi*/pan at regular intervals.

Reduce to low heat and simmer for 50 minutes, shaking the *handi*/pan at regular intervals. Remove, uncover, stir well and simmer for another 10 minutes or until the gravy is thick. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

Remove to a bowl, garnish with pistachio, almonds and red chilli strips, sprinkle the saffron to make artistic ribbons and serve with ***phulka, roomali roti*** or steamed rice.





Dum Ki Bharwaan Bhindee

PREPARATION TIME: 30 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 25-30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 600g/1lb 5oz **Okra** (small)
- 150g/5oz ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **Lemon wedges for garnish**

THE FILLING

- 75g/6tbs ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 4g/2tsp ***Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- 2.5g/1tsp ***Saunf*/fennel seeds**
- 2.25g/1/2tsp ***Rai*/Mustard seeds**
- 100g/3oz **Onions** (chop)
- 9g/1tbs ***Dhania*/coriander powder**
- 6g/2tsp **Red chilli powder**
- 3g/1tsp ***Haldee*/turmeric powder**
- 30g/1oz ***Imlee*/tamarind pulp**
- 3.25g/1tbs ***Taaza dhania*/coriander** (finely chop)
- **Salt**
- 10ml/2tsp **lemon juice**

THE GARNISH

- **Red chillies** (deseeded and cut into julienes)
- **Ginger julliennes**(reserved in lemon juice)

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION

- The Okra: Wash in running water, pat dry, slice off the caps and the tips, slit, seed and keep aside.
- The Filling: Heat ghee in a kadhai/wok, add cumin, fennel and mustard seeds, stir over medium heat until they begin to pop. Add onions and saute until translucent and glossy, add coriander, red chilli and turmeric powder (dissolved in 60 ml/1/4 cup of water), stir until the moisture evaporates. Then add tamarind pulp and 120ml/1/2 cup of water, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the moisture has evaporated and the fat leaves the sides.

Now add the chopped coriander, salt and lemon juice, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning.

COOKING

Heat *ghee* in a *lagan*/flat pan, add the stuffed okra and saute over medium heat for 5-6 minutes, reduce to very low heat, cover with a lid and cook on dum for 9-10 minutes.

Remove, drain the excess fat and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE:

Remove to a flat dish and serve with lemon wedges, *paratha* or *phulka*. ■



• Turmeric • Cumin
• Coriander • Red Chilly

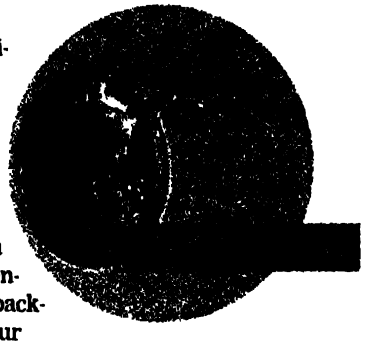
Fresh as home made

Shalimar's CHEF SPICES

CYBER

WINDOW SHOPPING

Samita Bhatia shows you how to shop at the click of your mouse



Virtual doors have opened and you can now buy practically everything in cyberspace. Products that educate, inform or inspire, fill your depleted larder or get the digestive juices going. Yes, you can order yourself a *paan* on the net. What's more, on-line stores are customer-friendly and easy to navigate.

Shopping, or just ...er... window shopping (browsing) on the web can be great fun and it's remarkably easy as well, what with search tips and help desks being just a click away. The prices mentioned (except for paintings) are usually inclusive of handling, packing and delivery. All you have do is to fill the order form with your address and contact telephone number. And after you are done at a particular site you can even view your shopping cart. The payment is made either on delivery of the products by cash, cheque or credit card. A sea of sites abound from where you can take your pick of goodies from the shopping malls of the world. Pay by credit cards that allow for dollar payments.

http://www.amazon.com

@ The site offers three million books, CDs, audiobooks, computer games and more. The site claims that 2.2 million people in over 160 countries have already made purchases. On Amazon.com, you can search for books going by author, title or keyword. For music, search by the artist, CD title or song title.

http://pages.ebay.com

@ On the site there are 4,93,732 items on sale in 846 categories. On ebay, people are buying computers, toys, dolls, antiques, jewellery, pottery, coins, stamps, photo equipment, to books and magazines.

http://www.khoj.com

@ The site helps you access an array of Indian merchandise. From instant on-line shopping at leading departmental stores like Benzer, to jute and handicrafts at Prakash Enterprise and even the cheapest computer systems and peripherals at the Bombay Computer Centre.
And veggies to flowers at India Florist & Gift Service. A virtual flower shop, it's equipped with multimedia catalogues for secure on-line shopping. You can actually dispatch a bouquet to your lady love wherever she may be — which could be in any of the 154 countries that the site claims to deliver your order to!

http://www.delhibazaar.com

@ While the site is open only to Delhiites for the moment, come August and it will extend its facilities worldwide. Here you can buy gift items, CD-ROM titles, ready-to-wear garments and interestingly, even view an art gallery. The paintings of your choice can also be picked up in cyberspace. Best bargains, sales and discounts available in Delhi for the day in various markets are also on display for your convenience.

http://members.tripod.com/~Lodha_handicraft/

@ Indian handicrafts on sale in US dollars on this site include mirrors, lamps, decorative *shikaras* and even an Eiffel Tower.
The site can also be found through:
handicraft @yahoo.com

barnesandnoble.com

@ The site is perhaps the world's largest on-line bookseller that also promises fast delivery and 'deep discounts'. Click on sections like recommended, books in the news, book talk, gifts and bargains. Read reviews and see which books are in the limelight. Check out the bestsellers and visit chart toppers. ■

OTHER SITES

http://www.whowhere.com, http://www.webshopper.com
http://www.dellas.com/, http://commerce.us.dell.com
http://www.stoneage.com, http://shop.hotbot.com
also on sale are thousands of items on a daily auction

IN RELATION

SONIA GANDHI AND SHARAD PAWAR

Seema Goswami examines the dynamics of their relationship

They are almost exact opposites. He's a man. She's a woman. He is dark. She is fair. He is fat. She is thin. He is a son of the soil. She is an urban sophisticate.

About the only thing they have in common is that they both speak English with accents that are almost impenetrable. Sharad mumbles incoherently and can't say 'v'; so that the word 'give' comes out as 'geeyu'. Sonia has her own problems with the hard 't' and all too often the 'i' sound comes out as 'ee'; something that will be clear to anyone who has heard her say 'eet' for 'it'.

The only thing they have in common is that they both speak English with impenetrable accents



But there are more fundamental differences. The Gandhi family has always hated Sharad Pawar. Mrs Gandhi never forgave him for splitting the Maharashtra Congress and refused to re-admit him into her victorious Congress(I). Rajiv Gandhi took him back in 1986, sent him to Maharashtra as chief minister, and then turned viciously against him in 1989. "I don't trust him an inch" he told anyone who would listen.

Pawar got a new lease of life when Dhanu's bomb ended Rajiv's career in 1991. Barely had the funeral arrangements been made when Sharad was plotting to become Prime Minister. He nearly succeeded except that Sonia propped up Narasimha Rao to keep him out.

Since then, the relationship has been tense.

Pawar had fallen out with Sitaram Kesri and expected that when he returned to the Lok Sabha as the head of a contingent of Maharashtra MPs, he would unseat the Congress president and take his job. But no, Sonia moved in instead and Sharad was left behind again.

But Pawar had his own ideas. He did not have the capacity to run a national party and reckoned that she had failed as a vote-catcher in the Lok Sabha elections. So, if he set himself up as an alternate centre of power within the Congress, Sonia would have to respect him.

Clearly, he had underestimated her. She recognised that he had just one option -- to go over to the BJP. But to do that, he needed to take a third of the parliamentary party and there was no way that he was going to attract enough MPs to do that.

So, much to his horror, she has tightened the screws at every sign of misbehaviour and poor Pawar has only been able to wriggle helplessly like an elephant caught in a hunter's snare.

Sonia's calculation is that she will cut him down to size and assume unquestioned control of the parliamentary party before making her own bid for government. Pawar's strategy is not to appear too greedy and to mumble apologies in the hope that he can live to fight another day.

He's been around long enough to know that just because you lose a single battle it does not follow that the war is over -- or that you've lost.

His problem is that Sonia never forgets either. And so, the stage is set for a war in several episodes in the months ahead.■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY

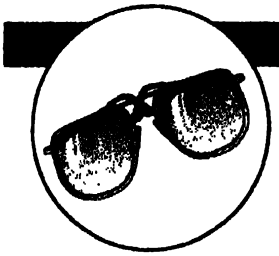


Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 15 years old and a regular reader of your column. My problem is that compared to the rest of my body, my thighs and hips are very fat. Whenever I try to lose weight, my problem areas remain unaffected. Please suggest a remedy or an exercise regimen.
SHARMILA BASU,CALCUTTA

Invest in a bicycle and regularly ride in the mornings and evenings. Also lie down flat on your back and hold your knees to your chest and roll from one side to another. This should be done at least 10 times. Avoid sleeping right after a meal and try to go for a brisk walk holding your buttocks straight. Exercise is very good but you have to be particular about body shaping. So concentrate on the exercises that are specific to the area where you want to lose the weight.

I am a 16-year-old boy and my problem is that my complexion is very dark. In summers, it becomes even more dark. Please suggest a pack for a fairer skin.
VIRENDRA SINGH,
DURGAPUR



TO AVOID A SUN TAN

Always use an umbrella or a sunshade when going out

Your skin is getting tanned and it is best to avoid the sun. However, if you do have to go out, I would suggest a sunscreen mixed with sandalwood powder, fuller's earth, raw potato juice and lemon juice. Apply this on the face and leave on till dry. Later wash your face with ice cold water. This pack should be applied at least for three weeks for best results.

I am a 34-year-old man and used to be a chain smoker. I have given up smoking but my nails and lips remain dark in colour. Kindly suggest a remedy.

SUMESH VERMA, JAMSHEDPUR

Congratulations for giving up smoking! However, the damage has already been done. Massage lips with almond oil and coconut oil and the juice of one lemon. As lips do not have any pores, you need to apply a layer of the mixed oil and juice and leave on. Rub lemon peels on the nails daily after bathing and let the nails soak up the natural juices. This should be done for two weeks for best results. These patches have been there for a long time and one has to be patient to get rid of them.

I am a 28-year-old obese woman. I am very depressed about my weight and although have tried to reduce through dieting and exercise, it has not really helped. I want to go in for liposuction. Can you tell me the cost, procedure and effectiveness of such an operation and how safe is liposuction.
S. KHEMKA, CALCUTTA

You are taking advice from the wrong person. I am completely against anything that will leave scars. At 28, you should be confident and in control of yourself. Depression will worsen your eating habits.You can try this diet: Eat only fruits and raw vegetables for the first two days. Days three and four should only be for steamed food without spices.Drink lots of *nimbū paani, lassi* and fresh juices. Eat a high-fibre diet on the fifth and sixth day—whole wheat *chappatis*, green vegetables, *dahi* etc. Exercise sensibly, not like a maniac on the first day and

then groaning in pain for the next two days.In fact, take up yoga as it is excellent for shaping up in a healthy manner. It has taken years to accumulate the fat, it will take a minimum of six months to get rid of it if you eat and exercise sensibly. Overnight wonders are painful and are also heavy on the pocket.

I am a 28-year-old girl and would like to grow long nails. However, my nails get chipped very easily. Can you tell me what to do? Also, I have white marks on my nails and many people tell me that it is a sign of undernourishment. Is it true? Please suggest a natural way to counter my problem.

PARNA BANERJEE, BARASAT

Yes, it is a sign of under nourishment. It is mainly lack of calcium. You need to eat lots of dairy products like milk, cheese, *paneer* and yoghurt. Take one tsp of gelatin with half a glass of water daily for a month. You can also rub glycerine and lemon peels to make your nails stronger. If you want to grow your nails long, file them into round or square shapes rather than pointed ones which make them weak.

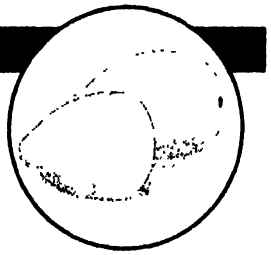
I am 39 years old and wish to know whether there is any remedy for bad breath which is pursuing my 12-year-old son. We try to follow a strict and hygienic routine and make him brush his teeth twice a day, but the problem just does not seem to go.

SANGEETA BANERJEE, HOWRAH

First get a dental check-up done for the gums. Many times, it is not the teeth but the gums which get infected. I would also advise you to see that he does not suffer from constipation. As bad digestion can often lead to bad breath.

Eat a balanced diet of lots of raw, crunchy foods like carrots, cucumber, apples, pears, celery sticks and cabbage. You need to give your son at least 12 glasses of water a day to flush out the toxins in his body and this should be done regularly like giving medicines and not merely when one is feeling thirsty. Make a mouth wash of cloves, aniseed, cardamoms and cinnamon. Boil these in water until it becomes half of the quantity. Store in a bottle and rinse daily several times a day. You will find a difference.

TO REMOVE DANDRUFF



Use warm coconut oil mixed with lemon juice followed with turban therapy

My three-year-old baby girl recently had a bad attack of German measles. Her rashes still remain and have left behind red patches. Please suggest a way to get rid of them. I am not in favour of strong medicines as they may harm her tender skin.

PAROMITA CHAKRABORTY, CALCUTTA

Make a smooth paste of sandalwood powder, cream, gramflour, turmeric and lemon juice. Before bathing, apply on the body and gently scrub off with milk. Bathe normally and massage with coconut oil. This should be excellent for her skin but you have to be careful that she does not scratch the rashes. Otherwise it may leave marks. If it feels itchy, apply coconut oil which will soothe it immediately.With time and patience, there would be a definite improvement as anything natural will yield positive results only if you are perseverent and regular with your beauty regimen.

My son is extremely averse to milk or any milk products. He refuses to include any dairy items in his diet in spite of our repeated attempts and even threats. Do you think that this exclusion of milk or milk products will harm him in any way? Can we substitute them with anything else?

RITIKA CHAWLA, BEHRAMPUR

You can give him ice-cream if he likes it and tell him that he must have either buttermilk, *paneer* or cold milk. You can also make milk-based sweet dishes at home like *kheer* or sweet *dahi* once in a while. Try to increase his intake of fresh fruits, salads and green vegetables. Almonds are also excellent for him so give him at least five almonds soaked overnight. There are a lot of children who do not like milk but must be supplemented with other foods. A calcium tablet once a day will also help. Do not threaten him; convince him through friendly persuasion. Also serve him food when the rest of the family are sitting for their meals and let him feel that meal times are not tiring or dreadful at all.

I am a 14-year-old student and have thick, bushy eyebrows. I hear that threading is a very painful procedure. Should I pluck them at home?

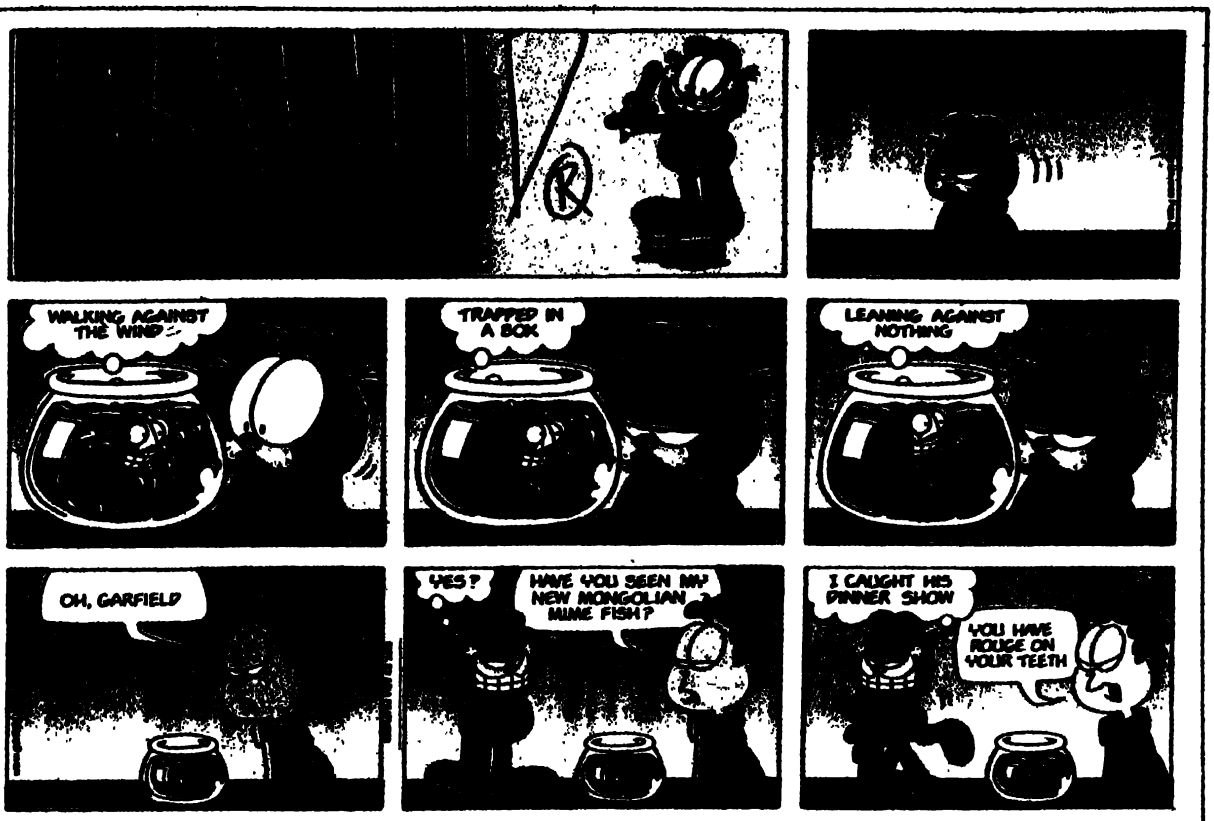
RUNA ROY, CALCUTTA

I would strongly recommend that you get your eyebrows threaded by a professional rather than trying to pluck them yourself. It might hurt a little when you are doing it for the first time but then you can do it as many times as required without too much fuss or pain. Assuming you have never plucked your eyebrows before, there is a possibility that you might pull your skin near the eyes which can be extremely painful. Besides, you might not get the shape or the arch right and that might not be complimentary to your face. Always remember to dab your eyebrows with ice cold rose water after threading. That will really soothe them. ■

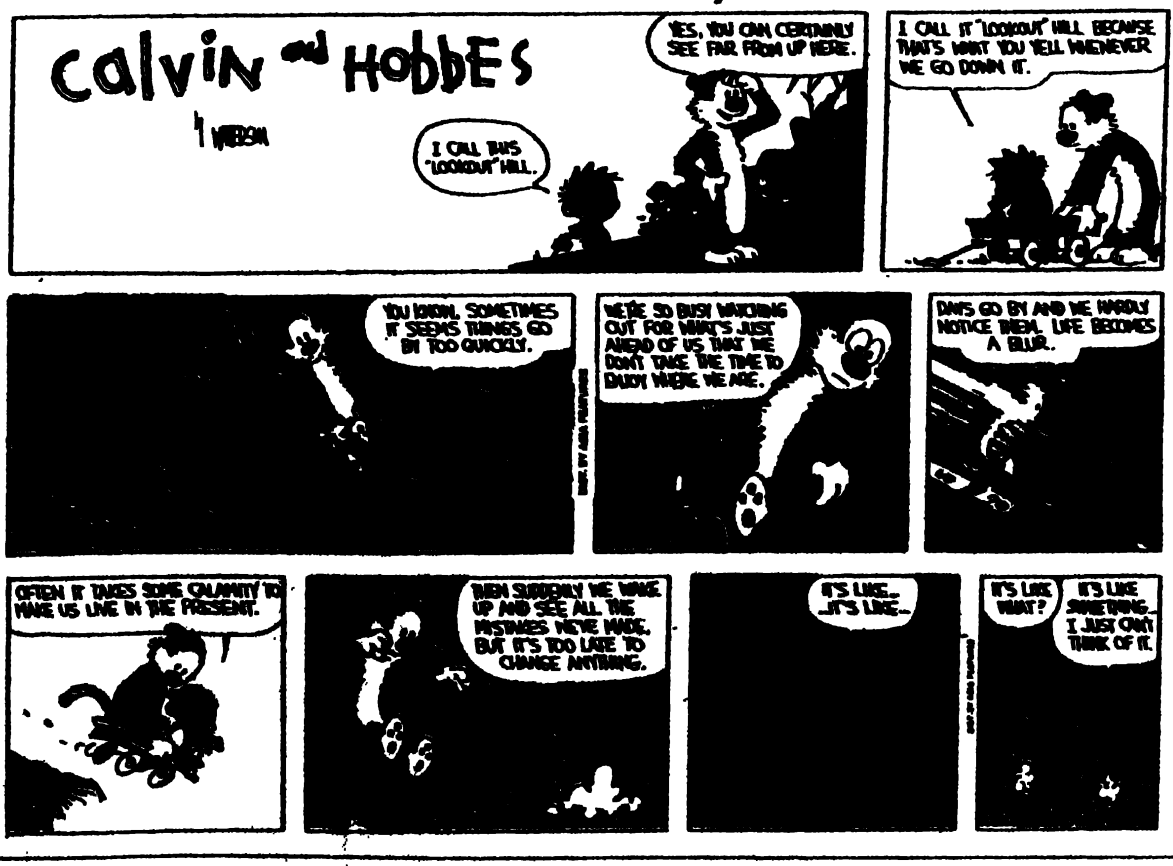
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-257	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-258	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1405	daily	9W-512	2150	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1305	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	1015	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1405	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2150	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	1015	3, 5	9W-622	1330	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	9W-201	0935	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-308	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0945	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-319	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0805	2, 6	IC-732	1610*	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-308	1900	5	AI-305	1905	3
SINGAPORE					
SQ-000	1250	2, 5	SQ-007	1210	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-082	0915	1	BG-081	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-081	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-084	1645	2	BG-083	1545	2
BG-086	2105	daily	BG-085	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-536	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0840	2, 6
			KB-105	0825	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
No.	Time		Time	No.
		Delhi-Kalka Mail		
		Amritsar Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Allahabad		
		Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi		
		Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun.		
		Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.		
		Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna		
		Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat.		
		Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.		
		Rajdhani Express via Gaya		
		Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat.		
		Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.		
		Rajdhani Express via Patna		
		Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.		
		Jodhpur Express		
		Shalimar (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday		
		Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly		
		Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.		
		Guwahati Samajhat Express		
		Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.		
		Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday		
		Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express		
		Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.		
		Doon Express via Grand Chord		
		Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line		
		Delhi Janata Express		
		Amritsar Express		
		Kolaghadum Express		
		Mithila (Rewati) Express		
		Kamrup (Guwahati) Express		
		Black Diamond Express		
		Coalfield Express		
		Asansol Express		
		Dhanbad Express		
		Jamalpur Express		
		Sanchalitabas Express		
		Rampurhat Express		
		Chambal (Gwalior) Express		
		Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.		
		Shipra (Ujjain) Express		
		Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.		
		Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express		
		Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.		

Sealdah

		Tewari-Tenu Express		
		Darjeeling Mail		
		Lal Quila Express via Main Line		
		Kanchenjunga Express		
		Gaur Express		
		Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express		
		Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.		
		Kalkar Express		
		Jammu-Tawi Express		
		Mughal Steel Express via SBG Loop		
		Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express		
		Ganga Sagar (Kakdwipur) Express		
		Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
No.	Time		Time	No.
		Madras Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Nagpur		
		Gitanjali (Bombay) Express		
		Shalimar (Howrah) Express		
		Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday		
		Ahmedabad Express		
		Kurla Express via Nagpur		
		Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack		
		Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express		
		Tata Steel Express		
		Ispat (Sambalpur) Express		
		Sambalpur-Rangpalia Express		
		Ranchi Hatia Express		
		Puri Express via Cuttack		
		Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express		
		Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express		
		East Coast (Hyderabad) Express		
		Purulia Express		
		Dep: Except Saturday		
		Arr: Except Sunday		
		Tirupati Express		
		Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express		
		Dep.: Sunday; Arr.: Sunday		
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-30	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-45	2422
6322	09-05	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	09-30	6322
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
6323	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	6323
6324	09-05	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	09-30	6324
6334	23-55	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arrl. Friday & Monday	13-45	6333
6528	09-05	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	09-30	6528
6525	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	6525
6334	23-55	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6333

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THE Best



HAIR TODAY, GONE TO

That could be your story, if you don't use a good shampoo, says Geeta Sharma



A nice, shining head of hair can make all the difference to your appearance. Just as unkempt, lank locks can ruin even the most beautiful outfit and detract from a carefully made-up face. Small wonder then that shampoos have become an important weapon in the beauty arsenal.

Hair care has always been intrinsic to the beauty regimen of Indian women who are said to have the longest hair in the world. But while earlier they struggled with *reetha, amla, shikakai* and *henna*, they can now choose from a range of shampoos, with and without conditioner, available in the market.

These days there are a bewildering variety of shampoos on the shelves. From synthetic to herbal to health and beauty shampoos, and now even shampoos being brought out by hair stylists and cosmetologists.

The major players in the Indian shampoo market are Hindustan Lever Limited (HLL) and Procter and Gamble. Between them, the two multinationals have a hold over nearly 60 per cent of the shampoo market. Hindustan Lever markets the Clinic anti-dandruff range, Sunsilk (Ceramides and Frutamins), Organics and Lux Super Rich Shampoo while Procter and Gamble markets Pantene and Head and Shoulders.

The anti-dandruff shampoos have been able to find a niche of their own, given the fact that nearly 40 per cent of the consumers suffer from it. According to Sanjiv Kakkar, HLL marketing manager, the Clinic range, "is individually India's single largest selling shampoo with a combined share of 36.2 per cent by volume."

Vivek Bali, Marketing Director, Procter and Gamble Hair care, refers to a recent market survey "which found that 58 per cent of Indian dandruff sufferers have hair fall or breakage and 21 per cent of them have split ends."

Besides the synthetic shampoos, the herbal ones too have a sizable consumer following, more so with the growing trend towards natural, chemical-free products. Besides the Ayur and Arnica ranges, Biotique, Halo (natural) and Ultra Doux, Dabur too has entered the shampoo market with Vatika Henna Cream conditioning shampoo.

According to Dabur India Managing Director V.C. Burman, "Consumer research has revealed that a large chunk of the consumers today feel the need for safe, natural products with superior conditioning for the hair" The company, he says, hopes to fulfil this

TRESS TALK
Indian women are said to have the longest hair in the world and hair care forms a vital part of their beauty regimen

NALINI SINGH
TV Personality
My only indulgence in life is this Swiss shampoo, Elseve, that I have been using for the past 14 years. I used it by chance in Geneva and found it so good that I have managed to get enough stock over the years. It is mild and one does not need a hair conditioner with it



need through the Vatika launch.

Given the burgeoning market for cosmetic products, the aggressive marketing stance adopted by most companies has made consumers more vulnerable to the appeal and

MORROW

lure of the fragrant, foaming liquid.

Clean, great-looking, manageable, full bodied, soft, silky and dandruff-free hair is what most shampoos promise. So from pretty models with thick lustrous manes to cricket stars, they are all there, touting the virtues of one brand or the other to the consumer through TV advertisements and newspaper and magazines ads.

"*Dimaag rahega* cool, dandruff *jaoge bhool*" Ajay Jadega says in one such shampoo ad, while in another, Rahul Dravid, also a cricketer, tells you "*Jo* Regular, *Woh* All Clear.'

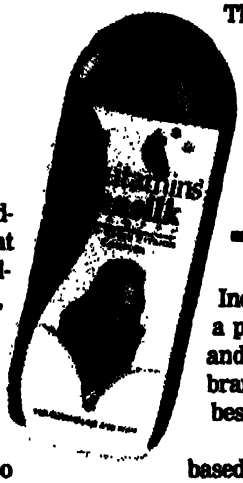
Price is a significant factor in any mass-market product and so also in the shampoo market. However, as Kakkar points out, the price factor is significant in the small pack segment, since the consumers include those who earlier used soap to wash their hair.

Most of the shampoos have an average price range of about Rs 100 for a 200 ml bottle while their sachets cost between Rs 2 to 3.

According to industry figures, the shampoo market is estimated at around Rs 300 crore and is growing at a rate of 40 to 50 per cent per annum. While synthetic shampoos account for nearly 70 per cent of the market, the herbal shampoos rule nearly 30 per cent of it.

At present, despite the aggressive marketing stance and huge sums spent on advertising, the shampoo appeal has extended to only 24 per cent of the populace. The shampoo market has seen a lot of activity in the past one year with a host of new entrants joining this segment of hair care. According to an ORG report, increased competition had led to the doubling of the media expenditure on this segment in 1996 over the previous year.

Interestingly, the per capita consumption of shampoo in urban India is just 24g as compared to other developing nations like Thailand and Indonesia which have a consumption rate of 275g and 200g respectively. In developed countries like the US and in Europe, the consumption is as high as 275g to 800g respectively.



The Indian consumer is easily led on by a Miss India or a celebrity posing with a particular brand of shampoo and picks from the shelf, a brand, without knowing what is best for the hair.

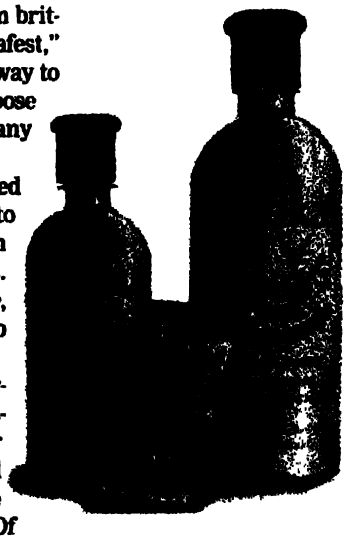
Sylvie, a leading Delhi-based cosmetologist and hair stylist says many of the shampoos on the Indian shelves have an alkaline content that can damage the hair and make them brittle. "A mild shampoo is the best and the safest," he suggests. For the lay person, an easy way to decide what is the best shampoo is to choose one which gives a silky sheen without any conditioner or toning, he says.

The big market for shampoos has led even hair-stylists and cosmetologists to manufacture and market what they claim to be the best quality shampoos. Shahnaz Hussain, Habib and now Sylvie, are among those who have done so already.

Aggressive advertising or not, if market surveys and the growing consciousness about personal grooming and hair care are any indicators, shampoos will continue to occupy a prime place on the Indian consumer's shopping list. Of course, the brand may change from time to time. But then, you can't have everything. ■

BRAND WARS

The Indian consumer now has a bewildering range of shampoos to choose from. Right from synthetic, herbal, health and beauty shampoos to special ones brought out by cosmetologists and beauticians



MINI MATHUR

Model

I use the Ultra Doux Lime Blossom shampoo for my hair specially in summers as it strips the hair of all the grime and dust that settles in so fast. I like it for its fine fragrance and because it is mild enough to be used even four times a week



KAPIL DEV

Cricketer

I am not very particular about shampoos. But of late I have been using this shampoo, Himani, made in Calcutta. I have found it rather soft and mild and have developed a preference for it



MY PERSONAL *Style*

COOL COMFORT

That's the aura, actor Soumitra Chatterjee likes his house to exude



ALOKE MITRA

GREEN THUMB

A certain amount of foliage contributes to the livening up of the ambience and just being one with nature helps me unwind

My home is an eclectic mix of decoration styles Though there are no conflicting sides to my persona, the aura I'd like my house to exude is that of comfort, of a lived-in look with an aesthetic sensibility. I like the quaint, stylish look of the old but I prefer the modern look with an accent on an agglomerate of aesthetics, style, comfort and functionality.

I have a distinct preference for smaller spaces (larger spaces only increase my sense of loneliness). The decor, according to me, should be bereft of clutter

A house mirrors the personality of the resident and is an extension of the same. What you are in your home is determined by what you will put in it While I do not consciously opt for the wholly co-ordinated look, the interiors nevertheless, reveal an orchestrated whole with nothing to jarr the senses.

I owe my interest in interiors to my profession as an actor. This discerning eye for colour and rhythm is reflected in the sets designed for my stage productions. Credit goes to my wife, Deepa, who has done up the interiors herself and has given a lot of thought in landscaping the garden and also to Dulal Mukherjee, who has impeccably handled form and space while designing our two-storeyed house.

There is a lot of mix and match in our furniture, the curios, wall pieces and bric-a-brac, which have been collected over the years from all over the world.

Special mention must be made of the rare Saraswati icons and my wife's prized collection of antique bulls from Mysore, Benares, Bishnupur, Orissa, Ladakh, Nepal, Chile and Britain. A particular favourite is the black monolithic 'nandi' acquired from the house of Bankim Chandra through an art dealer. This has resulted in a synthesis of the Indian and Western look.

I like to strike a balance with the furniture which should neither be ultra modern nor opulently antique. The dining table with the marble top and Victorian upholstery is a family piece, three generations old and of immense sentimental value. The living room is a blend of period and metallic furniture — the emphasis being on a casual as well as a well-done interior. Furniture, while slightly ornate has to be functional as well.

The walls in my house are never bare, embellished as they are with photographs, artefacts and paintings by Jamini Roy, Picasso, Gauguin and Renoir.

Old-fashioned lamps have generously been disbursed lending warmth to the interiors, thereby mellowing the stark contrasts.

A certain amount of foliage contributes to the livening up of the ambience and just being one with nature helps me unwind.

I like the element of change when my wife effects it but the sheer hassle that the process entails makes me cringe.

Above all, an ideal home is one where one can give free rein to one's creativity coupled, of course, with an individualistic predilection.

AS TOLD TO AJANTA KRISHNAMURTHY



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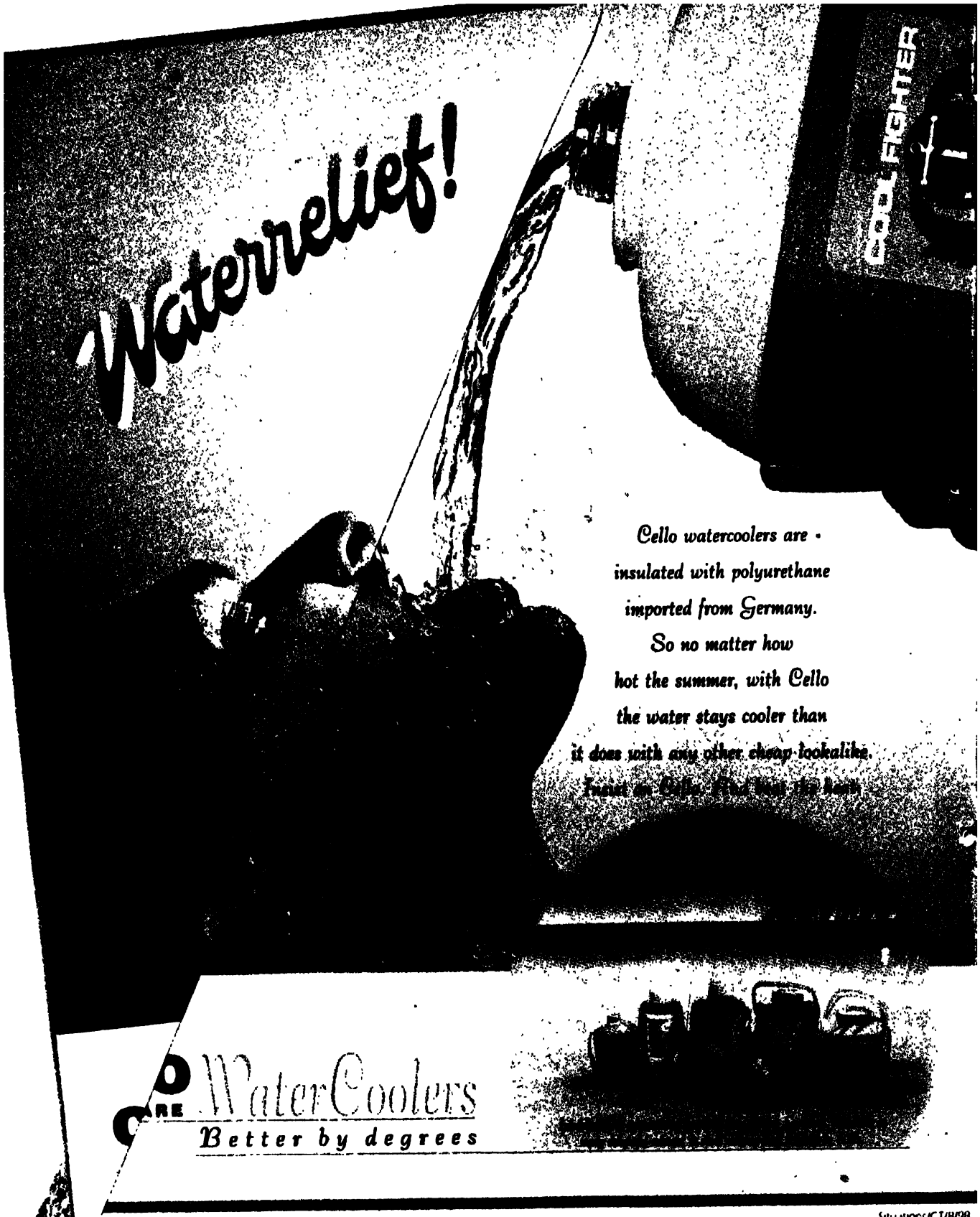
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WRITE IN



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THE SANTOOR STAR

Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma's intense love for his art is amply reflected in the way he talks about spiritualism and how it has enabled him to shape the destiny of the santoor ('Touching a Chord', June 21). It is amazing that the man who is primarily responsible for reviving the santoor from the forgotten alleyways of music chooses to be modest about his achievements. Although the government has done its bit by bestowing him with the Padmashree and the Sahitya Natak Akademi Award, one still feels that more recognition from the public is due.

SAGARIKA GHOSH, CALCUTTA

FATHER AND SON

Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma will always be remembered for the soulful music that he bequeathed to films as *Chandni* and *Lamhe*. Hindi film music never had it so good. Let us see how much of his artistry his son Rahul manages to inherit.

A.Dutta, Calcutta

The cover story on Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma was a welcome break from your usual stories on fashion and dress designers. Please include more articles such as these. We have a lot of talent in India and the best way to encourage it would be to publish articles on people who have made it big in their chosen fields.

Ira Das, Calcutta

ALL ABOUT THE ADAM[illegible] EVE

Thank you for the feature on Lubna Adams ('Pretty Woman', June 21). The cherubic face that viewers in the early and mid-Eighties had the pleasure of seeing may have been forgotten by many but not by me. The Eighties was a time when female models looked feminine, healthy (not anorexic like today's models) and looked very much the pretty girl next door. It feels nice to see that my favourite model is doing rather well for herself. She seems to have found her soul mate in Deepak Malhotra. Wishing her all the best and hoping we get to see more of her and her work in India in the coming days.

Anirban Mandal, Barasat

FACT AND FICTION

The article on the best in Indian fiction in English language was very timely ('Book, Line and Sinker', June 21) what with Indo-Anglian writers doing so well for themselves and putting India firmly on the world map as far as English Literature is concerned. But one cannot ignore the fact that one in a million can ultimately make it. Of course, there exists many talented writers who are brilliant in regional languages and need competent translators to do them justice in the international literary scene. Besides,not everyone can expect to be a Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth or the much hyped Arundhati Roy with just one work of fiction!

Souren Dutta, Kharagpur

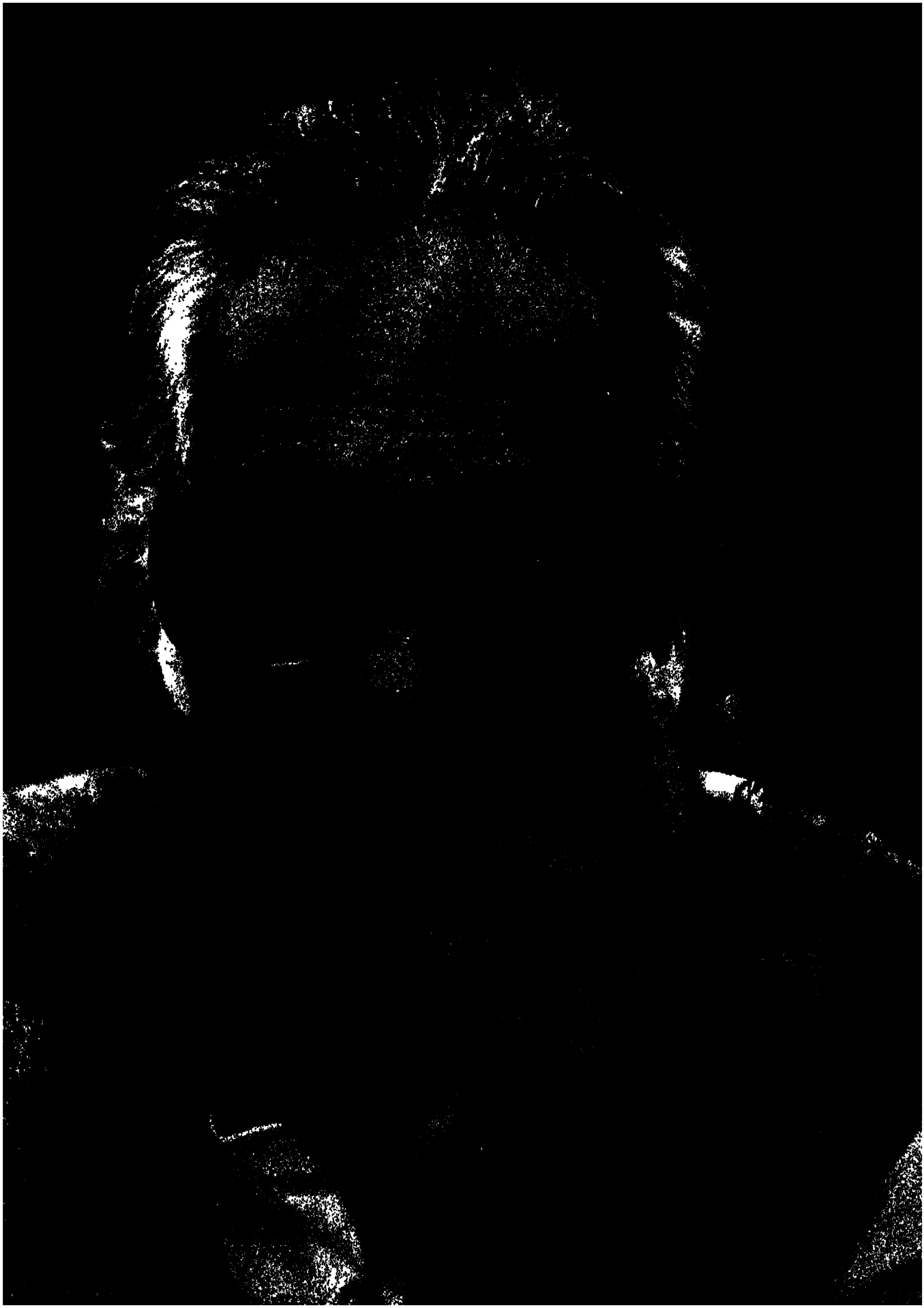
SKIN DEEP

Your beauty column by Suparna Trikha is getting rather repetitive and dull. Your column could be made more interesting if you could provide some beauty tips which would deal with one specific problem or a condition or even a beauty product in detail. I am sure that would be more informative.

Atreyee Ban[illegible], Calcutta

graphiti ★ 2 August 1998

4 SEN AND SENSIBILITIES Mrinal Sen may have run into a creative block, but he remains Bengal's best known film maker 10 OUT TO LUNCH In free-wheeling conversation with former Union minister, Renuka Chowdhury 12 INNER EYE 13 SMALL TALK It's not all fun and games being a celebrity sportsman 14 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES 16 MIXED BAG 18 RASOI Jiggs Kalra on the unique culinary stream of Kerala 20 DESIGN CORNER Windows are the soul of a home 22 BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY 26 TIME TABLE 28 THE BEST Keeping a watch on time 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE Shovana Narayanan wears two hats as a hostess



SEN AND SENSIBILITIES

Mrinal Sen may have run into a creative block, but he remains Bengal's best-known film maker, **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** tries to fathom his mysteries

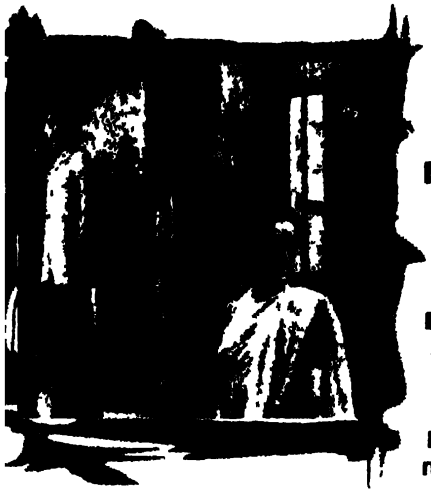
At 75, Mrinal Sen thrives on his own brand of boundless energy. In fact such is his enthusiasm that he wants to be told what shape the interview will take, so that he can work out his answers in advance. Then, ready with his script, he starts reading them aloud, seated on a straight-backed chair at Delhi's Centaur Hotel. A Marxist, oratory comes naturally to Sen, though it may also have something to do with his "love for the cadence of a language".

As he begins to speak, it becomes clear that the angst-ridden Sen of the Sixties and Seventies is gone, leaving in his place a much chastened person.

MAKING SENSE



A list of some of his memorable films



Raat Bhor (1956)
■ Sen's first film starring Uttam Kumar, it was an unmitigated flop that the film maker would rather not talk about.

Neel Akasher Neechey (1958)
■ This is the story of a Chinese silk tradesman—played by Kali Banerjee—and his acquaintance with a Bengali family.

Bhuvan Shome (1969)
■ A bureaucrat's relationship with an innocent village girl which changes the man completely. Starring Utpal Dutt and Suhashini Muley.

Ekdin Pratidin (1979)
■ A single woman who is the only breadwinner of the family does not return home one night, starting a chain of events.

"The time has changed, the wind has shifted. It is no wonder, therefore, that the quality of anger you seem to be hinting at has also gone with the time and the wind. Gone are the desperate days when we thought that a kind of revolution was brewing on all fronts. Hence the militancy all around — in me, as well," sighs Sen.

During the turbulent Sixties and the early Seventies, he could not escape the 'contagion'. "I did not want to. I, like plenty of others, was ready for an explosion. I thought I was sitting on a volcano. That was the time I passed through and you heard of."

But no, Sen doesn't want to have any truck with the word 'Naxalite'. Maybe, it is too sacrosanct in his lexicon. "After an intense re-appraisal of all that happened in the late Sixties and early Seventies, I, like others, became careful, cautious and quiet, if not wiser....," he trails off warily.

Was he not disillusioned with the militant movement? "That would be too simplistic," says Sen refusing to defuse the issue in a couple of words. "Life is two steps forward and one step backward. We believed in certain things and then came the realisation that we had made a mistake. But my anger did not evaporate. It was fermenting within, it is fermenting even now, even at my age."

He feels that his films should not be judged by their exterior look. "True, I do not shout these days. But anger, if not in its elemental form, is there, coupled with an inner strength—all hidden beneath the surface despair," he says, refusing to acknowledge, however, the streaks of despondency in some of his films.

Sen ruminates over a sequence in *Ekdin Pratidin*, his eyes hovering softly on wife Geeta at the far end of the room. "Towards the end of the film, she—playing the mother— comes out to light the earthen stove. A smokescreen rises before her. On the surface, it looks very depressing."

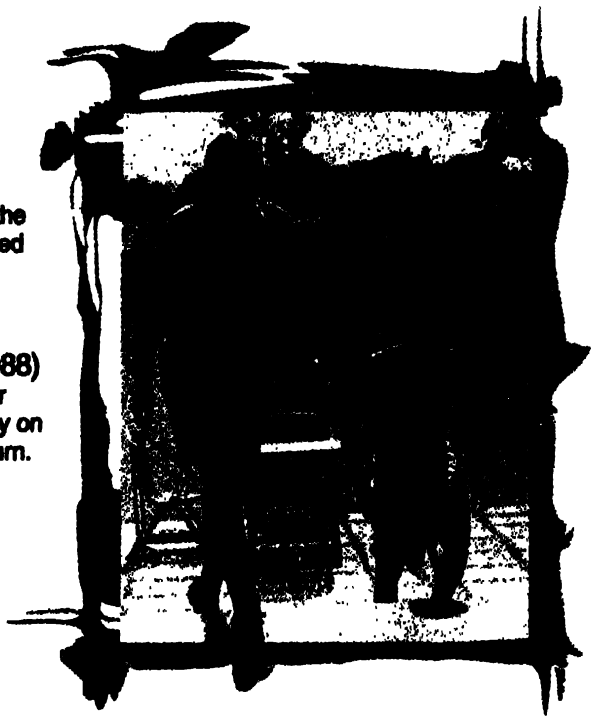
Pushing back his broad-rimmed spectacles, Sen begins recounting the story of the film, of the daughter who goes missing all night to finally come back in the wee hours of dawn. "The mother, for fear of public censure, had rushed back to her room. Two hours later, she quietly closes the door, lighting the stove. At that moment, she is without fear. She knows nobody would dare to ask her about her daughter, and even if they do, she knows how to answer them. This inner strength," says Sen, "speaks of hope, rather than despair."

Anger, silence, hope, despair— Mrinal Sen rejoices in the shock of contrasts. Does *Ekdin Pratidin* personify his inner turmoils? Sen chooses to relate it to the larger milieu around him. "Someone had once asked me how far my films are autobiographical. Physically, it may not bear any semblance with my life, but this is a kind of experience to which I can extend myself, intellectually. In *Kharij*, for example, no servant actually died in our house," says Sen, referring to the way middle-class families treat their servants. "But it is a part of me,

Mrigaya (1976)
■ Introducing Mithun Chakraborty and Mamata Shankar, this film deals with a young Santhal who avenges his wife's rape by murdering the zaminder only to be hanged to death. The film won a National award.

Ek Din Achanak 1988)
■ The story of a professor who walks out of his family on a stormy day never to return.

Antareen (1993)
■ The film revolves round the telephonic conversations of a lonely woman (Dimple Kapadia) with a stranger she has never met.



part of her (pointing to his wife), part of everybody's reality."

Sen's recent nomination to the Rajya Sabha has left him cold. He finds it pointless to assess the current political situation—-with its strengths and weaknesses, its confusions and even its bankruptcy—by observing the nature of debates and walk-outs on the floor of Parliament. "Parliament and its counterparts in the State assemblies are a battleground, where you battle with words, certainly not the ideal place when you can measure the political climate of a country," he bristles.

Clearly, politics leaves him cold. But if Mrinal Sen had not been a film maker, what would he have been? "As I look back I see I was destined to be a film maker even though I had no initial preparations for being so. It was purely an accident. What else could I have been—a loafer? Just loafing about?"

The 'accident' happened while he was a college student. A frequent visitor to The Imperial Library (now called the National Library) in Calcutta, he read Marx, Nietzche, Shakespeare, books on sociology, poetry, Firdaus's *Shahnama*... and just about everything he could lay his hands on. It was while playing with the cards in the catalogue room, that he ran into a book by Rodolf Arnheim.

Called *Film*, the book turned out to be a marvellous treatise on the aesthetics of cinema, propelling him to read up everything on the subject. It strengthened his passion for the medium. By that time, Sen had started seeing films most of which he disliked. In a way, his distaste for films (both Indian and American) and his love for it cultivated through books grew together. "I began writing on the dialectics of cinema, articles which were published in various papers."

It inspired him to make a film—*Rathbhor*—which was a complete disaster. "I thought that film making was not my cup of tea and left it altogether."

But life had other ideas for him. He became a medical representative, but even though he made some money, felt dissatisfied. "Gradually, I drifted into film making, building a long career where I made films, good, bad and indifferent."

Why does he not make them any more? Sen links his hibernation to what he perceives as a "worldwide cultural crisis". There is hardly any work of art which one can talk about in glowing terms. "And interestingly, a peculiar situation such as this has been found to be manifesting itself since the political debacle in Eastern Europe, manifesting itself all over the world."

He concedes to a few exceptions though, among them Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* which Sen found rivetting. "I had an initial resistance towards the book and was angry with the media hype surrounding it." He also found it hard to reconcile with the syntaxing and its approach for the first 30-40 pages. But once Sen overcome that,

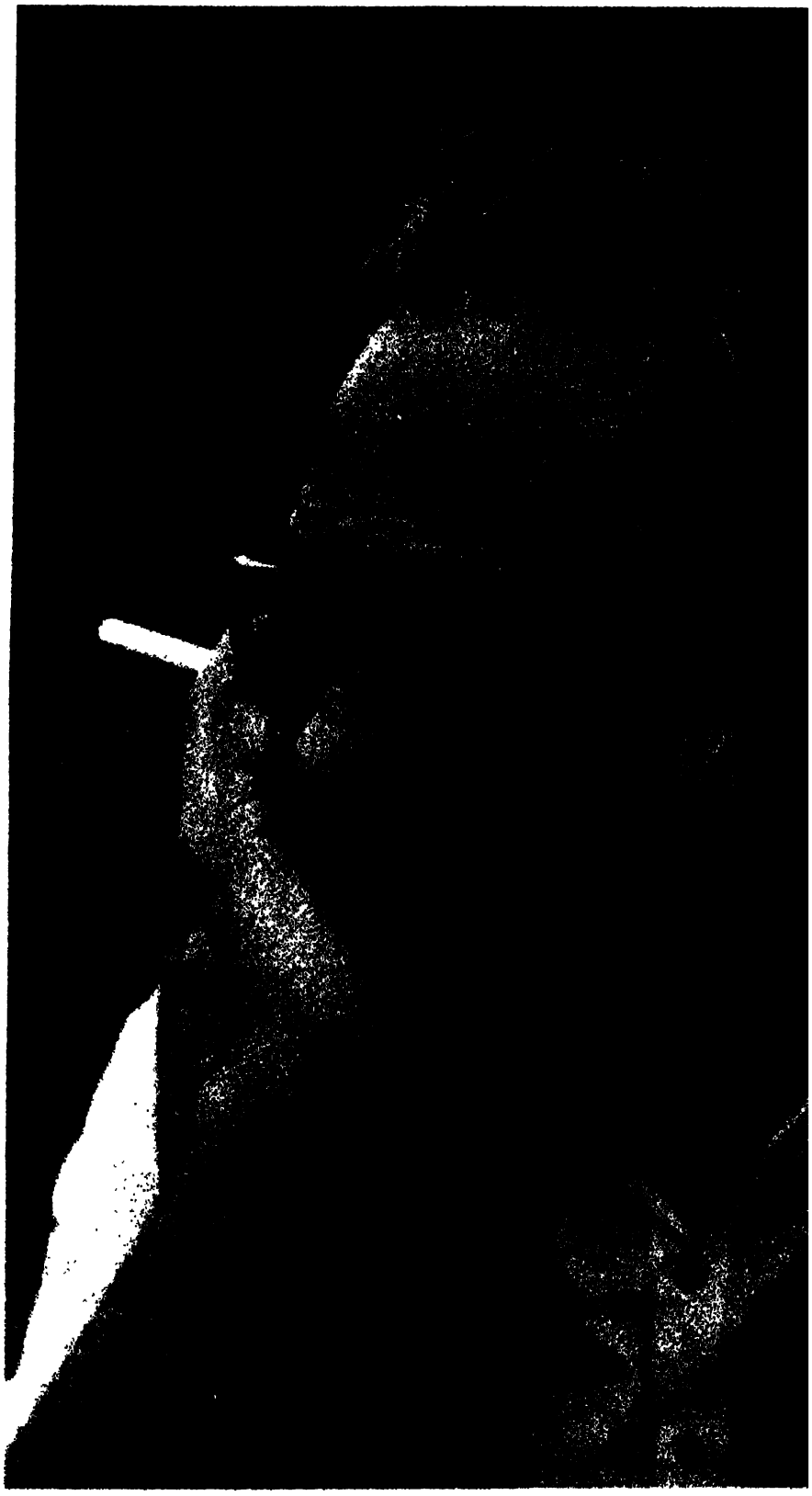
"As I look back I see I was destined to be a film maker even though I had no initial preparations for being so. It was purely an accident"

his fascination with the book grew. But, he adds, "I doubt if she can ever write another book of this magnitude."

Sen is pessimistic about those currently engaged in any form of creativity. "Have they stopped dreaming? Or their vision has become atrophied? I, for one, do not know what to hold on to," says Sen, admitting to what he calls a "creative block".

When he watches Spielberg's films, he sits and "takes respectful note of the tremendous advances of science and technology". And what does he see but magic. "I never debate the objectivity of the situations depicted by Spielberg. He did a lot of research work. But *Schindler's List* lacked soul. I think I fell in love with its violence. To be objective and to have a sense of historicity are two different things and Spielberg lacked historicity. He would not make you hate Nazicism the way some anti-Semitic films of Eastern Europe did in the Sixties," says Sen.

He is not against the depiction of violence, but he would like to raise questions about the way it is being depicted in today's films. "It is like watching *King Kong*," says Sen, smiling at the thought.



Born in Faridpur in Bangladesh, Sen's first impressions of Calcutta—which he now considers his 'El Dorado'—were those of a boy from the boondocks. "The city was such a sprawling mass of confusion; I was eaten up by it." On the other hand, he felt he became a citizen of the world among the nameless, faceless millions. In course of time, he developed a love-hate relationship with it.

No one enjoys being an iconoclast more than this film maker. Sen has the guts to make regional language films without knowing a word of Oriya or Telugu, to speak nothing of his ignorance about the cultural nuances of those regions. But his doubts were dispelled when each film turned out to be a fascinating discovery of human experience. "I took it up as a chal-



EMPATHY AND SYMPATHY

Sen makes an effort to understand other people's language. It is subjects like, say, his Bengali neighbour who is a rich industrialist that he would not be able to indentify or emphathise with

lenge."

It is a part of human endeavour, says Sen, to understand other people's language. "But in spite of Oriya being close to Bengali, we make every effort not to understand it, too full of our pride in Tagore's legacy."

He has made quite a few films in Hindi, too, which are very close to his heart even though he is not familiar with the language. Once he had asked Shabana—who had acted in his *Khandahar*—whether his Hindi had improved. The actress shot back unabashedly, "Not really, but you have become more desperate with the language."

"If you ask me, I cannot make a film about my Bengali neighbour who is an industrial tycoon. I know nothing about his world. But I can make a film about a Telugu farmer." The difficulties there are not insurmountable, even if he has to encounter the barriers of language. "Poverty and exploitation do not have two cultures to talk about," says Sen. "It is the same everywhere."

Poverty on celluloid has a special significance for him. For it is a reality which is so "devastating and indeed, so militant that you can do nothing but suffer and react violently." In fact, his initial years were a gruesome example of some of the worst forms of privation.

Wife Geeta is not bitter, having borne the years of penury with quiet fortitude. She talks of their room on the roof where the sun beat down ceaselessly with great humility. "I would dilute the small quantity of milkfood with lots of water to keep feeding our child," she says resignedly.

The family survived on *muris* and *khois* since rice was a luxury. She did not even have a pair decent of slippers, making it difficult for her to go out for a year. Sen had to pawn pieces of jewellery as he had no fixed sources of income till *Neel Akasher Niche*, when things got slightly better.

Today, those days are behind them. With a son in Chicago, the Sens are a contented couple, enjoying their occasional *addas* at home. Sen still forages books by the dozen, undergoing a change every time he makes a film. Like a man possessed, he becomes oblivious to the mundane tasks at home.

Comparisons with Satyajit Ray sets Sen on the defensive. Stung, he proffers a brief, "Why ask me? You would do good to ask yourself. And then, if you feel it is worth doing so, draw a line between Ray's techniques and mine."

He does not believe in the strong demarcations between art and commercial cinema though he admits to making films to serve his conscience. "I make as many films of the commercial variety as the other man does. Nobody will be happier than me to see that my films have reached a wider audience.

"Most people claim they don't care for their audiences," emphasises Sen. "That is a blatant lie. Everyone does that. Even a man like me who has suffered so many reverses. Most of my films have been popular failures." And that clearly, is something that Mrinal Sen regrets at the end of the day. ■

"Poverty and exploitation do not have two cultures to talk about, It is the same everywhere....You can do nothing but suffer and react violently"

OUT TO *Lunch*

WITH RENUKA CHOWDHURY

The former Union minister regales **Seema Goswami** with stories from the political front

Renuka Chowdhury is a touch embarrassed. She has put on a few kilos since she entered politics, and lost only about six of them on the treadmill recently. So, when the *maitre de* at the *Dum Pukht*, the Indian restaurant at the Maurya Sheraton, recommends the non-vegetarian *thali* ("that way you can sample a bit of everything"), she demurs a little.

"How will it look?" she asks. "Having such a large *thali* in front of such a large person. Don't go by my size when you make your recommendation."

She's only half-joking, but the persuasive charms of the manager and the *kakori kebab* (made famous by resident chef Imtiaz Quereshi) make her relent in time. So, the non-vegetarian *thali* it is.

Chowdhury may be consciously trying to cut down on the calories, but her interest in food is deep and abiding. "I didn't even know how to boil an egg when I got married," she says, "but now I can even make things like *Hyderabadi biryani*."

According to her, her's has been a culinary adventure by trial and error, but by now she's finally got things right. And as she launches into a long and complicated recipe, and details the difference between *kachha* and *pucca biryani*, it is clear that Chowdhury knows her *kebabs* from her *tandoori* chicken.

Renuka is fresh from her experiences at the Union health ministry, which she headed as part of the United Front government, and where she made AIDS and family planning the focus of her efforts. And she is teeming with stories about her stint as health minister.

"Right behind my chair at the ministry," she recounts, digging into the melt-in-the-mouth *kakoris*, "there was a map of India, which was drawn with condoms." That was the minister's way of bringing condoms out of the shadows, so that they could be made a part of polite conversation, and nobody experienced any embarrassment about buying or using them.

> "Right behind my chair at the ministry, there was a map of India which was drawn with condoms"

Not that this was easy going. Chowdhury often came up against orthodox and obscurantist beliefs in this effort. On one occasion, her office was stormed by several mothers from Haryana, who objected to her 'preaching' sex to their children. Renuka let them vent their fury before she asked, "Do you have a knife in your kitchen?"

Yes, of course, replied the bemused women, but what did that have to do with anything? It did, countered Chowdhury. If by making condoms available, she was propagating sex, then surely by keeping a knife in the house, these women were encouraging murder. The women saw the point.

Chowdhury's interest in the population problem is not a recent one; and nor is it a product of her stint in the health ministry. She was extolling the virtues of a small family to her driver even way back in Hyderabad. After his wife had her third baby, Chowdhury told him in no uncertain terms that he should have

Acc No..... Date.....



PICKING AND CHOOSING: **Renuka Chowdhury ponders over matters political as she samples items like *kakori kabobs* from the non-vegetarian *thali***

no more children. If he refused to listen to reason, Renuka added, she would have no option but to sack him.

The driver agreed that he would stop procreating, and all seemed well. One day, however, he didn't turn up for work because his wife was very unwell. A worried Chowdhury sent him the car so that he could take her to hospital. This happened for a couple of times over three years, and Renuka thought no more of it.

But finally, the other servants in the house could bear it no longer. They told Renuka that she was wasting her sympathy on this man. Did she realise that over the last four years, he'd had three more children? Needless to say, Chowdhury was appalled, though several years down the line, she can see the humour of the situation.

Renuka is a somewhat unlikely entrant into politics. The *chi-chi* daughter of an army officer, she was expected to marry well and settle down to looking after her husband and children. At least part of that prophecy came true when Renuka met Sreedhar Chowdhury, a young businessman, at a party thrown in honour of her father. For Sreedhar, it was love at first sight, but it took a lot of convincing before Renuka agreed to tie the knot. Finally, however, she was convinced of Sreedhar's love for her, and two were married.

Two daughters, Poojita and Tejaswani, followed, and Renuka devoted her life to home and hearth. But her's was too effervescent a personality to be content with just housekeeping. And thus it was that, with her husband's active encouragement, she entered the murky world of politics.

Here, she quickly acquired the reputation of being a live wire, even slapping a policeman on one memorable occasion. The headlines never quite managed to ignore Chowdhury, and she rose to become one of the more important campaigners for N.T. Rama Rao's Telugu Desam. She fell out with NTR once his second wife, Laxmi Parvati, hoved into view, and joined up with his son-in-law Chandrababu Naidu instead.

These days, however, the vibes between Naidu and Chowdhury are at an all-time low. Is it because Naidu regards her as a threat to his chief ministership? Or does he just feel uncomfortable with the kind of high profile that Renuka has in politics?

Chowdhury laughs, as she samples the lighter-than gossamer *shahi tukda* that the chef has specially conjured up for her in the kitchen. "No," she says laying down her spoon carefully, "I don't have any ambitions, really, when it comes to state-level politics. And I certainly don't want to be chief minister."

But, as she begins relating her experiences on the campaign trail, it becomes clear why she makes Babu — as she refers to him — nervous. Chowdhury is a people's politician who is most at ease when she is surrounded by crowds.

"On one occasion," she recounts, "I went to address this election meeting in the walled city area of Hyderabad. When I arrived there, I found only men around. There wasn't another woman in sight."

When Chowdhury enquired why that was so, she was told that the women of the area observed *purdah*, and that they couldn't come out when there were strange men around. But Renuka would have none of that. "I am also from a *khaandani* family," she told them, "but my husband is very comfortable with the idea of my being here at this time of the night because he knows that I am safe with my Muslim *bhais*. So, why are you keeping your women within the house?"

The shame-faced men had no option but to let the women attend the meeting as well.

It's easy to see, then, why Renuka has acquired the repuation of being an irresistable force in politics. And perhaps that explains why the Andhra Pradesh Congress unit is wooing her over, now that Chandrababu Naidu has sidelined her within the Telugu Desam.

Chowdhury is too discreet to either confirm or deny these rumours. But even though she's not being too forthcoming at this point of time, there can be no denying that her voice will continue to resound in Indian politics for a long time to come.■

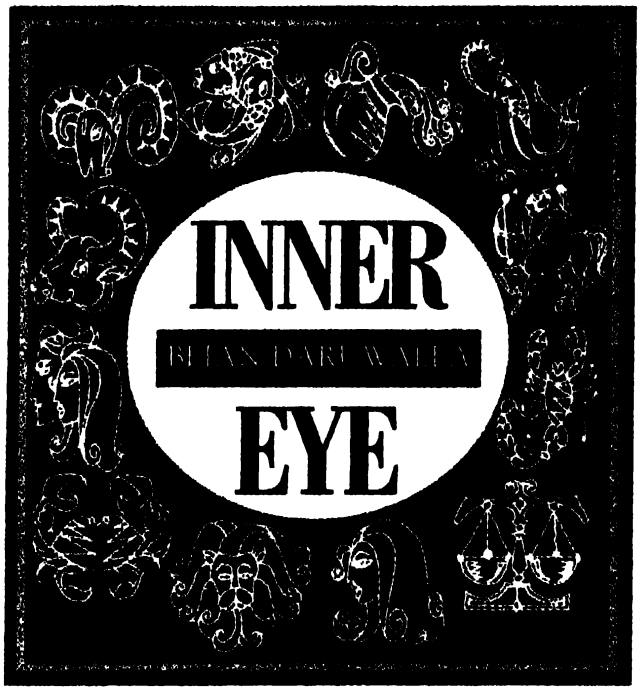
ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Introspection and a reaching out to people and places, are opposites, but both will find a place in your psychology and mental make-up. A trip, a journey is very likely so get your travel-kit ready, a cliche, but an apt one in the context. August 7-9 are favourable for getting work done, so, give it best shot. Health safeguards essential.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) True, there will be pressures on the emotional and the material frontiers. True also, you will be able to cope with them. But it will be a tight squeeze all the same. August 5-6 will be rather crucial for you. Tuesday through Thursday will be important for buying/selling/investing/shopping/socialising and so on. Marriage is on the cards.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) You will be forced to pull out all the stops if you want to succeed, says Ganesha. This holds particularly true. Between August 8-10 many of you could be changing horses mid-stream and this change appears almost inevitable and necessary. You will have the energy and the enthusiasm to go ahead. Travelling is more than possible.

CANCER, (June 21- July 20) You will have to move fast, very fast to get the goodies, as, competition will be tremendous. Two things are evident: a) finances, inclusive of loans, funds, joint-finance, investment, capital formation, play a vital part, b) foreign ties, inspirational moves, a certain sadness, all of these make conflux, a union. An affair is not ruled out.

LEO, (July 21- August 21) The Sun-Jupiter aspect/formation could make life a bit difficult healthwise. Otherwise, your success in putting your message across will be simply phenomenal. Many Leo's must have made fresh start in the last month or so, and now is the time to renew that pledge. Finances and socialising make strange bed-fellows for you.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) While there could be opposition to plans and even a falling out, it could be temporary and a patching up is possible. Employment opportunities and house or property development schemes, keep you active. Pay particular heed to your attire and personal appearance. That could tilt the scales towards you.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Changes and overhauling on the job sector are indicated. Health could call for special care. In matters of children, research, creative pursuits, for example film making, writing, teaching, sculpting music, architecture, paintings, commercials, your luck holds well. Money will pour in from unexpected quarters.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) It would be best to distance yourself and not be totally involved, says Ganesha. Renovation/alteration/decoration of house, office, shop, is foretold. For funding, loaning and investment, Tuesday through Thursday will be of vital importance. Meditation and relaxation will certainly help a high-powered you.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) The health and well-being of elders and family members is suspect. It could cause tensions.Many Sagittarians will be communicating at literally break-neck speed! Contracts could be on the anvil. Visits, interviews and tests seem ordained for you. Prepare for a trip or even a long-distance journey.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) You have a chance to really 'grow' and be praised for it. The going maybe tough but it will be well worth the effort and that's important. Letters, calls, posters, flyers, ads, and other media of communication will entice you. Read all contracts and letters twice. Horrible errors could creep in for you.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Keep a leash on family and finance, as, both could get out of hand. The trick is to know when and where to draw the line. Despite difficulties, you will have the nerve and the verve to do what you have to. It would be best to put your ideas across clearly and briefly, without overdoing it. August 8-9 will be inspirational for you.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Avoid depression and melancholia and be sure your mood will change for the better shortly. Yes, help from strange places,secret powers, friends and God, will be there for you. The best policy would be to be diplomatic about the things you don't like or approve.Later on, say in November, you could strongly voice your disapproval.



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SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Seema Goswami on the pressures faced by celebrity sportspersons

The talking point is:
Ronaldo's brave performance in France 98, which ended in near-disaster in the final against the host nation. The Brazilian star striker was the man on whom his entire nation's hopes were centered, only to be dashed on the eve of the final when Ronaldo was discovered having convulsions and had to be rushed to hospital for tests. "I swallowed my tongue," said Ronaldo after the event. "I thought I was going to die."
None of the doctors, however, could diagnose what was wrong with the striker. The problem, they said, was probably emotional in nature.



Are you surprised?:
Given the kind of pressure that he was working under, it was only to be expected that Ronaldo would crumble sooner or later. When so many people have such high expectations of you, it's only a matter of time before you snap.

It didn't help any either:
That Ronaldo had been having problems with his girlfriend through the World Cup. Though she sat through every game, much the supportive fan in the distinctive colours of Brazil, all was not well on the romantic front. In fact, the two had decided to go their own ways, but had delayed announcing the decision until after the tournament.
But after Ronaldo's little misadventure, there was some rethinking on that score. And even as you read this, the estranged couple are ensconced in a hideaway, trying hard to resolve their differences.

He's not the only victim, though:
And nor are footballers the only sportspersons who are subjected to this kind of pressure. Tennis abounds with such examples as Mary Pierce, whose ambitious father made such a nuisance of himself on the sidelines that he had to be banned from all her matches. Then, there was the legendary John McEnroe, whose idea of coping with pressure was questioning—loudly, and sometimes abusively—every decision that the linesman made.

The biggest victim of them all, however:
Was Monica Seles, who was stalked by an ardent fan of Steffi Graf. The episode ended with the demented man stabbing her in the back, as she rested between games at a tennis tournament, in the hope that Steffi would gain because of Seles' absence on the circuit.
After long months spent in hospital, and extensive physiotherapy, Seles came back into the game. But the toll that this nightmarish experience took on her was clear for all to see.

In India:
The limelight is always focussed on cricketers, so they have to handle the rough with the smooth. The classic case is that of Mohammad Azharuddin, who was lionised when he was making all those huge scores and captaining India successfully. But no sooner did he hit a bad patch—both individually and as captain—than the media and his fans made him a target.
Even though it was his game that was at fault, the press went to town about his broken marriage and his relationship with starlet Sangeeta Bijlani, speculating that his personal life was affecting his professional one.
Of course, now that Azhar is back in form, nobody's talking about Bijli any more. Or saying that she's responsible for his recent successes.

Is that cricket?:
Not by a long shot. But then, who said that fair play was an essential feature of life? ■

When so many people have such high expectations of you, it's only a matter of time before you snap

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

LOVE THROUGH LETTERS

Q : I am a 24-year-old boy student of an Engineering college in love with an eighteen year-old student. Although we have neverever met we are in love with each other. We have exchanged several letters and feel that we know each other very well. The problem, however, is that she belongs to a very conservative family and her father found out about us a few days back. She was asked to stop writing to me at once. In spite of so many obstacles, I still love her. Do you think we have a chance of making our relationship successful? Please advise.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

I reallydon't know quite how to react. You are both certainly in love with the idea of love. And your girlfriend's father has made matters worse by putting up a show of resistance to a total non-event. In a way, it is easier to be in love with an impossible ideal than a living, breathing human being. In that sense, perhaps, you have indeed hit upon the perfect relationship. You could try meeting her father and telling her of your honourable intentions, and then with his permission, getting to know and meeting her. But for heaven's sake, don't do anything foolish, like eloping with the young lady, because then you will have a real problem in your hands. Ah, to be young and silly!

SOME BREATHING SPACE

Q : I am a 12-year-old girl and my problem is overprotective parents. I am not allowed to go out alone in the evenings. My mother in fact, accompanies me to my school and stays there till the school gets over. I have tried to explain to my parents, in whatever way I can, that they should give me some amount of breathing space, but all to no avail. Please advise.

SWAPNA MUKHERJEE, CALCUTTA.

Well, at least your protective parents haven't managed to completely break your resistance by smothering you in destructive love. You have my very real understanding and sympathy, but you seem remarkably intelligent for your age and I am sure you will

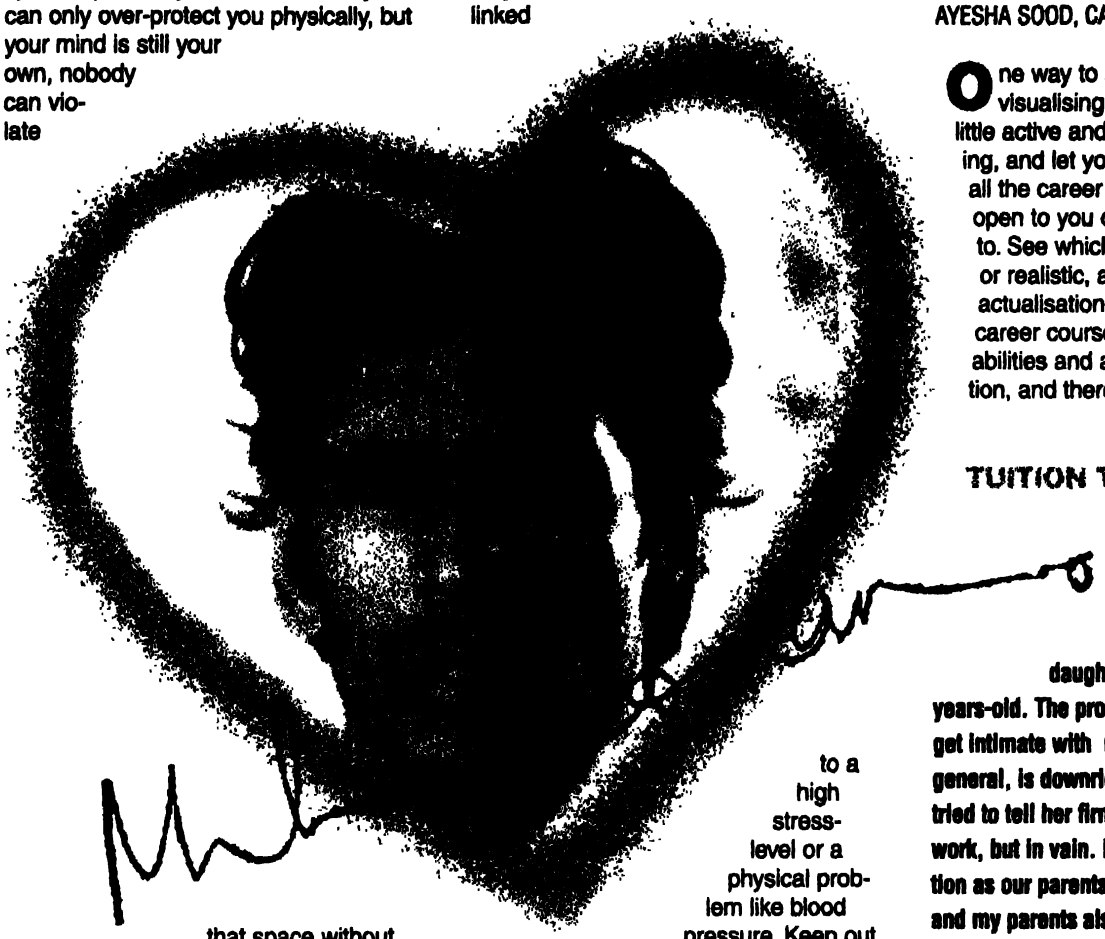
MAD ABOUT MILIND

I am a 15-year-old girl. My problem is that I am deeply in love with the model, Milind Soman. Believe me, I have tried desperately hard to stop thinking of him but it just does not work. I am worried that I will always be living in this make-believe world of fantasy and will never fall in love with a 'real' man as I will keep comparing him to Milind Soman. Please help.

PRIYA SARKAR, CALCUTTA

Falling in love with an iconic figure is quite a normal thing at 15. It's not that you are individually or personally in love with Milind Soman, it's just that he represents the concentrated focus of your dreams fantasies and aspirations. Indulge yourself, collect posters, photographs, autographs in the sure and certain knowledge that this day will pass and you will look back with nostalgic amusement upon your adolescent follies. And when the day arrives when you transfer all this hope, joy and longing to a real person, just tear up those posters and ready yourself for a new set of problems. Have fun!

indulge your mother for a few more years while managing to carve out a spot of space anyhow. After all, they can only over-protect you physically, but your mind is still your own, nobody can violate



that space without your permission. Prove your maturity and capability to your over-anxious parents, and then take life in your own hands.

'BOSSY' ATTITUDE

Q : I work in a reputed organisation and I love my job. The only problem that I face is my boss. He is a moody person and given to a foul temper. This upsets us very much as we often get lambasted for no apparent fault of ours. As such, he is a very capable administrator but this behaviour of his irks us no end. Please advise us on ways to tackle him especially when he is in a foul mood. He just does not listen to logic during these moments.

P.R, CALCUTTA

Everybody has their blind spots, and your boss's abominable temper may well be linked to a high stress-level or a physical problem like blood pressure. Keep out of his way during these explosions, and during a sane and peaceful moment, take the courage to explain to him that his unreasonable and unpleasant behaviour disrupts the work momentum and may result in serious attitudinal problems within his staff. Don't make this into a confrontation, keep it at a level of free and frank exchange of views. I am sure he will de-escalate somewhat.

DIFFERENT STREAMS

Q : I am a 16-year-old student who has recently passed her Class X exams. I have been reasonably good in studies. My problem is that I just cannot decide which stream to opt for. My parents insist that I take up Science as they feel I am quite good at it. I am, however,equally fond of Arts. I cannot make up my mind on this as I feel that my future life, career etc will be affected by my decision. Please help me.

AYESHA SOOD, CALCUTTA.

One way to solve the problem is by visualising the future. Indulge in a little active and creative day-dreaming, and let your mind wander over all the career and life-script options open to you or to which you aspire to. See which of these are feasible or realistic, and within the scope of actualisation. Then examine which career courses will enhance your abilities and aptitudes in this direction, and there you are!

TUITION TERROR

Q : I am a 30-year-old Engineer who gives tuition to a family friend's daughter, who is around 18-years-old. The problem is that she tries to get intimate with me and her behaviour, in general, is downright outrageous. I have tried to tell her firmly that this will just not work, but in vain. I am in a delicate situation as our parents are very good friends and my parents also have a very high opinion of her. Please tell me how to handle the situation.

A.K, CALCUTTA

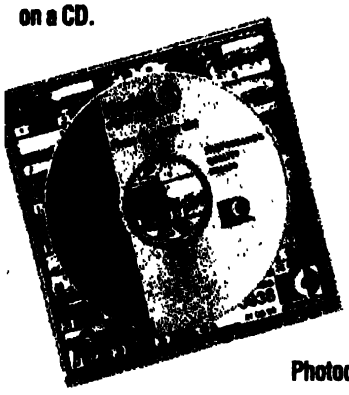
I would say that you are coping with the problem superbly. Your family friend's daughter is obviously very socially repressed, and so she is seeking to engage the attention of the only eligible male within her ambit. Don't be afraid of offending her, and make sure you are firm in your attitude and continue to maintain the upper hand. Don't chicken out of the situation, for there is no peace for the chicken-hearted. Act as though you are made of stone, and stubbornly resist her advances by not even letting them register in your reactions. Bring a friend along to the tuitions sometimes, or encourage other family members to be around. This will exasperate her. But her respect for you will go up as well, and sooner or later, she will tire of her wiles and fall into line.■

MIXED Bag

A CD-FUL OF MEMORIES

● Worried about those sepia-tinted prints that tug at your heart strings every time you flip through an old family album? For, each time you see them they seem to have faded just a little more?

Well, Kodak's latest technology promises to scan your photographs, digitise them and store them on a CD.



Photodisc (India) Private Limited along with Kodak India Limited has set up the country's first Photo CD Service Centre.

Kodak promises to scan a hundred images per CD and guarantees that they will be safe for the next hundred years! Scanning a strip of mounted slides or negatives cost Rs 60 per scan.

Now you can shoot standard 35mm film pictures and have them scanned onto Photo CD discs as 'digital negatives'. These can also be viewed on an ordinary television using the Kodak Photo CD player or retrieved for use on any PC supporting Mac OS or Windows.

The Photo CD technology can be used by almost anybody—professional photographers, printers and publishers; by those making a presentations; and by archaeological departments and museums.



Stamp of quality

A special postage stamp was released recently by the department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, Government of India, on the occasion of the completion of the centenary celebrations of the Godrej group. The stamp, available in a denomination of Rs 3, features the two pioneers, Ardeshir and Pirojsha Godrej; the growth of Godrej, making locks to launchers; and the Godrej Industrial township at Vikroli, Mumbai.

The stamp was released at Raj Bhavan, Mumbai, by President KR Narayanan. The chairman of the Godrej Group of Companies, S.P. Godrej said on this occasion: "Quality, service and reputation give a brand basic strength and reliability. But the values that lie behind and go beyond its manufacturing give the brand its charisma. It is increasingly being realised that well-run enlightened industries owe a responsibility not only to their companies but also to the country in which they have grown and prospered."

The function was presided over by the governor of Maharashtra, Dr P.C. Alexander, Sushma Swaraj, Union minister of communication, the chief minister of Maharashtra, Manohar Joshi and the deputy CM Gopinath Munde.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: For a quick dye job, use new m

That old sinking feeling

The *dooba dooba* trio comprising Mohit Chauhan, Atul Mittal and Kern Trivedi are far from sinking. In fact, going by their second video *Boondein* (some penchant for water) they are actually flying high. The Silk Route was in New Delhi recently performing live for an audience thirsting for more, and literally so.

When the audience went berserk



Keep Smiling

The Indian Dental Association (IDA) would like to ensure healthy smiles by launching a month-long (July 15 to August 15) 'Smiles for All—National Oral Health Programme'. Aimed at covering around 50 lakh school kids between the 6 to 16 age group in over 104 towns all over India, the campaign has sunk its teeth into five different facets—school dental check-up, school dental health education, teacher's training, healthy teeth contest and a war against chewing habits.

The healthy teeth contest will select state winners who will be adjudged at a final national competition scheduled to be held on Children's Day (November 14). There will be attractive prizes and trophies for schools and winners at various levels besides cash prizes and scholarships for national winners.

IDA's members are tutoring children to fight against the chewing habits of their parents—known for their addiction to *ghutka* and tobacco—as it has been known to cause oral cancer. A comprehensive dental health education programme for the students is being conducted by trained dental professionals using dental charts, audio-visual presentations and models to help prevent many dental problems (periodontal disease, caries, etc.) from occurring.

Colgate has joined forces with IDA in its endeavour to bring that sunshine of a smile on everyone's face.

ART FOR A SONG

● Art lovers have never had it so good. Thanks to the never-ending wrangling in the Lalit Kala Akademi, the country's premier Akademi for the promotion of the arts, monographs, reproductions and journals on art are going for almost half their price these days.

The Akademi has been put under the control of a retired Deputy Chief of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. And among the many firsts that Mr. Sivasubramanian, the administrator, has to his credit is putting them up for sale at almost half the price.

Monographs of Gajendranath Tagore, K.S. Kulkarni, Arpana Caur, S.H Raza, Ram Kumar and others, priced at over Rs 100, are being sold for Rs five!

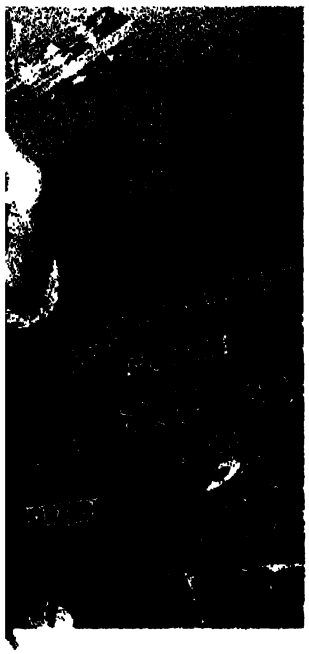
Similarly the going price for colour reproductions of works of artists such as Bikash Bhattacharjee, Jogen Chowdhury, K.G. Subramanyam and Ganesh Pyne originally reasonably priced between Rs 8 to Rs 30 are now going for an unbelievable Rs 2.

The same holds for rare and important journals and books such as *Indian Paintings* by Dr. B.N. Goswamy. Originally priced



at Rs 2,500, it is being sold for Rs 1,650, while a journal on Eastern Indian Bronzes, originally priced at Rs 450, is being sold for only Rs 151!

ra sticks for hair—in such colours as copper and pink



demanding a repeat of *dooba dooba* and the trio relented, it actually started raining. Some *dooba dooba* experience that was, as everyone broke into an impromptu rain dance. Before starting the song, Mohit had remarked that whenever they have sung *dooba dooba* on popular demand, it has always rained. "I hope it doesn't rain," he said looking at the overcast sky. But obviously, the rain gods weren't listening to him.

Despite the drenching, the audience seemed to be enjoying itself thoroughly. But then, as Mohit once said in a television interview, "Our music is very listener-friendly, kind of stress-relieving. It is the kind of music one would like to listen to again and again." Going by the listeners' response, one can't argue with that. But Calcutta fans needn't feel deprived as the group will perform in this city on August 22.

RASOI

The food column



Simply South

Jiggs Kalra on some of his favourite recipes from Kerala

For some inexplicable reason, this unique culinary stream of Kerala has remained largely ignored. We ourselves discovered the joys of the region a couple of years ago. It was love at first bite. We haven't stopped singing its praises since.

The following recipes, which were spectacularly successful at Festival of Malabar at The Kandahar, in The Oberoi Bombay, were perfected by Coconut Lagoon's Master Chef Amin Ali.

Mutton Stew

INGREDIENTS

- 16 ***Nalli*/Shanks of kid/lamb** (2" bone)
- 200g/7oz **Potatoes** (cut into 1/2" cubes)
- 30ml/7Tbs **Palm Oil**
- 8 ***Chotti Elaichi*/Green cardamom**
- 4 ***Lavang*/Cloves**
- 4 ***Tej Patta*/Bay Leaf**
- 2sticks ***Daal Chini*/Cinnamon (1")**
- 300 g/11oz **Onions** (slice)
- 10 g/1"piece **Ginger** (cut into juliennes)
- 8 **Green chillies** (seed and cut into juliennes)
- 24 **Curry leaves**
- 15g/2 ½tsp **Ginger paste** (strain)
- 15g/2 ½tsp **Garlic paste** (strain)
- **Salt**
- 480ml/2 cups **Coconut milk** (II extract)*
- 240ml/1 cup **Coconut milk** (I extract)*
- 1 5g/1/2tsp ***Chotti* *Elaichi*/Green cardamom powder**
- **A little *Kopra*/dessicated coconut for garnish**

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION TIME: 1:30 HOURS

COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

PREPARATION

- The Potatoes: Put in a pan full of water, sprinkle salt and boil until *a dente*, drain and keep aside.

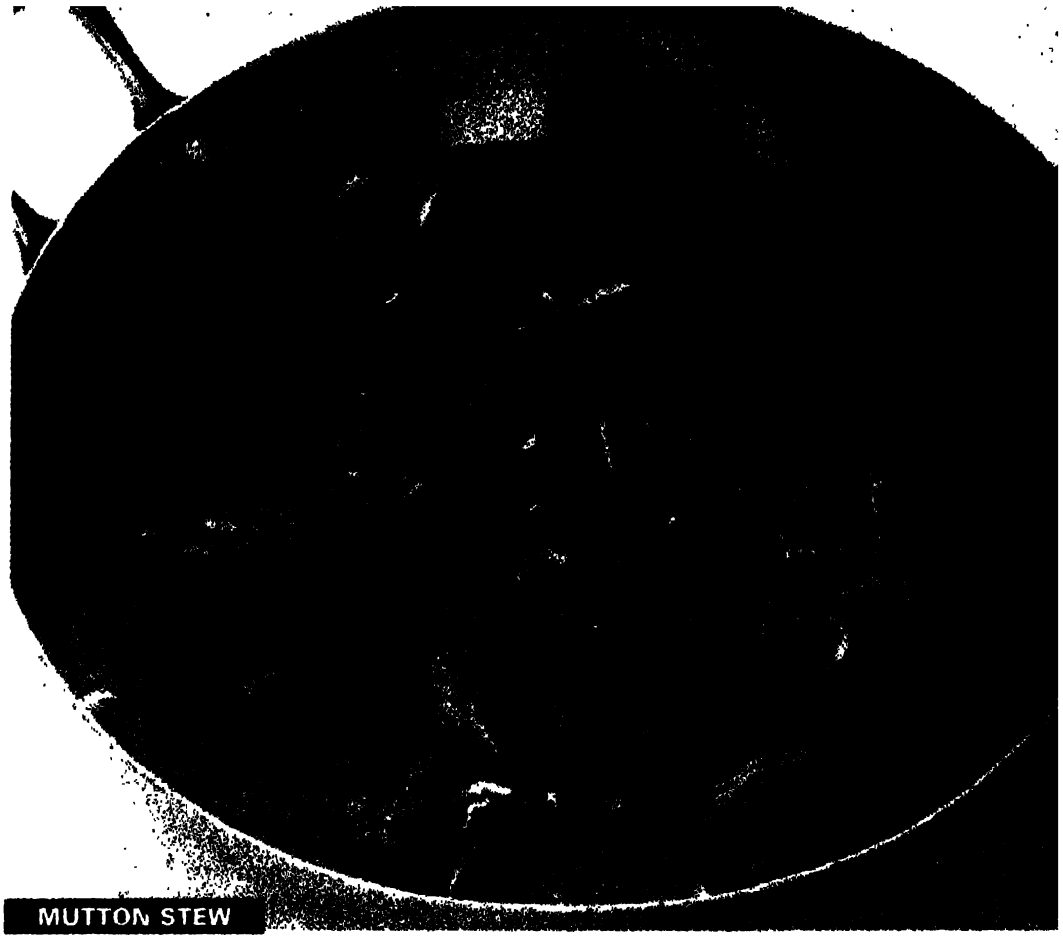
COOKING

- Heat oil in a *handi*/pan, add green cardamom, cloves, bay leaves and cinnamon, stir over medium heat until t cardamom begins to change colour. Then add onions, saute until translucent and glossy, add ginger, green chilies and half the curry leaves, stir for minute, add the ginger and garlic pastes, stir until te moisture evaporates. Now add the second extract of cocnut milk and 360 ml/1½cups of



KOZHI VARATHARCHATHU

water, bring to boil, reduce to low heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the meat is cooked. Uncover, add the remaining curry leaves and stir. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in the first extract of coconut milk, return *handi*/pan to heat, sprinkle cardamom powder, cover and simmer it until it begins to boil. Remove and adjust the seasoning.



MUTTON STEW

TO SERVE

Remove to a bowl, garnish with dessicated coconut and serve with Aapam or as an accompaniment.

*Remove the brown skin, grate 120g/4oz of the white meat , put in a blender, add lukewarm water (approx 120ml/1/2 cup) and pulse into a thin liquid through a fine mesh strainer. The strained liquid is called the 'First Milk' or the ' First Extract'. Yield: approx 180ml/3/4 cup.

For the 'Third Extract', put the residue in the blender and repeat the process. The third milk is even thinner and has less flavour. Yield: approx 120 ml/1/2 cup.

Kozhi Varatharchathu

INGREDIENTS

- 8 **Chicken breasts** (cut into 1 ½" *tikkas*)
- 30ml/2Tbs **Palm oil**
- 250 g/9oz **Onions** (chop)
- 15g/1½"piece **Ginger** (chop)
- 8 flakes **Garlic**
- 4 **Green chillies**(slit and seed)
- 24 **Curry leaves**
- 300g/11oz **Tomatoes** (chop)
- 21 g/7tsp ***Dhania*/Coriander powder**
- 9g/1Tbs **Red chillie powder**
- 3g/1Tsp ***Haldee*/Turmeric powder**
- **Salt**

THE *MASALA*

- 1/2 **Coconut**
- 10g/1"piece **Ginger**(roughly chop)
- 12 flakes **Garlic**
- 10g/5tsp ***Dhania*/Coriander leaves**
- 2g/1tsp ***Zeera*/Cumin seeds**
- 6 ***Chotti Elaichi*/Green cardamom**
- 4 ***Lavang*/Cloves**
- 4 **Whole dried red chillies**
- 2 sticks ***Daalchini*/Cinnamon** (1")
- 2 blades ***Jaavitri*/Mace**
- 2g/1/2tsp **Black peppercorns**
- 240 ml/1cup **Coconut milk** (II extract)

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES

PREPARATION

- The *Masala*: Heat a *tawa*/griddle and roast all the ingredients, except ginger and garlic separately over low heat until each emits a different aroma. Put all these ingredients, including ginger and garlic, in a blender, add 240 ml/1cup of water and make into a coarse paste. Remove to a bowl, add coconut milk, mix well and keep aside.

COOKING

Heat oil in a *kadhai*, add onions, saute over medium heat until light golden, add green chillies and half the curry leaves, stir for a few seconds,add tomatoes and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates. Add the chicken and the salt, increase to high heat, *bhunno*/stir-fry (to sear) for 3-4 minutes. Now add the *masala** , *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides, add 480 ml/2 cups of water, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat, add the remaining curry leaves and simmer until the chicken is cooked and the gravy is of medium thin consistency. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

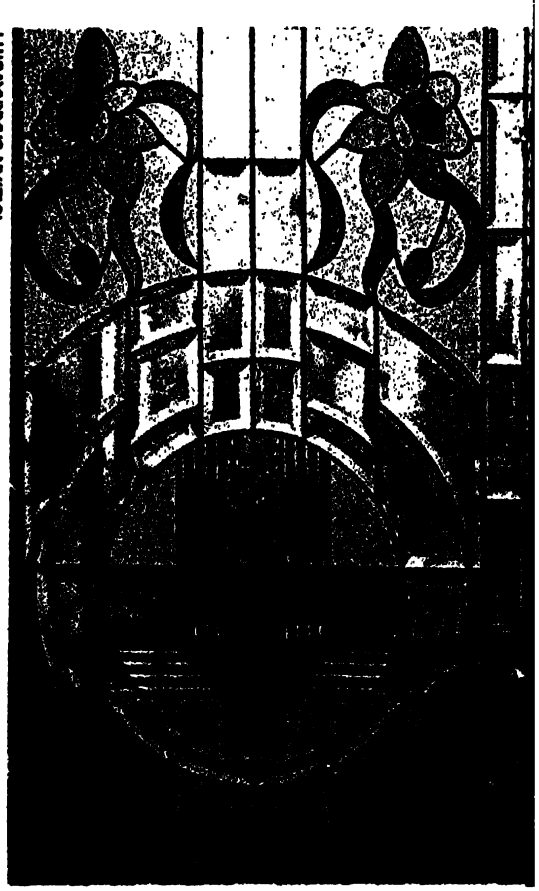
TO SERVE:

Remove to a bowl and serve with *Pathrie, Appam, Malabari Paratha* or steamed rice.■

DESIGN Corner

WINDOW TO THE WORLD

They can be both functional and beautiful, and also be the soul of your home. **Ghazala Wahab** reports



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

What would Rapunzel's fate have been if there was no window in her tower where she was incarcerated? It would probably have been a case of no window, no story. For, it was only because of that small opening in the wall that Rapunzel could let her hair down and the prince could climb up to rescue her from the vicious witch.

Clearly, windows have more uses than are apparent on the surface. Perhaps that's the reason why most love stories, irrespective of their climax, have a window. The design of the window may be important, but so is its strategic location in the house.

But that's not the only reason why one needs windows for any kind of building. There are plenty of scientific reasons in favour of windows. For example, they provide one with a window-view of the world, if you discount the sunlight and fresh air factor. If architects are to be believed, they also give a sense of space in cramped rooms. For others, they are a media, which brings the outside world inside.

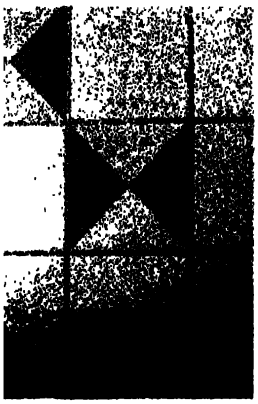
"For me, windows are the life of the house," says Archana Sultaniya, an interior designer with Premnath Associates in New Delhi. "They are important, not only for functional reasons but for aesthetic ones as well."

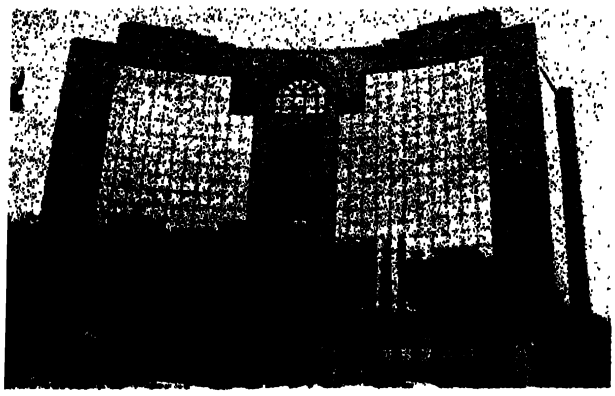
Over the years, functional reasons have been taken over by aesthetic ones. Apart from the obvious benefits, windows can completely change the way the house or the apartment looks. Says Anuradha Dhawan, an interior designer, "Each window has its individual cha acter and collectively they contribute to th design concept of the house." But design co cept aside, windows are among the primary co cerns of any architect. Whatever the dreame may dream, in most cases, the size and th design of a particular window is dictated by th compulsions of the building, its surrounding and also the budget of the client.

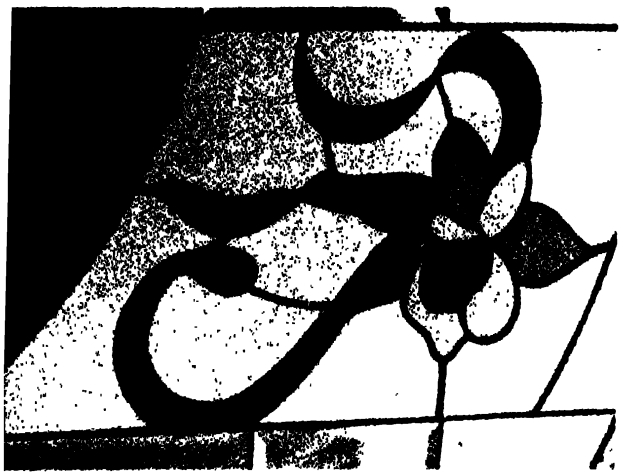
Some structures require fixed windov while some require openable windows. But i either case, access to the window, both from th outside and the inside, has to be determined. I case of openable windows, the size of the roo decides what kind of doors it should have. In smaller area, it makes sense to have slidin doors, or ones which open externally. There ar also vertically or horizontally sliding doors.

But that's jumping the gun. To start at th beginning, ordinary Indian homes trad tionally didn't have any windows because th houses used to be more or less open. Onl palaces and *havelis* had intricately carved wooc en windows on the higher floors. Rajasthar windows or *jharokhas* were carved in the shap of an umbrella with low seating inside wher the lady of the house could sit. Images c women with colourful *odhnis* perched on th window seat became part of Rajasthani foll lore.

WINDOW VIEW
Apart from the usefulness of windows in providing sunlight and fresh air, windows are important for aesthetic reasons, too







Jharokhas are still very popular but now they adorn walls rather than windows. People who want traditional houses opt for *jharokhas* as wall pieces or convert them into a small temple on the wall complete with images and *diyas*. This doesn't mean that since *jharokhas* have found their place on the walls, windows are left bereft.

In fact, contemporary houses have a vast choice. Depending upon the space, the view outside and individual purse strings, one can go for romantic bay windows or elegant French windows. Bay windows suit apartments which can do with as much space as they can manage apart from making room for a nice window seat inside the room. But these windows, like the French ones, demand a splendid view outside.

Even the most ordinary windows can be made to look exotic by giving special treatment to the glass or by simply altering the shape of the window slightly. For instance, narrow walls can look pretty with a couple of slim vertical windows. Among the popular glass techniques available in India are etching, both deep and surface; staining; colouring; and bubbling.

"Glass etching is most popular," says Lokesh Pathak, of Nangloi Glass in New Delhi. "Not only does it look very modern, it is affordable as against stained glass. Bubbling is another technique which is quite popular."

Etched or bubbled glass looks good as a partition glass in offices. In houses, a lot of people use it in their living room to demarcate the dining area.

A surface etched glass costs anything between Rs 75 to Rs 150 per square foot. Deep etched glass costs between Rs 200 to Rs 500 per square foot. Bubbling comes to Rs 30 per square foot. Of the lot, stained glass is the most expensive costing Rs 1,600 per square foot. A lot of people pass off coloured glass as stained glass. Since it is a cheaper option, it sells more than stained glass.

Vaastu Shastra, which has seen a revival of sorts in recent years, gives a lot of importance to windows. It believes that the position and size of the window can determine the energy level inside the house. A window which faces the east is considered good as it allows the morning sunlight in.

Sultaniya disagrees with *Vaastu* slightly. According to her, windows have to be logical to their surroundings. "For instance, in Delhi because of the tropical weather, one should ideally have windows in the south-west direction," she says. "It keeps the sunlight away in the morning which is ideal for summers while in winters you get all the sunshine in the late afternoon."

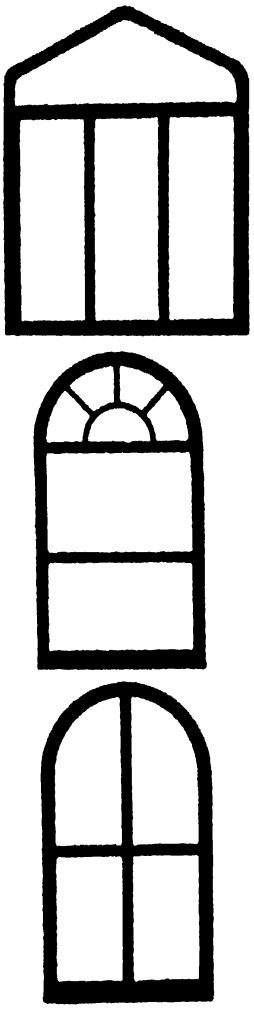
For people who just can't get enough of light and the beauty of a starlit night, windows can be moved to the ceiling, like a skylight. According to Dhawan, one can have fixed windows on the ceiling using glass blocks which are as strong as bricks, only more expensive. One glass block costs about Rs 180 as against a brick which comes for Rs 1.

The same technique can be applied to the front walls where one can then do without a window. Dhawan says that in the long run, this turns out to be cheaper. If you have a skylight or glass walls, then you have free supply of light and can save on power and on emulsions.

The concept of glass houses is yet to become popular but a few corporate buildings in this mould have come up recently. The idea is to capture as much of nature as possible because the emerging concrete jungles are taking people away from it. Besides, when people are investing their resources in windows, they are also compelled to do something about the view.

As Sultaniya says, "Even if you don't have lush gardens outside your beautiful window, you can put potted plants for aestheticism."

So, even if you can't feast your eyes on the Taj Mahal every day, the way Shah Jehan did, don't be disheartened. Just go right ahead and create your own room with a view. ■



WARM AND PRETTY
One can have different types of work done on glass windows like etching, staining, colouring and bubbling

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am an 18-year-old college student and would like to know the difference between a lip liner, a lip gloss and a lipstick. Can I apply all of them at once or a would a combination of anyone of them suffice?

ANURADHA SENGUPTA, CALCUTTA

A lip liner is usually a pencil and is used to outline or shape the lips. A lipstick is used to colour the lips and fill in the shape, it can also be used for lining the lips but more often than not smudges. A lip gloss is used to give shine to the lips and adds a shimmer to the lipstick. You can use a liner to outline the lips, lipstick to fill in the colour and gloss to give it that extra sheen.

I am a 28-year-old woman with an oily skin. Do I use a moisturiser? Are nourishing creams or moisturising lotions necessary for oily skins?

GAYATRI DEY, CALCUTTA

Definitely not! If you have an oily skin, for heavens sake, be sensible and avoid moisturisers totally as this will only make the skin look greasy. Invest in an oil-free moisturiser if you must. Once summer's over, you could start to use a light moisturiser with the right oil balance. Use cold rose wate and milk to cleanse your face. Follow a regular cleansing routine.

I am a 21-year-old student and had sometime back used a reputed brand of fairness cream to lighten my skin colour. Now my facial skin has developed white leucodermic patches. Please help me get rid of them.

CHANDRIMA BISWAS, ASANSOL

I fail to understand this maniacal need to have fair skin and the means adopted to achieve the same even at the price of damaging one's god-gifted skin. Bleaches, chemical-based fairness lotions promising silky smooth fair skins overnight are no doubt misleading but then, I do expect you to be more cautious now than ever. Massage your face with a paste of honey, lemon and cucumber juice. Leave this concoction on for five minutes and then wash off. This is to be done daily for at least 10 days for best results. I'd suggest that you start to believe in the philosophy that a healthy looking complexion is a beautiful one, no matter what the colour maybe. Use beauty products with natural extracts of honey, almonds, avocados, etc.

Due to regular use, my leather watch strap has left a deep imprint. This area feels very itchy. How do I get rid of the itchiness caused by this ugly mark?

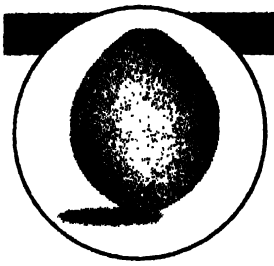
SHANTANU ROY, BARASAT

Change your watch strap as you may be allergic to the leather. Make a paste of neem leaves, honey, fuller's earth, a tsp of alum powder and apply it daily on the affected area. Leave it on for about 20 minutes and then wash off. This will, in due course, remove the mark. To relieve itchiness, you can apply coconut oil.

I am a 13-year-old girl and though I love wearing nail polish, I am unable to apply an even coat. I often end up smudging my polish or even chipping them. What is the right way to paint one's nails?

NOYONIKA BASU, CALCUTTA

TO GET RID OF CELLULITE



Massage daily at night in firm strokes, using equal quantities of almond oil, coconut oil and vitamin E oil

Always shake the bottle before use and check to see that the consistency isn't too thick when applying the first coat. Allow the first coat to dry and then, and only then, should you apply the second coat. When applying nail polish, start from the sides and then gradute to the centre of the nail. Always remember to remove nail polish and don't wait for it to peel and chip. Not only does chipped polish look disgusting, polish if allowed to remain on nails for very long, could leave a yellow stain on your nails. This is especially true in darker shades.

I am a 45-year-old woman suffering from asthma. Of late, I've gained immense weight and would seriously like to combat my weight problem. Please advise me on the type of diet and exercise routine that I must follow.

UNJAN SHARMA, DURGAPUR

You can go for long walks out in the open and take in the fresh air. Yoga is an excellent way of exercising your tired muscles and also helps control your breathing. Weight gain can be fatal to a person afflicted with asthma. Strenuous exercises will only leave you breathless. Eat light, avoid heavy fried food. Include in your diet, salads and fruits. Take plenty of fresh fruit juices and vegetable soups.

I am a 23-year-old woman and have a dry, patchy, scaly skin which at times comes off in flakes. What beauty regimen do I follow?

MADHU JAIN, JAMSHEDPUR

Massage face with honey to which you have added a tsp of almond oil. To avoid flakiness, use a natural scrub to exfoliate dead skin and slough off dead cells. You can make a home-made scrub by mixing together rice powder, oatmeal, almond powder, a tsp of fresh cream and juice of one lemon. Regular skin care must be made part of one's daily routine and there are no one day miraculous cures. Just be sincere and serious about your skin care routine and you will soon see the results. A high-protein diet, with the inclusion of lean meat, dairy products, fresh fruits and vegetables as well as dry fruits will be most beneficial. Drink at least eight glasses of water a day for proper lubrication. Apply fuller's earth face pack once a week to keep the skin well-toned.

TO HAVE SHINY WHITE TEETH

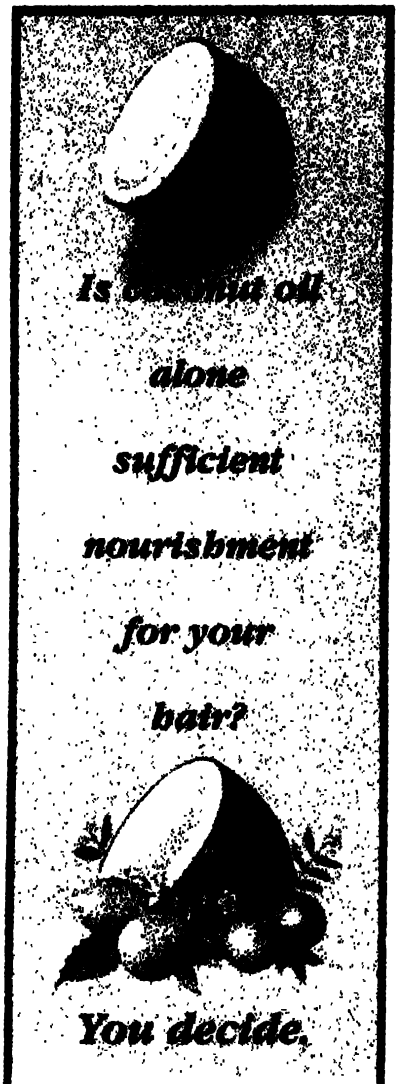


Brush with soda bicarb, salt and charcoal ash. Use scrub made from lemon peel and orange rind

I am a 23-year-old woman and have dark lines and folds on the nape of my neck. Is there a natural remedy to get rid of these unsightly lines?

ANJANA DUTT, CALCUTTA

Take coconut oil and almond oil and massage the area gently in upward strokes daily for two weeks after which you can reduce it to about twice a week. After massaging, apply the following neck mask — make a paste of fuller's earth, potato juice, lemon juice almonds and one egg. Leave on till dry and wash off with cold milk and then water. This is to be done thrice a week for two months for best results. Just as the rest of the body requires exercise, so does the neck. Exercise the neck by stretching it from side to side. Also, rotate your head slowly and then bend backwards and forwards. Be very careful about what you eat and take a high protein, high fibre diet with plenty of water and fresh fruit juices. ■



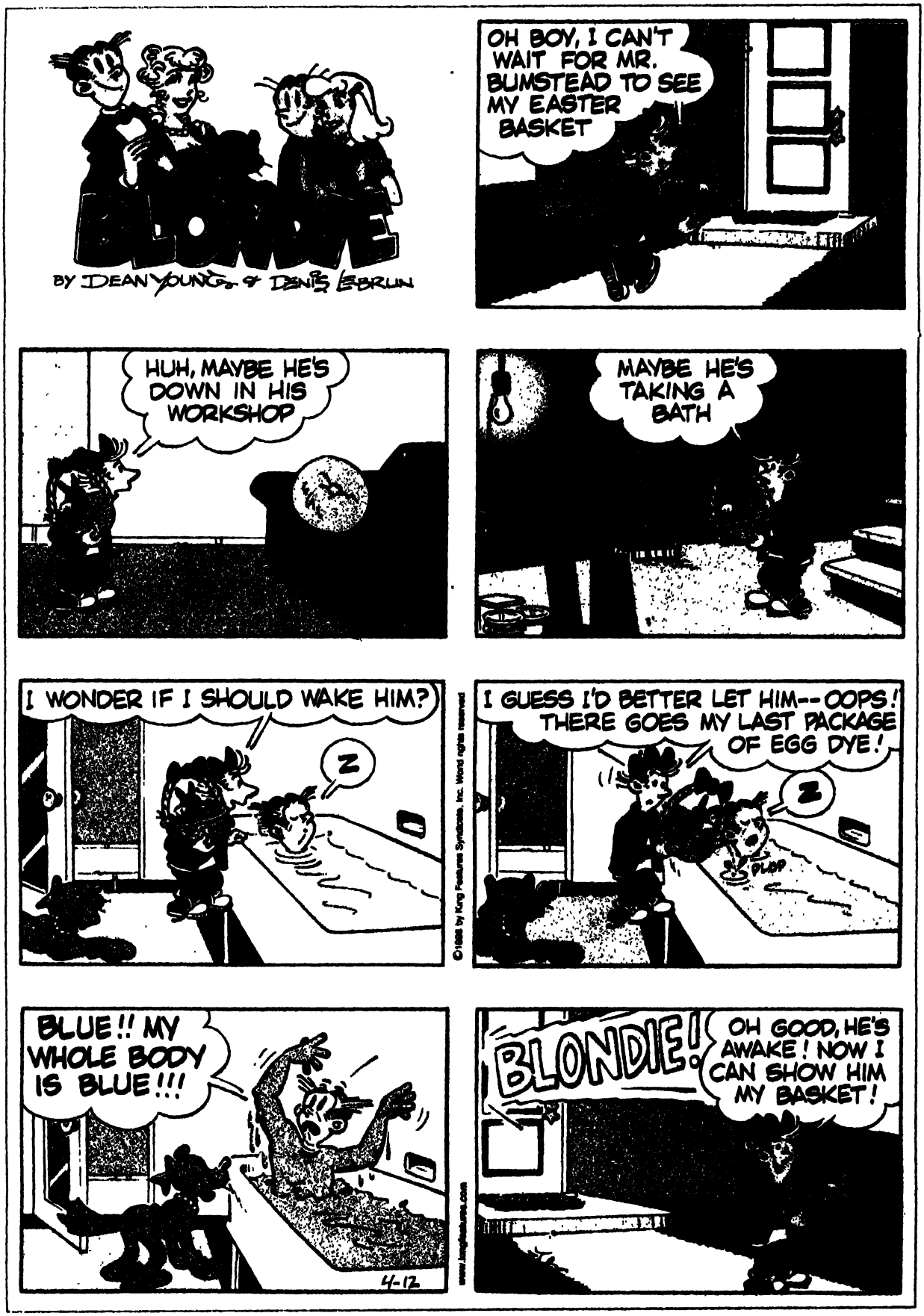
Given today's pollution and stress, your hair needs extra nourishment which coconut oil alone cannot provide. That's why more and more women are switching to Vatika Hair Oil Because it has coconut oil enriched with Henna, Amla and Lemon to keep your hair healthy and problem-free.



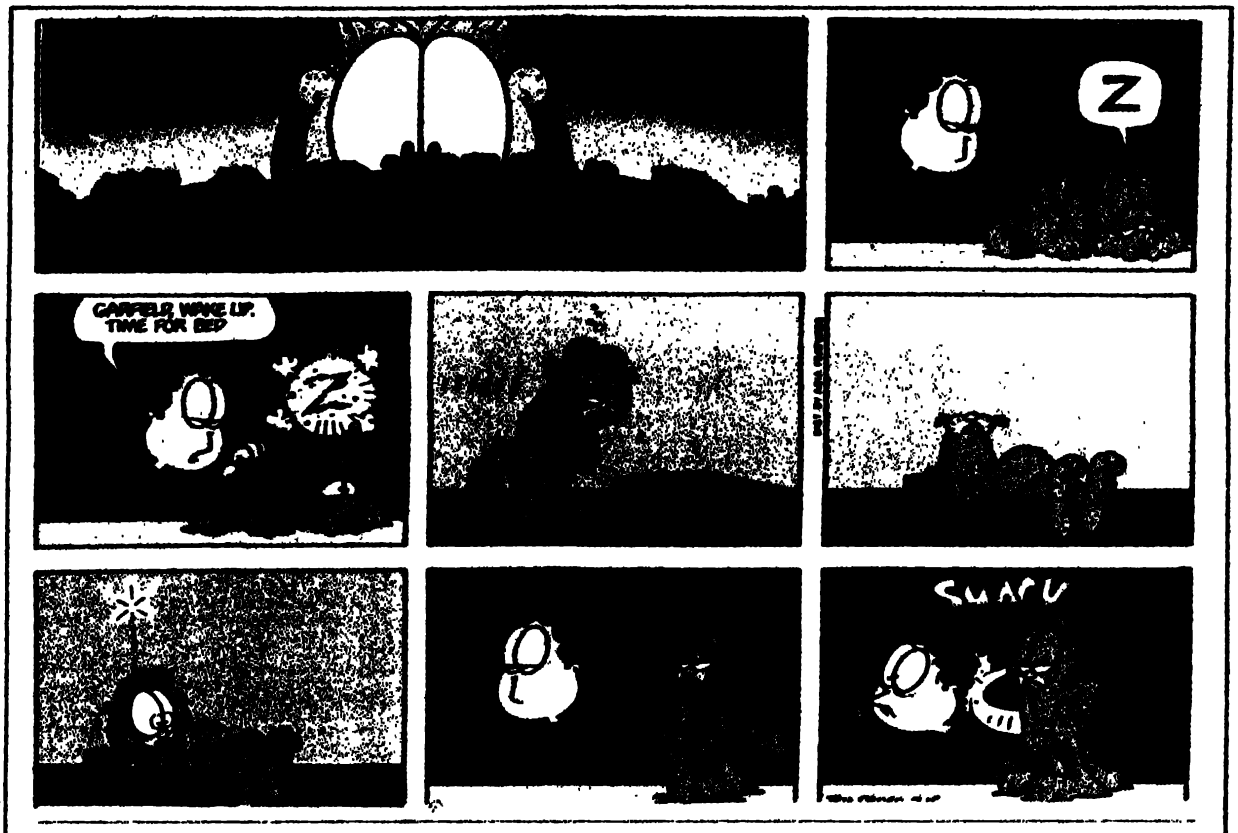
Mail your response to the above question to Vatika Hair Oil P O Box 4939 Safdarjung Enclave New Delhi 29 100 Early Birds will get a surprise gift

Mudra DIL 1233

BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC 744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC 202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1405	daily	9W-512	2150	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 965	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-965	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W 901	0815	daily
9W 902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1305	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	1015	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1405	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2150	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD 213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	1015	3, 5	9W-622	1330	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	9W-201	0935	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0815	2, 3, 7
KB 105	1010	4			

IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
CHENNAI					
BG-098	0250	2, 5	BG-097	1210	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-082	0815	1	BG-081	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-081	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1659	3
BG-084	1645	2	BG-083	1545	2
BG-088	2105	daily	BG-085	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0840	2, 6
			KB-105	0825	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1595	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	9-45	2312
2305	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	2306
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	10-15	3004
2381	8-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun. Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-50	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.	10-00	2306
2307	20-50	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	8-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-15	2020
3073	22-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-05	3074
3045	22-00	Gauhati Sealdah Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	09-50	3046
3049	22-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-05	3050
3047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-35	3048
3069	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3070
3037	8-45	Utkal Express via Main Line	16-50	3038
3053	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	8-25	3054
3057	19-35	Amritsar Express	15-00	3058
3055	21-00	Kalinga Express	11-00	3056
3071	14-00	Malda (Rampur) Express	6-00	3072
3067	9-35	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	3068
3077	9-15	Black Diamond Express	23-55	3078
3059	17-10	Coalfield Express	10-00	3060
3063	21-00	Asansol Express	6-35	3064
3065	21-00	Danapur Express	6-00	3066
3071	20-00	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3075	8-45	Saktikshan Express	16-45	3076
3079	8-45	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3080
1163	10-00	Chanchal (Gaushar) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-05	1164
3085	08-00	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-35	3086
3047	8-45	Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	6-30	3048
1167	21-00	Chambal (Agra Cant.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-05	1168

Sealdah

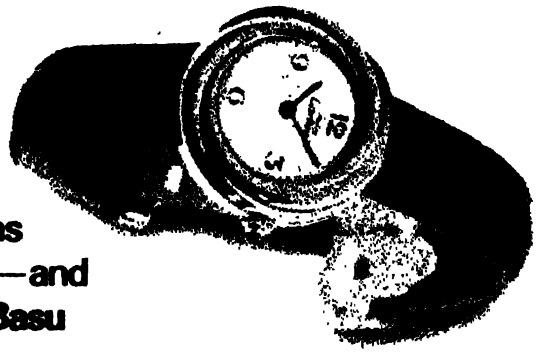
Time	Dn
Tawde-Toofan Express	
Darjeeling Mail	
Lal Quila Express via Main Line	
Kanchenjunga Express	
Bihar Express	
Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	
Kalinga Express	
Jammu-Tawi Express	
Mughal Sarai Express via Slig Loop	
Shaktipunj (Jabalpur) Express	
Ganga Sagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	8-55	6004
6005	19-00	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-30	6006
2809	13-35	Ghatpati (Sunday) Express	15-30	2810
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-05	2022
6004	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	6003
6009	19-45	Howrah Express via Nagpur	16-50	6010
2841	14-00	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	22-30	2842
2703	1-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	08-20	2704
6013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-40	6014
6011	6-00	Ispat (Kamalapur) Express	21-35	6012
6015	20-10	Sambalpur-Rajgangpur Express	9-00	6016
6017	23-55	Howrah Hatia Express	8-40	6018
6007	23-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	7-00	6008
6009	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	8-55	6010
2021	6-15	Dhanbad (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-05	2022
6045	16-10	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-30	6046
6017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12-05	6018
6079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	6080
1089	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday; Arr.: Sunday	6-15	1090
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-00	2422
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-00	2422
6022	09-00	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	05-30	6022
6021	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	10-45	6021
5823	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5823
5824	05-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	05-30	5824
6304	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr: Friday & Monday	13-45	6303
5828	05-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	05-30	5828
5825	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	10-45	5825
6305	22-35	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6303

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2205545-54 for in-coming trains; 2205535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2205455-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1361 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train number enquiry at Sealdah: 35505507.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2205455 (manual enquiry).

THE Best

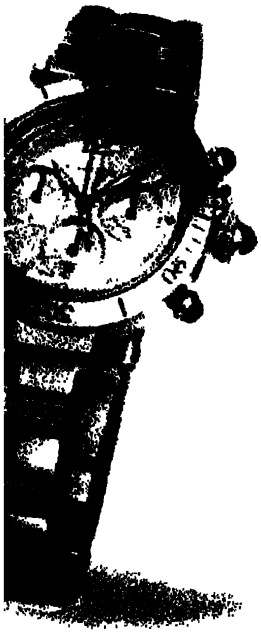


The watch market in India has something for every taste—and every budget, says **Sudipta Basu**

KEEPING TIME

WATCH OUT

The Indian has a bewildering variety of watches to choose from what with the influx of foreign brands



Time pieces have enjoyed a place of pride in most households over the years. Ornate *objets d'art* are either found nestled between family pictures on the mantle or attain a position of dignity on a mahogany study table.

On the human wrist though, from its more conservative function of a simple mechanical time-keeper, today the wrist watch has graduated to become a monitor of hi-fashion. Designer brands like Chopard, Omega and Piaget dot the larger market of domestic brands like HMT, Bentex and Titan.

As fashion critic Meher Castelino says: "The wrist watch is no longer a matter of utility. So much so, that it is considered a status symbol to give away the priciest of brands as dowry to the bridegroom."

Anna Bredmeyer, of Beautiful Boulevard, a lifestyle store in Mumbai, feels that this consumer item, as a fashion accessory, has been gaining ground in recent times with the steady influx of foreign brands. "And yet, this remains primarily an object of practical necessity with most people", she says.

The Beautiful Boulevard stocks Omega, priced between Rs 95,000 to Rs 3 lakhs. Breguet is priced between Rs 2 lakhs and 14 lakhs, the Concorde at Rs 50,000 and 9 lakhs whereas the Hermes at Rs 1.24 lakhs and 1.97 lakhs. "The Indian is happy to buy his choice of imported brands for considerably less than what he would pay abroad," Bradmeyer adds.

A spokesperson for Christian Dior says that watches of this brand are marketed as luxury items, rather than time pieces. "They form an ensemble to go with luxury items like bags and perfumes that are produced by the design house." The popular brands of the watch are the La Parisian model, a gold-plated watch that comes with straps in velvet, leather, satin, silk, lace and crocodile skin. The watches are priced between Rs 20,000-30,000.

Bagheera, priced between Rs 30,000 and 45,000 is gold-plated in convex style, and is designed as a bracelet in the shape of cat's claws. Miss Dior, which comes in matte and polish finish is priced between Rs 30,000 and 40,000. Dior's Heur Sublime is a diamond-studded design and is priced at Rs 7 lakhs.

Cartier watches are available at the Cartier Boutique at Oberoi, Mumbai and Ravissant, Delhi. The popular brands are the white dial with Arabic numerals, Vermeil Trinity watch, priced at Rs 58,000, the Limited Edition Watch

POOJA BHATT

Actress

I would rather wear one that would assure me the correct time. I don't wear a watch normally, but I swear by my Tiffany clock that has the most infuriating chime



ANNA BREDMEYER

Model

A wrist watch for me is a practical necessity. I wear an Omega these days. But over the years, I have also built up a small collection of Rado, Gucci, Rapree and Pierre Cardin

which costs Rs 3,50,000 and the New Pasha de Cartier Chronograph at Rs 2,34,000.

The popular designs in Piaget are Dancer, a slim bracelet watch with hard-stone dials made out of Lapis lazuli, Onyx or mother of pearl, priced between a lakh and 14 lakh, and the Piaget Polo, a chunky watch in white or yellow gold with diamonds studded within, priced between 2.5 lakh and 10 lakh.

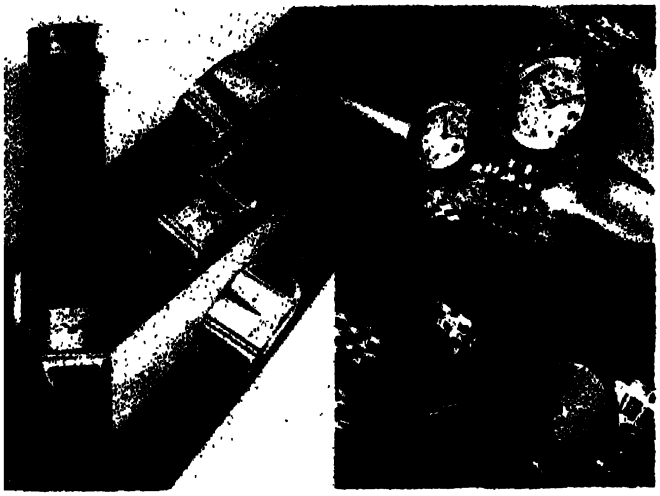
Chopard has the Happy Sport and the Happy Diamond for men and women, priced between Rs 85,000 and 10 lakh, whereas the Mille Miglia is priced between Rs 60,000 and 1 lakh. Vacheron is one of the oldest manufacturers for the top end of the market and its most popular design is the Overseas, a sporty stainless steel watch priced at about Rs 9 lakh.

homes of India," says Welling.

The designs in the mechanical watch variety like Janta, Sona and Kohinoor, priced at around Rs 400 are the flagship models. Tipped higher than this are Kanchan and Rajat priced between Rs 900 and 2,500. The quartz watches like Swarna, Lalit and Sangam are priced at Rs 500 and the jewellery brands like Utsav and Elegance for women at Rs 19,000.



Titan launched their watches in 1987 "when the reigning designs were bulky and non-stylish", says C.K. Venkataraman, marketing controller, Titan. The initial range of 150 designs have now burgeoned to about 800. The watches are priced between Rs 350 and 7,500, and its jewellery brand, Tanishq, sells between Rs 12,000 and Rs 75,000. Titan uses materials like steel and brass while Tanishq uses only precious metals and gems.



Bentex watches have been assembled — with imported materials — in the country from 1943. It appeals to a market of gold-plated watches. "These designs are aimed at people who like fashion and are destined to withstand the march of time by becoming tomorrow's classics," says brand manager Ivana Perovic. "The watches are also exported to Hong Kong, the Middle East and eastern Europe." The prices range between Rs 1,200 and Rs 5,500.

Whew, that's a long way from a utility-driven simple dial on a leather strap. As subtlety and simplicity make fashion statements, the wrist watch, among other accessories, is being rediscovered again and again.

Meanwhile, for the larger masses in the country, the home brands of HMT, Titan and Bentex have been dominating the scenario. C.K. Welling, general manager, HMT watches, maintains that they have over 9 million watches in the market and between the mechanical and quartz variety, HMT graces over 3 million wrists in the country. "The hand-wound watches are particulary eco-friendly and have consistently done well in the rural and semi-urban

FASHION TIME
The watch is no longer an utility item. It has become a status symbol for those who wouldn't mind spending a few lakhs on designer brands



MEGHANA REDDY

Veejay, Channel [V]

These days, I wear a strange looking nondescript kind of watch with a steel strap. I own a Gucci and an Omega that was gifted to me by Cindy Crawford. Delicate watches in gold and diamonds do not go with my personality. If I were to wear an evening gown, I'd still wear a chunky wrist watch and sneakers to go with it



MY PERSONAL *Style*

DOUBLE ROLE

Dancer Shovana Narayan wears two different hats as a hostess

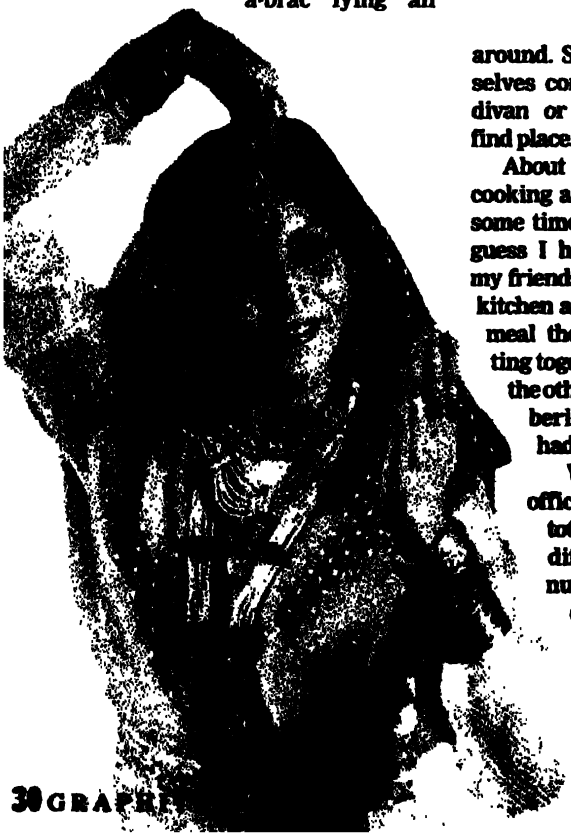


EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY

When my friends come over, they too come into the kitchen and put together a snack or meal by themselves. And when we are sitting together, it is real fun

It is as two different persons that I play the role of a hostess. One is as me, myself, as Shovana Narayan, and the other as the wife of the Austrian Ambassador. And believe me, the two are just the exact opposites.

At my house in Pandara road, it is a totally informal affair. I have loads of friends who just drop in, whenever they feel like and have whatever there is in the kitchen. My house then is in quite a state, with books and magazines and other bric-a-brac lying all around. So my friends just make themselves comfortable on the floor or the divan or the couch, wherever they can find place.



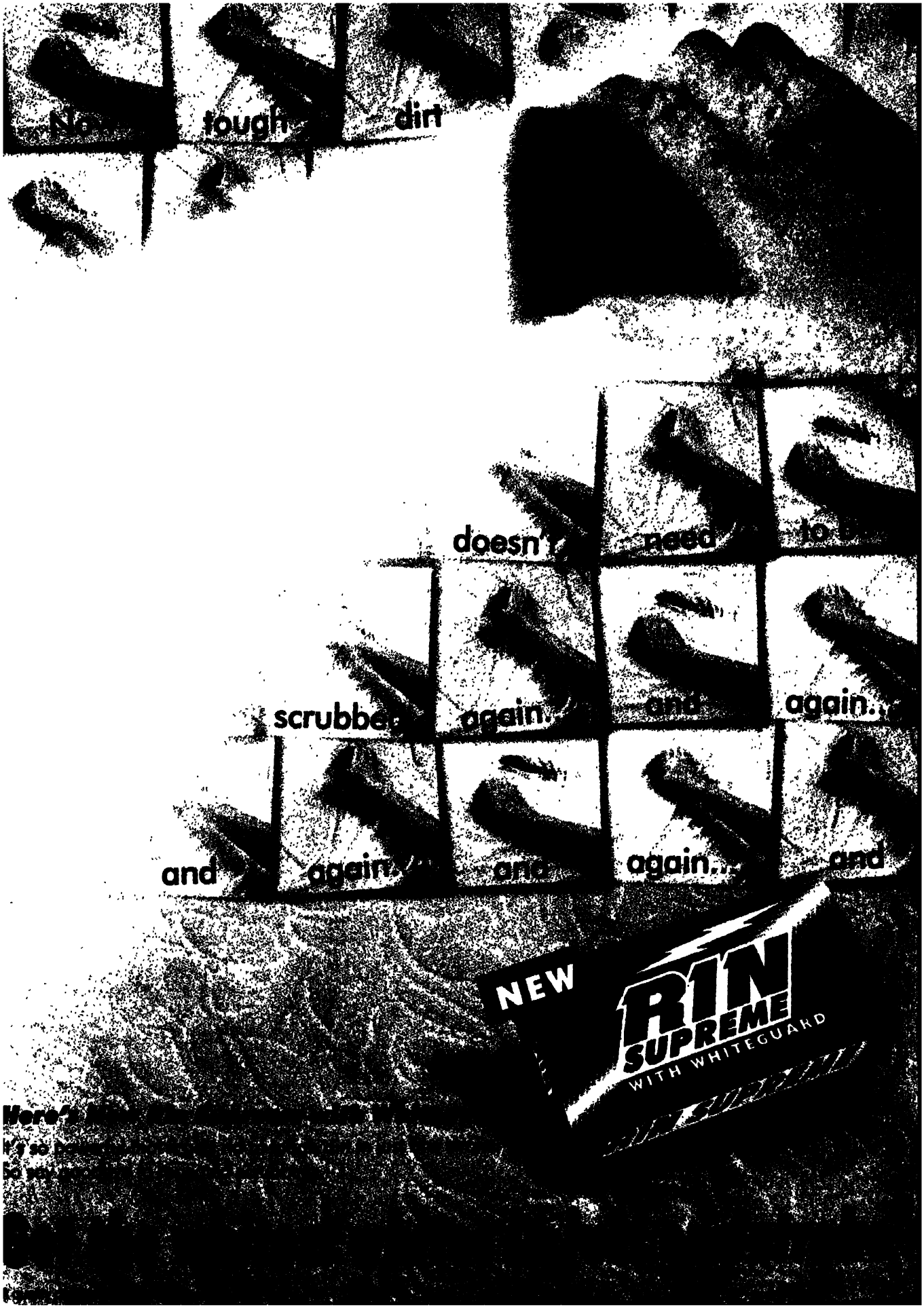
About 10-15 years ago, I used to enjoy cooking and would actually spend quite some time in the kitchen. But of late, I guess I have become a bit lazy. So when my friends come over, they too get into the kitchen and put together a snack or a meal themselves. And when we are sitting together, it is real fun. Someone or the other is telling a joke or is remembering the funny adventures we had.

When I slip into my shoes as an official hostess, however, it is a totally different role and a totally different me. There are these numerous parties for umpteen occasions that Herbert (my husband) has to throw for the diplomats and others. So everything from the guest list to the decor to the menu has to be planned in advance as most of these are highly formal affairs and are generally sit-down dinners. These would be unheard of in my Pandara road house where buffets are the norm.

I do most of the planning and supervising myself. This means that right from deciding in which corner the flowers are to be put to or how the dishes are to be cooked is overseen by me. Even the guest list is something that needs to be worked out. For instance, we had a waltz party recently and since not everyone can or likes to waltz, there was only a limited circle of people that were invited. And that left a lot of my friends out, who were very angry and upset with me!

Even though we love informal gatherings, Herbert and I together plan the parties. So even if it is a formal sit-down dinner, there is a lot of warmth and eagerness in it.

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CAPTIVATING CHARM

Thank you for the cover story on Supriya Chowdhury ('Mother Act', June 28). Though she has had more than her share of controversies (many of these, no doubt, scarring her public image somewhat), it would not be unfair to say that she has bestowed upon Tollywood, glamour and talent. Going by the latest photographs of Supriya (not, of course, the ones from the TV serial *Janani*, where she looks too old to be true) it seems that even age cannot take away much of that allure.

SHRABANI MUKHERJEE, CALCUTTA

Kamal Sidhu, Komal and now Helen Brodie has very little to do with their skills as VJs and more with their 'phoren' tags.

Rahul Bannerjee, Calcutta

Helen Brodie has come as a whiff of fresh air into the Indian modelling scenario. The *Janam Samjha Karo* video was especially made memorable due to her and Milind Soman's presence.

A. Guha, Calcutta

MOM'S THE WORD

Supriya Chowdhury's disarming honesty, especially when it comes to her love affair with Uttam Kumar, comes as quite a pleasant surprise Although, as the article says, there is no trace of fatigue in Supriya's visage, she should seriously refrain from acting in melodramatic and loud soap operas and focus more on films.

A.Dutta, Calcutta

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Why are we Indians so mesmerised by any pretty young thing who can speak English with a twang ? ('Legal Alien', June 28) The astounding success which has greeted VJs and models such as Sophia Haque,

COVER PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY RITU KUMAR

graphiti ★ 9 August 1998

10 MASQUERADE A peek into the life of a PR person **13** SMALL TALK Love in the twilight zone **14** SURVIVAL STRATEGIES **18** RASOI **20** OUT OF THE CLOSET Rina Dhaka shows off her designer wardrobe **22** BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY **26** TIME TABLE **28** THE BEST Rainwear options get more trendy with every passing year **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE Laila Rouass' individuality shows through in her home

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NOT JUST PRETTY FACES
Mini Menon and Divya Chauhan are preparing themselves for careers in journalism and export business respectively and feel there's more to life than just a crown

"You should do something that you are passionate about; not just something that comes your way"

were fascinated by my array of exotic Indian accessories, like *bindis* and *parandis*. Exporting handicrafts and garments to the region made good business sense," Divya gushes.

The prevailing slump in the south Asian markets worries her but then if business doesn't look up then she can always return to the arc lights.

The first time you see aspirants of beauty crowns they're gauche and invariably mouthing inanities on causes that they allegedly hold close to their adolescent hearts. With breathless anticipation they aspire to a title that is sure to take them places. A *mantra* for instant celebrity, the crown, they feel, is guaranteed to transport them from their average middle class lives to a world they often dream of.

After a year of donning the crown they re-emerge. This time as sophisticated, well-heeled and sometimes hard-nosed women with a sharp eye for the main chance.

Then you see them everywhere. Channel surf and you're likely to catch Nafisa Joseph, Miss India Universe 1997, on *MTV House Full* with the latest hits from Bollywood. Or she might be on *MTV & Smirnoff Megamix* playing the hottest dance videos from India and abroad. Manpreet Brar, Miss India Universe 1995, was for long on Channel V and its *Hot Seat*. Currently she's sashying down the catwalks of London and Paris.

Switch to TVI and you're likely to get your daily fix of the headlines read by Mini Menon, Miss India Asia Pacific 1996. She brings a touch of glamour to the antiseptic task of delivering the top headlines of the day.

And, of course, you see them on celluloid. Juhi Chawla, Sushmita Sen, Aishwariya Rai, Pooja Batra, Sangeeta Bijlani, Sonu Walia ... the list gets longer each year. They're also on the small screen, on the ramp, commanding five figure fees for an hour's show and on the covers of glossy magazines. They pepper newspaper columns with some more breathless gems — their favourite restaurants, holiday destinations and, of course, how they keep fit.

Fame and money have come to beauty queens of the 90s very early in life. Says Nafisa Joseph, "The adulation and respect that people shower you with is certain to give you a high. The title appears to bless you with a power that can melt a stone."

Ruchi Malhotra, Miss India Asia Pacific 1995 and first runner up the Miss Asia Pacific pageant, couldn't agree more, "The recognition and media attention goes through the roof and you can expect an upward-moving



career graph."

Titles become their passports to fame, fortune, celebrity friends and sometimes even romance. Says Ruchi, "A world of opportunities is thrown open while the glare of the public eye turns on us. However, the titles bring with them huge responsibilities."

Responsibilities? And one thought it was all about prize money, publicity and travelling overseas. "When we represent the country on an international platform we have to play down our individuality and play up the country," explains Divya Chauhan.

But for some, a pageant is a digression from their chosen careers and is just a means to quell their craving for "adventure". Mini Menon is your cerebral beauty who entered the contest "by default and the desire to do something really wild." Even as she was in the midst of studying for a Masters degree in Communication Studies she found herself donning the Miss India Asia Pacific crown in 1996. "I found that journalism is all about communications, just like the pageant," she explains.

Modelling wasn't what she had in mind for herself. Instead her sights were set on a degree in journalism. "I couldn't be bothered about keeping an eye on my vital statistics or my face all my life. You should always do something that you are passionate about and not something that just happens to come your way," she says.

Soon after earning her degree, Mini landed herself a job as script-writer at TVI. Currently she's senior assistant producer with the channel, a job that is her "greatest high".

If modelling wasn't Mini's idea of a career, Nafisa Joseph always knew that there could be no other profession for her. She'd been modelling in her home town, Bangalore, since she was 12 years old and she stoically stayed away from the contest till she was "absolutely certain that I wanted to participate."

Eventually it was curiosity about the noise and hype surrounding the contest that compelled her to give it a shot. "I thrive on competition and challenges,

At the international platform when you don't live up to your own expectation or the media hype, it crushes you

this was an ideal platform for me," she says.

Prasad Bidappa, choreographer and fashion consultant, took her under his wing "He groomed me by including me in every show" The contest also gave her a chance to work with a number of professionals in the glamour world.

Ruchi Malhotra, for her part, entered the Miss India contest because "as an individual I wanted to make a difference." She needed a platform on which she could move forward. "I believe that the pageant was a platform that was most appropriate at that time. I was already an established press and ramp model around then," she says.

For Priti Sardana *nee* Mankotia, Miss India World 1995, the crown was an ego massage, something that boosted her self-esteem. However, it wasn't solely responsible for her decision to take to the catwalk. All through her growing years in sleepy Meerut she'd dreamt of sashaying down the ramp.

But making inroads into the modelling scene wasn't easy primarily because she didn't have any "contacts" in Delhi. "However, the title proved to be a stepping stone into the glamour world," she admits.

At the Miss World pageant she was short-listed amongst the top 15 contestants and once back home, she was a hot favourite for shows. "That's when I went all out to achieve my life's ambition — to become a model." You saw her in *Cosmopolitan*, *Elite*, *Femina* (obviously) and doing as many as three shows a day.

And life settled down into a pattern. Every choreographer seemed to want a beauty queen in his shows. "As a matter of fact they sell all their shows tomtoming the fact title holders are in it," says Priti.

The crown inadvertently bailed out Mini as well not by launching her on the ramp but by giving her the confidence to face the camera. "It made me outgoing. Before winning the title I was the original introvert," she says.

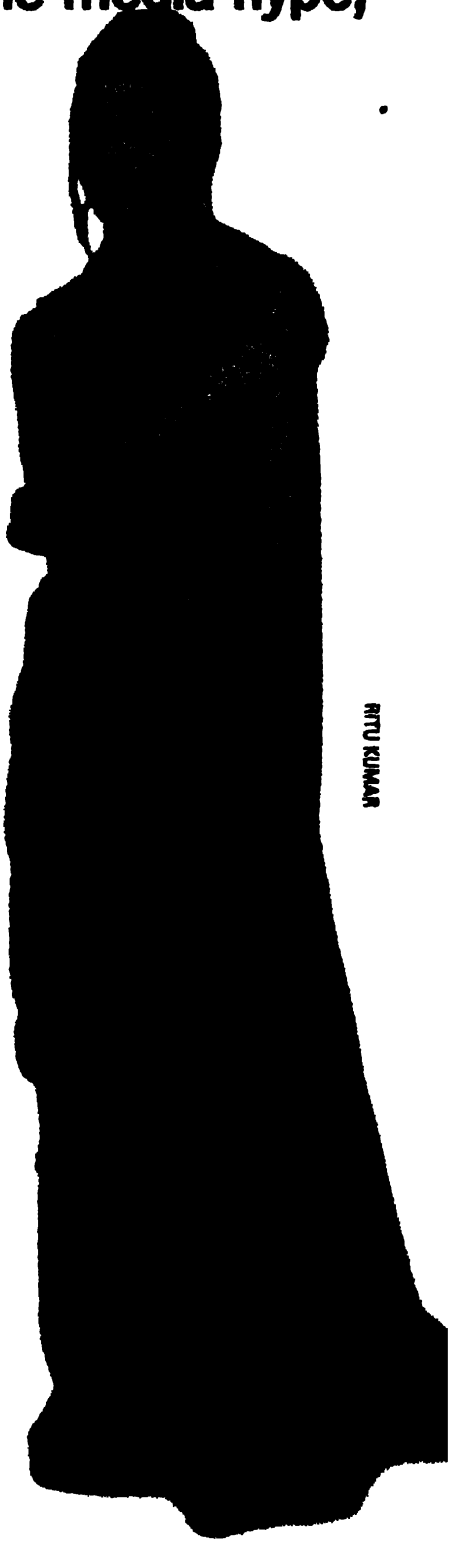
Divya Chauhan is discovering too that the crown comes in handy. For one, it gets you three times the money per fashion show that you might have earned without it. Besides, people tend to trust you implicitly. "It's easy to establish a rapport with my business acquaintances overseas. Back home the government officials I approach for certificates and licenses are very helpful as well," she says.

But all good things come with strings attached and a price that must be paid. A beauty pageant is all about being shocked, like Nafisa was, by the rampant racism in the western word. At the simplistic level it's about dealing with lost baggage, and a "disastrous evening gown and Donald Trump, who is a sleaze, and the disappointment of finishing seventh at the international level," says Nafisa.

Coping with disappointment is part of the drill. "At the international platform when you don't live up to your own expectations or the media hype it crushes you," agrees Mini Menon.

Part of the package is arriving in strange cities to very adverse conditions; living under very different terms and conditions and most often very far from home.

The hard-core glamour industry appears to leave the nymphets cold and disillusioned. "For all the hype associated with it, the industry is very unprofessional and disorganised.



RITU KUMAR



RITU KUMAR

WINNER TAKES IT ALL
Sandhya Chib Jacob was Miss India Universe '96 and finished sixth at the Las Vegas pageant. She also won the Miss India Worldwide crown

Frankly, it's quite difficult to trust anyone," says Divya Chauhan firmly.

The crown may give them a title that lasts a lifetime, but it tends to classify them into a very narrow slot.

Says Ruchi, "The dark side is that the options for entering an alternate career are severely limited."

The negatives could come at a very personal level as well — matrimony. Divya, who hails from a rather traditional family, learnt the hard way. Hailing from a conservative Rajasthani background she found that she had defied customs and traditions by participating in the pageant. Marriage proposals which had poured in before she was crowned, dried up.

She smiles wryly, "Our community associates me with a person who has been brazen enough to strut in a swimsuit." Proposals from professionals hailing from Rajasthani homes have been replaced by powerful NRIs and Indian businessmen, she observes cynically.

Priti on the other hand suffered from too much of a good thing. She asks, "How much can you travel? For me that one whirlwind year was enough."

You may well have the power to melt a stone but with the bouquets come the brickbats. Critics scorn the fact that most pageants have become a showcase for hypocrisy where every participant waxes eloquent on social issues that they hold close to their hearts. Issues that are conveniently forgotten once the show is over. Ruchi agrees, "I think an effort must be made to rid ourselves of this farce."

Nafisa responds stung, "I think the judges, who are eminent people of our society, force clichés out of the contestants. Their questions demand stereotyped answers. However, I'm sure that if given a free hand most of us would try and do our bit sincerely."

For her part, Nafisa is an active animal activist while Divya has taken on the responsibility for bringing up two homeless children. Mini retorts, "I don't believe in making lofty statements. Each one of us are doing our bit in our own little way."

The glitz and glamour may seep into their lives quite suddenly, but these women try and keep their feet firmly on the ground. Most realise that to start believing in the hype that is created around them is an open road to destruction. Says Ruchi, "I've tried to keep a balance between my individuality and the adulation that I've received."

For a newcomer, she says, winning makes a world of a difference. But Ruchi was an established model when she won and "while it was helpful, the effect was not overwhelming."

Sandhya Chib Jacob, Miss India Universe 96, began modelling when she turned 10. And by 16, she was working with Prasad Bidappa who insisted that she participate at the Miss India pageant. She walked away with top honours at the India pageant, and then went on to finish overall sixth in Las Vegas. Her winning streak didn't end there and in December that year she also went on to win the Miss India Worldwide crown.

Says Ingrid Chib, Sandhya's mother, "She's been independent since she was 16 years old. The money and fame that came her way didn't affect her and so we as parents weren't worried." December last year Sandhya married a Wall Street investment banker and has joined a modelling agency in New York.

Presumably unaffected, the beauties forge ahead in their careers, building on their successes. Nafisa is contemplating cutting an album but that will come some time in the future. "There are too many singers around already and the audiences need a breather," she says.

Ruchi Malhotra intends to model for another three or four years after which she plans to "flow into a synergetic business like clothing or to open a lifestyle gymnasium — that's my dream."

But despite this (occasionally desperate) search for a second career, a crown is still the stuff that dreams are made of — even if it is riddled with thorns. ■

MASQUERADE

Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya finds out—the hard way—that public relations is not what it's cracked up to be

Look Who's Talking

Image It's all that seems to count these days From the roots of your hair to the tips of your toes, it all boils down to how well you can package yourself

Thus, it was that when offered a choice to be someone else for a day, I decided to go right ahead and masquer ade as a public relations (PR) executive To be honest, I had attempted this earli er on a few furtive occasions Like when I had walked into a multi-national com pany, resume in hand, imploring the communications chief for a job

"But why would you want to change your job?" he asked, puzzled

"I want exposure you know, meet more people," I said, perhaps not too convincingly

"Aren't you meeting enough of them already?" he countered

Of course I was, but how could I tell him that it was just that the grass seemed greener on the other side cushy job, big pay cheque and, maybe, a lot more perks, combined to make PR look like an irresistible career option

The first PR firm I approached to let me fulfil my fantasy had a ready excuse One of the resident greenhorns came on the phone to announce they were moving office

"Where to?" I asked, undeterred "To to well, we are still deciding on the venue," she said evasively

Making a mental note to act indifferent when she next came asking for publicity, I tapped the next best alternative. The lady in question was a friend of one of my colleagues She was gracious enough to invite me for a special preview – a chat, really before I could take on the PR's role

Pritha Saluja (not her real name) has a small PR outfit in Delhi's Defence Colony, which is an extension of her home She gave me a run-down on what to expect the day I joined. Towards the late evening, two lissome girls who were to be my colleagues trooped in. Both, through a rare coincidence, had the same name, let's say Deesha. And both spoke with an assurance that gave me a huge complex. Nonetheless, I decided to give my 'job' my best shot

The day of deception arrived. I decided to dress in a wine red *churidar*

WEAR YOUR ATTITUDE

Apart from looking cool in a neat outfit, groovy glasses, bag and all, it is absolutely necessary to look the part of a PR—unruffled and simply charming



with mirrorwork, thinking it would flatter me — only to realise that its flounces made me look clumsy and overdressed. I pleaded with my brother for a lift in his chauffeur-driven car in a desperate bid to arrive at the workplace in shape.

The skies were ominously grey, and as I waited for the car to turn up, it began pouring. When I had finally negotiated the various blocks at Defence Colony to reach Pritha's place, I looked a sight. Hair tousled and dress crumpled, I doubted my abilities to pull off the charade.

Luckily for me, the clients had not arrived. The first meeting hinged on a fashion designer's Monsoon collection. The photographer—a glamorous name in Delhi's party circles—put me on the spot by asking, "Aren't you a journalist? I think I have seen you somewhere."

"Who me? Journalist? No way..." I said, trying hard to look my part.

"Thank God. These journalists! All they want to do is put words in your mouth. Nobody bothers to cross-check anything with you," she said.

"Don't I know?" I replied, in an equally conspiratorial tone.

We were an all-women team discussing clothes—in pastel grey, ruddy brown and black-and-red gossamer fabric—which Pritha had brought out from the folds of delicate paper. A shoot to showcase the clothes was the subject of discussion. The photographer suggested a list of hopefuls. "Maybe we could use Sonalika or Simar....they look amazing in Indian clothes," she said.

Brochures highlighting past collections had been pasted on the jute board to inspire new ideas. Finally, it was decided that Bipasha Basu would be the best bet. Soon, everyone broke up for coffee and chocolate cookies. The PR women lit their cigarettes; the photographer drew on her Marlboro; and I looked crestfallen without an 'attitude'.

Between the photographer's exit and the arrival of some officials from a travel chain, there was hardly any breather. The second round of discussions focussed on a corporate package which needed newspaper coverage. Sonia, an associate for the PR group, dropped in to give her input. She was obviously no rookie, knowing exactly which names to drop, and brimming with ideas.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

"The grass seemed greener on the other side and a lot more perks combined to make PR look like an irresistible option"

There was a general consensus on how journalists didn't bother to rewrite press releases—they printed them ditto, probably too caught up with their deadlines and page-making exercises. I fumed on the inside, but had to acknowledge that there was some truth to the allegation.

The idea was to sell a travel story with a view to publicising the recently opened hotel chain, and I knew just how difficult that could be. Hence, I suggested lamely, "Why don't we ask the newspapers to mention the hotel's name in a box?"

The clients were not impressed. Since they were going to pay for the junket, they expected journalists to focus on their hotels. To salvage the situation, Sonia rattled on about timeshare concepts. The clients, nodding vigorously, then departed, expecting us to immediately swing into action.

Sonia immediately took me aside to tell me the facts of life. "Look sweetie, it's like this...you scratch my back and I scratch yours. Newspapers have to acknowledge they need the clients' money."

Deesha junior offered to take me out for lunch. Tucking into crisp paper *dosas*, she confided that PR was a lot of fun. "You should know when to turn on your charm."

"What does that mean exactly? Do you have to be seductive," I asked her, a touch nervously.

"No. But there all kinds of men," Junior continued, "grouchy ones, boring ones, and nice ones, too. You can neither be offended nor rude."

Back in office, I keyed in some publicity material before dashing off with the press handouts to make my rounds at the newspaper offices.

My first prospect had already quit his job—which didn't do much good to my confidence. The lady who had taken over for him made me slightly nervous with her salamander eyes. "You let me know the whole deal," she said curtly, cutting me off half-way through my spiel. "Maybe, I can send someone to cover the hotel properties."

My next stop was at a regional newspaper office where the correspondent—a man—was friendship itself, offering to keep me updated on "when the story will come out". What had I done to deserve that?

The next-door journalist was friendly, but inquisitive. "What is you name?" she asked casually. "Rama Vip," I said proferring an ex-employee's visiting card.

"Whip?" she questioned, not looking at the card.

"Don't worry," I said, jokingly. "I don't mean to flog you."

"No, no, what I mean is that your name is an asset. The VIP can take you places."

She then threw me into a tizzy by asking me to give my boss' designation. I wrote a vague 'PR chief' on a piece of paper and ran out the door.

A few more inconsequential calls, and I had had enough of this whole business of being nice to people. My jaws ached from smiling as I boarded the cab to go home. Frankly, PR is not all that it's cracked up to be. ■

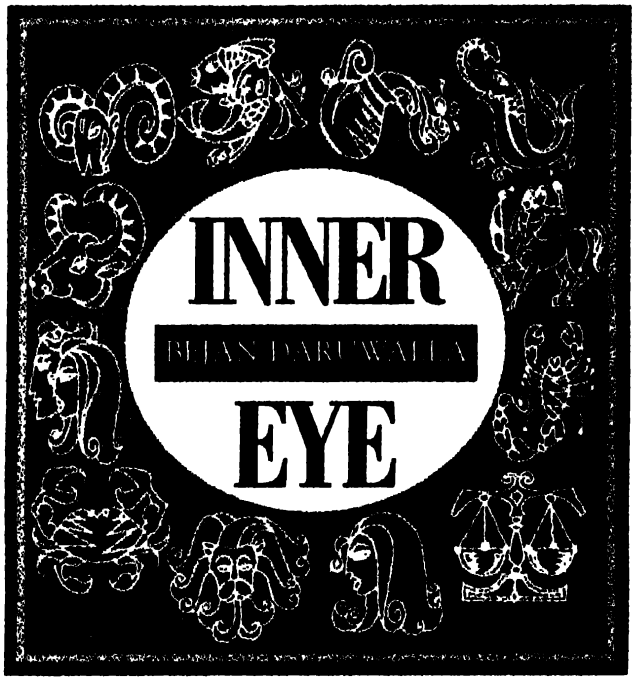
ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Ganesha says money and family are the twins who ride you hard and spur you to glorious achievements. Buying, selling, leasing, borrowing, funding hold the key to a happy you. While romance is possible, it will be sporadic and sudden. You might be hosting parties, dinners, functions. You are on the verge of partnerships at all levels.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) The Sun and Neptune in superb positioning gives you the fillip, the imaginative brilliance, the intuitive hold on things so necessary to speed ahead and be a winner. Be it music, science, research, construction work, housing or management, you should forge ahead. Love will knock at your door. Children and grand children give great joy.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) There's a 'sweet chance' to launch a venture, open a restaurant, start a business, have a legacy, get loans and funds sanctioned. Visits, interviews, appointments, a touch of romance and passion are fated. A lot of intrigue and foreign connections seem to be brewing for you. Yes, events do multiply for many of you.

CANCER, (June 21- July 20) 'Romantic linking, business collaborations, travel and trade, 'wedding bells' are predicted for Cancerians, because Saturn-Uranus act as a yeast, a fermentation, an activation. Many Cancerians are in for a change of direction, both in their personal, as well as, professional life. It will be for the better. An affair is not ruled out.

LEO, (July 21- August 21) The pointers are hard work and sweet rewards and that's fine in any language. Do take chances, be your best, get work done, and also find time to relax and enjoy. Your system needs it. Use your imagination and will to get what you desire and expect. Actors, editors, teachers, TV folks, counsellors, managers, industrialists get mileage.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) You will be taking decisive action and fortunately it will be the right one. The Moon-Jupiter conjunction will sprout new ideas and gambits, boost travel, make you innovative and ingenious, daring and deadly. Time to start and expand business, prepare to make money, have plans, commute and contact. Enjoy life to the hilt.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Plenty of behind the scenes activity; cross-currents of friendship and animosity will be strong, so best to take it in your stride. Finances get top priority, just like American 'priority mail'! Journey, ceremony, buying, selling, lending, funding, foreign connections, secret deals are essential for your very existence this week.

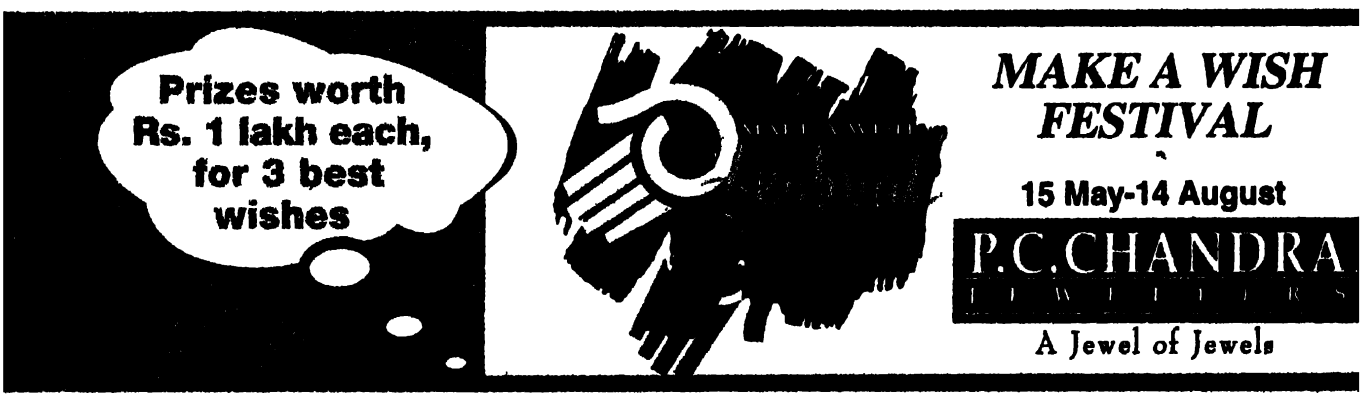
SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) 'A young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts love' is how it will be with you, Scorpios. This is an excellent week to marry, mate, co-ordinate, collaborate, build a house, renovate, move and reach out to others. Cultivate a hobby, rear kids, take a study course, contact and communicate vigorously and effectively.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) Ganesha says a week of gains and financial transactions, trips and ties. Loans, funds, investments, capital formation, buying/selling are the highlights very definitely. A promotion, job-switch, loving pets, hiring/firing servants, subordinate staff, finding lost articles/goods, improving health, keeps you busy.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) The focus will be on family values, finance and personal relationships. Children, hobbies, creative pursuits snatch your heart away. This week and the next, you will experience the truth of it. It is time to ask for favours, step out in style. Good events are foretold. Your creative urges find release.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) An excellent week to travel, publicise your wares, burnish your image and that of the company you represent. A good time to sally forth and be with the world. Matters related to family, vehicles, property, jewellery, shop, office, warehouse, land development, agriculture, receive a great fillip. Bonding will increase your happiness. Finances will pour in.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) You will find your bearings, be aware of your potential/power, and be able to move fast and get what you desire. You can start something new and exciting, as the timing is right. Those in communication, PRO, sales, teaching, films, painting, photography, graphics, research, colour and chemicals, do wonders.



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SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Seema Goswami examines love in the twilight zone

The talking point is:
The recent wedding of South African President Nelson Mandela to long-time sweetheart, Graca Machel. The two wed on Mandela's 80th birthday, in a private ceremony attended by close friends and family. This is Mandela's third trip down the aisle, while 52-year-old Graca has only been married once before, to the Mozambiqan President, Samora Machel, who died in an air crash some years ago.
Graca wore a long, white gown to take her wedding vows, and the newly-married couple exchanged a kiss after the ceremony, with Mandela announcing that this was the first time he had kissed her — not that anybody believed him. The formalities over, the happy couple wandered off to enjoy the sunset of their lives with one another.



The couple exchanged a kiss after the ceremony, with Mandela announcing that this was the first time he had kissed Graca

Also in South Africa:
You have the example of F.W. de Klerk, who was on the wrong side of 60 when he left his wife of many decades for his long-time mistress. Of course, it helped that he had retired from politics by then, or else this would have been a very risky decision to take.

So, is romance possible on the wrong side of 80?:
Or even 50? Most certainly so. You only have to look at Yasser Arafat, the leader of the Palestinians, who is completely besotted with his (much younger, needless to say) blonde wife, and the daughter of his twilight years. This, despite the fact that Arafat steered clear of all emotional entanglements all through his life, because he had dedicated his life to the Palestinian people. But one look at the beautiful Suha Arafat *nee* Tawil was enough to make him rethink his basic tenets of his life.
And even though Mrs Arafat hasn't proved to be very popular with the Palestinian people, whom Yasser has served throughout his life, she continues to be the subject of his devotion.

Unkind souls may well say:
There's no fool like an old fool, but we believe differently. Sure, you have examples like that of the Greek President Papandreaou, who spent his later years completely under the spell of his second wife, Mimi, the former air-hostess who turned into something of a political Svengali. But, for the most part, marrying late is far better than marrying in haste.

Take the case of:
Pandit Ravi Shankar, for instance. He was well into his seventies when he married Sukanya Rajan, the woman who was the mother of his biological daughter, Anoushka. But despite the vast age difference between the two, marriage seems to suiting both the Shankars very well. Sukanya loses no opportunity to make it clear that she and Panditji enjoy a 'complete' relationship (no prizes for guessing what that means). And Shankar, for his part, has found his last years considerably enlivened by the presence of his young daughter and disciple, Anoushka.
You could do worse than follow his example. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

YOUNG BLOOD

Q: I am a 16-year-old boy in love with my 15-year-old cousin for the past one year. Our parents are in the dark about our liaison since we live in different towns but we do meet once every six months or so. We love each other very much and want to get married as soon as possible. Is it possible to legitimize the relationship?Our feelings for each other go beyond love—we respect each other and have no qualms about approaching our respective families. We do not wish to live apart anymore. Please advise.

MANIKANCHAN, AGARTALA

Love between cousins is usually the first flowering of emotion between young people who have grown up in a restricted atmosphere and have had limited opportunities to mix with other people from the outside world. I think it is highly inappropriate for a 16-year-old boy and a 15-year-old girl to even consider marriage. If, as you say, your feelings go beyond love, what is the hurry to tie down each other? It is entirely possible that the two of you remain the best and most devoted of friends all your life without the bonds of marriage, and it is equally unlikely that an early marriage between minors would work out for the best—so get real—there is a whole big world outside, to be explored and experienced, waiting for the two of you. If, after a period of at least seven years, you both decide that your feelings remain unchanged, why, go right ahead and get married.

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Q: I am a 31-year-old working woman and have a daughter who is three years old. My husband is having an affair with his younger brother's wife and he seems to have his mother's encouraging support with regards to this. Please advise me as to how I should react in such circumstances?

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA

Make it clear to your husband that you are distressed by his behaviour and would like it to conclusively end. Your husband's family obviously takes you for granted and assumes that you will put up with anything and everything. It's time for you to put your foot down and define what is it that you will tolerate and what you won't. You are a working woman, I am sure you make your due financial contributions to the family. Make your presence felt and don't let anyone or anything let you down.

SOCIAL TABOO

PAPA DON'T PREACH

I am a 16-year-old girl and come from a large well-knit and loving Bengali family. As children, we were taught to love and treat our cousins as siblings. Of late, however, my father suspects me of having an affair with one of my cousins with whom I share a deep bond of love and friendship that has strengthened over the years. We keep in touch with each other through letters but even these have been misconstrued by my father as being amorous. I have been asked in no uncertain terms to stop writing to my cousin and all my protests have fallen to deaf ears. How do I convince my father?

XYZ, RANCHI

Your father belongs to the previous generation, and can probably not understand that it is normal to have a frank and forthright relationship with the opposite sex. Stand your ground and continue to talk and correspond with your male cousins as before. It is a free world, and you sound like a sensible young girl—don't let anybody censor your spontaneity without good reason.

Q: I am a 20-year-old girl. Two years back, I was engaged to be married to a boy of my age. Since we loved each other very much, we went ahead and had sexual intercourse. Now, I am pregnant but my fiance suggests that I go in for an abortion—the reason being that he is a student and not ready for commitment as yet. I do not wish to go in for an abortion. How do I convince my family and society? What are the other problems that an unwed mother faces besides the social stigma attached to being one?

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Being an unwed mother at twenty without a support network would frankly be unfair to the unborn child as well as to you. Motherhood is not a one-shot deal, it is a sustained commitment for at least a quarter of a century. Whatever your initial emotive reactions may be, and however much the hard decision to abort your unborn child might hurt, I would suggest that you accede to your boyfriend's more pragmatic view. The other option is to go through the pregnancy and give the child for adoption. Your whole life lies before both of you, and one indiscretion should not put all your options at stake. Our's is a harsh and hypocritical society and I would not like you to suffer the pain and indignity that would in all likelihood follow, were you to decide to carry the baby.



AMIT DUTTA

GAY ABANDON

Q: I am a 17-year-old homosexual. Three years back, I had fallen in love with the Principal in my school who happens to be a priest. I used to secretly admire him and the feelings, I guess, were mutual. A year back, he had been transferred to another school in a different city. I miss him terribly. What should I do?

RAHUL, CALCUTTA

A schoolgirl or schoolboy "crush" on a respected and admired teacher is a normal part of adolescent development. You could always write to your ex-Principal occasionally and keep him informed about your personal and scholastic progress. Perhaps, it is time to outgrow your childhood crush and develop a normal relationship with boys and girls of your age. The danger, otherwise, is that you will simply transfer the intense emotions that you have for your ex-Principal to some other substitute authority figure and land up in an emotional mess.

TRIFLING ISSUES

Q: I am a 24-year-old married man. My wife and I are very happy with each other but she threatens to commit suicide over little tiffs. How do I cope with this?

B.G, DELHI

Your wife seems to be indulging in a childish game. This could be an irresponsible sign, to talk of suicide in this manner. Explain to her in a firm way that you disapprove of this. You can tell her that you are responsible partners in sharing your life together and that your disagreements have to be resolved in a reasonable manner.

GRUELLING TEST

Q: I plan to be an Army Officer for which I have to sit for a Psycho-Intelligence test. How do I keep my nerves during this gruelling session?

SINCHAN GHOSH, KHARAGPUR

A sense of mental and physical ease comes from good emotional and bodily health. A psycho-intelligence test is not an inquisition, but merely an examination of your alertness, your common-sense, and the normalcy of your orientations. Just be simply and determinedly yourself and you will do just fine. It's like the story of the centipede who forgets how it walks when it starts thinking about it. Just take things in your stride and you will do just fine. ■

MIXED Bag

STERLING GIFTS

● You love him dearly, you also want your own space. But how do you tell him that without hurting him?
Frazer and Haws, a subsidiary of the House of Hennell, London, has devised a special way of conveying that sentiment: a commitment set, comprising a neckpiece, earrings, a couple of bracelets and rings in silver & gold with other precious stones. Bringing these international design concepts to India, Frazer and Haws



recently opened a retail outlet in New Delhi's Green Park. Housing sterling silverware and exquisite precious stone jewellery the salon has been the culmination of the 129-year-old relationship India has had with Hennell.
The designs which came from Hennell were crafted in India and were later exported to their salon on Bond Street. Apart from the traditional Hennell designs, the Indian outlet has taken Indian sensibilities into account. They launched an exclusive collection of *rakhis*, *puja thalis*, Ganeshas and other gifts for the festival. Priced between Rs 375 to Rs 725 the *rakhis* came with a dainty silver chain so that they could be worn as pendants.



Big city blues

Delhi has been a home to him ever since his student days. But Ustad Amjad Ali Khan is no longer at home in the capital. The maestro, in a recent statement, could not conceal his anguish at the rot that has set into the city — water scarcity, air pollution, perennial power-cuts, traffic jams, road accidents, robberies, thefts — the list is endless.
Khan is anguished at the thought that at a time when the country is celebrating the 50th year of its independence, the national capital has acquired the dubious distinction of being the third most polluted city in the world. But all is not lost for the city, he believes. Not, at least, if Delhi chooses to learn a lesson or two from *Kolkatta*, a city that he has close ties with. Till the other day, the maestro says, the City of Joy too had a similar story to tell and had become notorious for its long power cuts. But then, "it found a way out of its 'powerless situation' by involving the private sector in power generation. So now, one no longer hears of power or water shortage there." So if Calcutta could do it, why not Delhi, Khan asks..

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: After a swim, always shampo

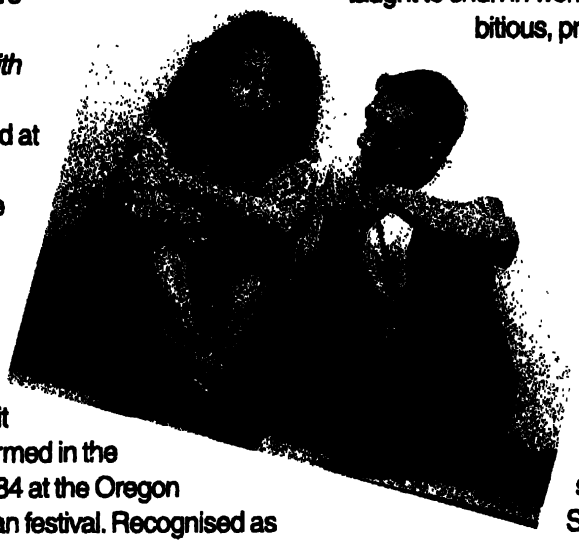
So near, and yet so far

Post first day first show of *Kareeb*, the audience shrugged in dismay and wondered where the story was in this love story. The picture postcard locale of Rivalsar and the melodious music notwithstanding, director Vidhu Vinod Chopra's labour of love seemed to have suffered a creative miscarriage of sorts.
But Chopra and his brother Vir, the creative producer of the film, are not willing to say die. They have launched a website, www.kareeb.com to offer the much needed fillip to the film. The site has detailed information on the film, live chat rooms, bulletin boards, audio video images of song clippings and complete songs with sing-along lyrics. "It also probes into the characters of the film and has sec-



Double role

Rahul Bose, who played the witty, laid-back civil service trainee, Agastya Sen, in *English August*, has graduated from acting to theatre direction with *Seascapes with Sharks and Dancer* hosted at Delhi's India Habitat Centre (July 30-31). The play written by Don Nigro ran to packed houses when it was first performed in the summer of 1984 at the Oregon Shakespearean festival. Recognised as one of the most sensitive stories on the man-woman relationship in the late 20th century, the play centres round a man who saves a girl from drowning. She regains consciousness in his house and from there starts a relationship that is doomed from the start. She is hyper-intelligent, mercurial, demanding and complex—everything men have been taught to shun in women. He is unambitious, professionally unstable and a loner—the kind women would generally avoid in men. What follows is a relationship that is passionate, infuriating and sharp.



Says Rahul of *Seascapes*, "The good part is that acting and directing simultaneously is a new twist to what I've been doing. The bad part is I've got a lot more responsibility."

condition your hair, or the chlorine could ruin it



tions about the film's cast and crew," says Vir Chopra.

He adds that in the last few days following the film's release, they have been flooded with queries, mostly about the leading lady Neha. "Most of the callers have been from Indians from UK, USA and Australia," adds Chopra. But will all this help generate any interest in an otherwise dead script? After all, gimmicks like a yellow *dupatta* zigzagging down the stairway of Liberty, Mumbai, where the film is being shown and innumerable *Kareeb* T-shirts on sale have done very little to fuel any enthusiasm in the cinema-going public.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE STARS

● So, what's new at Zee TV? The latest from the entertainment channel is that it is launching a new film magazine. Priced at Rs 50, the magazine is expected to hit the market some time in September, and will also be shown on TV — in its video version — on a weekly basis.

"It's a very different kind of magazine we are working on," promises Rauf Ahmed, the man behind the project. "Not the usual gossip magazine but a high profile premium product with strong star involvement. The magazine will be more feature-oriented and will have lots of interviews, fashion reporting, film stories and events in the film industry. Also it will be visually quite strong."

So, how's it different? Aren't there enough film magazines around



churning out the same stuff?

Not quite, says Ahmed. For one, they are not feature-oriented. And two, they thrive mainly on scandals which will not be the case with the Zee magazine.

High on the success of Zee Cine Awards, the channel now wants to increase its presence in the film industry and has decided to do away with the scandalous stuff. But while that might help get the support of stars like Aamir Khan surely it can't help circulation.

RASOI

The food column

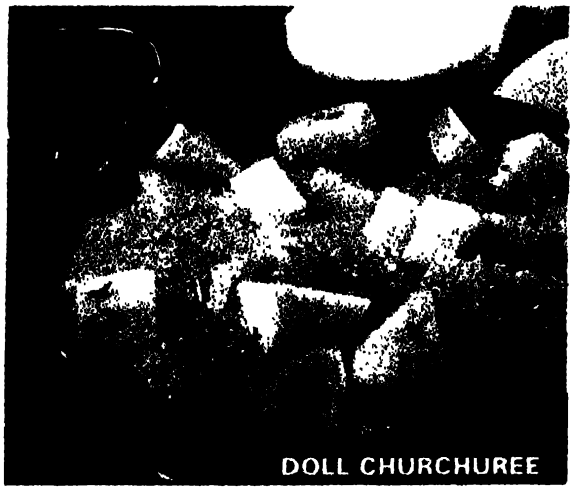


Really Daalicious

Jiggs Kalra writes about some unique lentil dishes

Commonly known as *daal*, lentils are synonymous with basic sustenance. The concept of a square meal is *daal-bhaat* or *daal-roti*. Different regions, however, have marked preferences for a particular *daal*. *Daal*'s unique selling proposition, of course, is that it is a cheap source of protein for the masses--a vegetable protein, which assimilates much more easily than animal proteins. The recipes were perfected with Javed Akbar (*'Saat Nizam'*) at the Dum Pukht, Hyderabad and Raminder Malhotra and Pankaj Kapur (*'Doll Churchuree'*) at the Kandahar, Delhi.

Daal Saat Nizam


DOLL CHURCHUREE

INGREDIENTS

- 50g/1/2 cup ***Channa Daal***
- 50g/1/2 cup ***Masoor Daal*** (whole)
- 50g/1/2 cup ***Arhar/ Toor Daal***
- 50g/1/2 cup ***Moong Daal*** (husked)
- 50g/1/2 cup ***Urad Daal*** (husked)
- 50g/1/2 cup ***Maash Daal*** (husked)
- 45g/1 1/2 oz ***Gehun*/Whole wheat**
- 4.5g/1 1/2 tsp **Red chillie powder**
- 4.5g/1 1/2 tsp ***Haldee*/Turmeric powder**
- **Salt**
- 5 ***Chotti Elaichi*/Green Cardamom**
- 5 ***Lavang*/Cloves**
- 3 ***Motti Elaichi*/Black Cardamom**
- 2 sticks ***Daalchini*/Cinnamon**
- 5 ***Tej Patta*/Bay leaf**
- 20 g/3 1/2tsp **Ginger paste** (strain)
- 15g/2 1/2tsp **Garlic paste** (strain)
- 60g/2 oz ***Imli*/Tamarind pulp**
- 30ml/2 tbs **Lemon juice**
- 4 **Green chillies** (seed and halve length wise)
- 12 **Mint leaves**

THE FIRST TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1 tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 2g/1 tsp ***Zeera*/Cumin seeds**

THE SECOND TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 8 flakes **Garlic** (peel)

THE THIRD TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 4 **Whole dried red chillies**

THE FOURTH TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 24 **Curry leaves**

THE FIFTH TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 2 ***Rai*/Mustard seeds**

THE SIXTH TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- A generous pinch ***Heeng*/ Asafoetida** (pound)

THE SEVENTH TEMPERING

- 12.5g/1tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified Butter**
- 100g/3oz **Onions** (slice)

THE GARNISH

- **Crisp golden fried sliced onions**
- **Mint leaf**

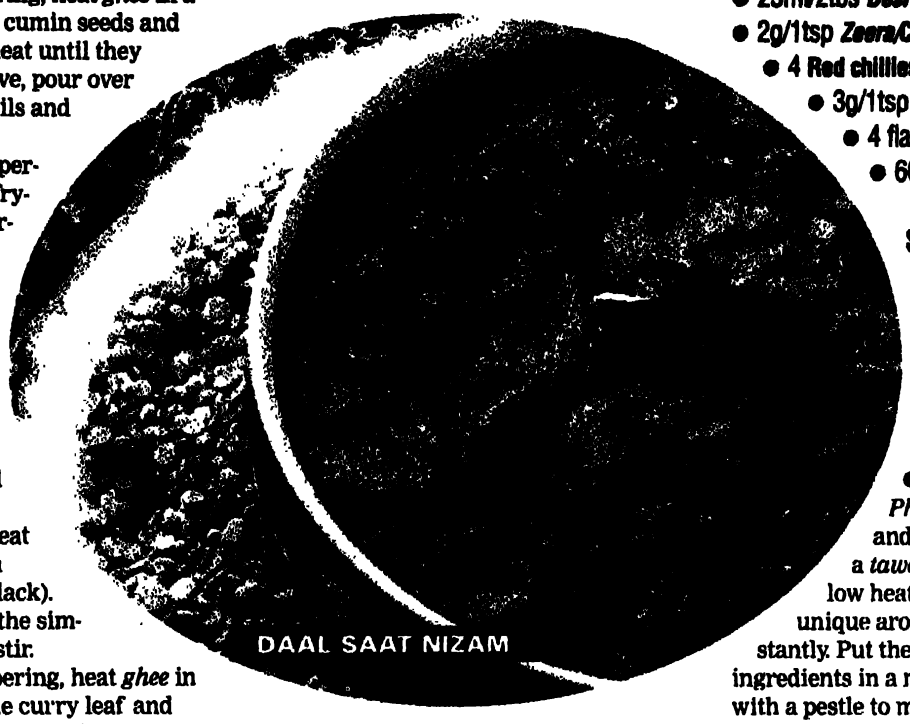
SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

PREPARATION

- The *Daal*: Pick, wash in running water, drain and reserve in a panful of water for 30 minutes.
- The Whole wheat: Pick, wash in running water, drain,transfer to a ***handi*/** pan, add enough water and boil until soft. Drain and keep aside.

COOKING

- Put the lentils in a ***handi*/**pan, add 1 litre 4 1/4cups of water, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, salt, green cardamoms, cloves, black cardamom, cinnamon, bay leaf and the ginger and garlic pastes and bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat and simmer until the liquid is absorbed(remove scum at regular intervals).



Doll Churchuree

INGREDIENTS

THE LENTILS

- 150g/5oz ***Channa* Daal** (soak for 30 minutes)
- 150g/5oz ***Arhar* Daal** (soak for 30 minutes)
- 150g/5oz ***Moong* Daal** (husked; soak for 30 minutes)
- 25g/2Tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified butter**
- 90 g/3oz **Onions** (slice)
- 90 g/3oz **Tomatoes** (chop)
- 10g/1"piece **Ginger** (chop)
- 4 **Green chillies**
- 3 g/1tsp **Red chillie powder**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Haldee*/Turmeric powder**
- 1 **Cooking Apple** (peel, core, cut into 1/4" cubes)
- **Salt**

THE *PAANCH PHORON*

- 60g/2oz ***Zeera*/Cumin seeds**
- 60g/2oz***Saunf*/Fennel seeds**
- 30g/1oz ***Methidaana*/Fenugreek seeds**
- 30g/1oz ***Sarsondaana*/Yellow mustard seeds**
- 30g/1oz ***Kalonji*/Onion seeds**

THE TEMPERIN

- 25ml/2tbs ***Desi Ghee*/Clarified butter**
- 2g/1tsp ***Zeera*/Cumin seeds**
- 4 **Red chillies**
- 3g/1tsp ***Paanch Phoron***
- 4 flakes **Garlic** (slice)
- 60g/2oz **Onions** (slice)

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

PREPARATION

- The *Paanch Phoron*: Roast cumin and fennel separately on a *tawa*/griddle over very low heat until each emits its unique aroma, stirring constantly. Put these and the remaining ingredients in a mortar and pound with a pestle to make a powder. Sift and store in a sterilised and airtight container. Remember we will be using 3g/1 tsp of *paanch phoron*.

COOKING

- Melt ghee in a *handi*/pan, add the lentils, *bhunno*/stir-fry over medium heat for a minute, add the remaining ingredients, except the apple, and 1 litre/4¼ cups of water, bring to a boil, reduce to a low heat and remove the scum. Then cover and simmer, stirring occasionally until the lentils are 3/4ths cooked. Now add the apple and simmer until the lentils are cooked but not mashed. Remove and keep hot.

- To prepare the tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add cumin, stir over medium heat until it begins to pop, add the red chillies, and stir until they become a brighter red (not brown), add garlic and stir until golden. Now add the onions, saute until onions are light golden, add *paanch phoron* and saute until onions are golden. Pour the tempering on the cooked *daal*, stir to incorporate, remove and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE:

- Remove to a bowl and serve as an accompaniment. ■

For the first tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the cumin seeds and stir over medium heat until they begin to pop. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the second tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the garlic and saute over medium heat till golden. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the third tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the red chillies and stir over medium heat until they become a brighter red (not black). Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the fourth tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the curry leaf and stir over medium heat until they stop spluttering. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the fifth tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the mustard seeds and stir over medium heat until they begin to pop. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the sixth tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the asafoetida and stir over medium heat until it puffs up. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
For the seventh tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the onions and saute over medium heat until golden. Remove, pour over the simmering lentils and stir.
Remove the lentils and pass through a fine mesh soup strainer into a separate *handi*/pan, return lentils to heat,add tamarind pulp, whole wheat and water (approx 720ml/3 cups), bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until of thin custard consistency. Remove, sprinkle lemon juice, stir and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

Remove to a bowl, garnish with crisp, golden fried onions and mint, serve with steamed rice, *parantha*, *phulka*, or as an accompaniment.

OUT OF THE *Closet*

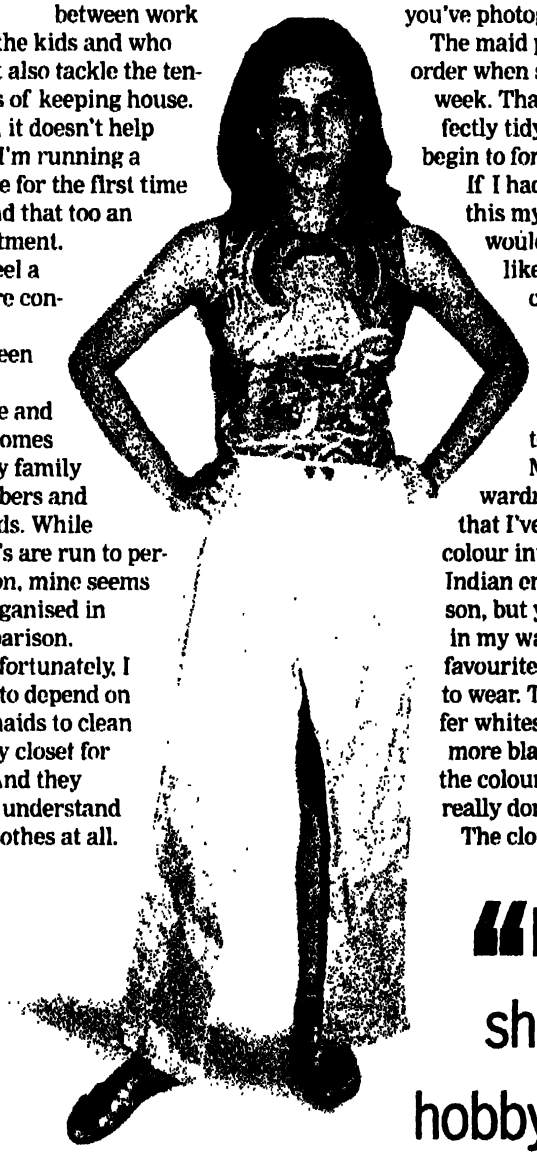
RINA DHAKA

A peep into the fashion designer's wardrobe

Frankly I'm not much of a housekeeper. Mine is the classic case of a working mom who is torn between work and the kids and who must also tackle the tensions of keeping house. Also, it doesn't help that I'm running a house for the first time -- and that too an apartment.

I feel a severe contrast between my house and the homes of my family members and friends. While their's are run to perfection, mine seems disorganised in comparison.

Unfortunately, I have to depend on my maids to clean up my closet for me. And they don't understand my clothes at all.



They invariably mix up my trousers with the skirts, evening-wear with the day-wear. So when I want to pull out my clothes, they look just the way you've photographed them.

The maid puts my wardrobe in order when she has time during the week. That's when you find it perfectly tidy; but then piles again begin to form, and so also the mess.

If I had the time and were to do this myself, I'm sure things would be better. For my part, I like to clean shelves and cupboards as it's a hobby that I find strangely relaxing. Whenever I'm stressed out this is the only thing that I like to do to unwind.

Mine is a colourless wardrobe and it's only now that I've started putting some colour into it with shawls and Indian ensembles. I go by the season, but you'll find a lot of black in my wardrobe. Black is my favourite colour as it is the easiest to wear. Though in summer I prefer whites, this spring I've worn more black even though it isn't the colour of the moment. But, I really don't care.

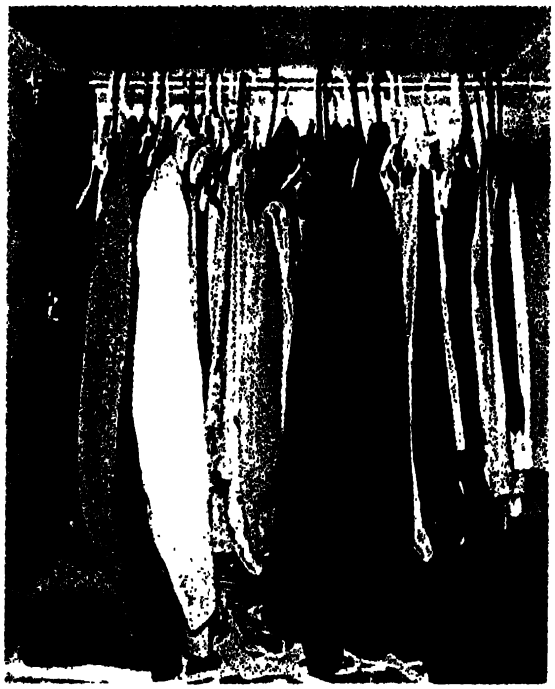
The clothes you'll find in my wardrobe aren't necessarily designerwear. I do like to wear outfits of other designers but only if they're really fashionable or classic. However, designerwear has no value for me as I am a designer myself.

I like wearing clothes designed by me but not all the time. These (tugging at her trouser fabric) are Gap and this (pulling at the hemline of her embroidered shirt) is a Muzaffar Ali creation. A lot of my closet is filled with sporty clothes which is what I normally buy.

What I never do is to buy a dress for 200 pounds knowing that I might wear it just once. Mostly, I buy a lot of separates or classic designs. I used to buy a lot of DKNY, but this season I've taken a liking for Helmut Lang. In my closet you'll also find outfits of some Japanese designers and garments from Ghost and Joseph. For casuals, it's always Marks & Spencer and Gap jeans. My underwear too is only Classic Marks & Spencer.

I simply love shoes and my cupboards are stacked with Gucci, Prada and even some of my own designs. I never buy my shoes in India so you wouldn't find any Indian brands here. My footwear has to be fashionable and must be really 'in'. And it ranges from flats for the day to heels for the

"For my part, I like to clean the shelves and cupboards as it's a hobby that I find strangely relaxing"

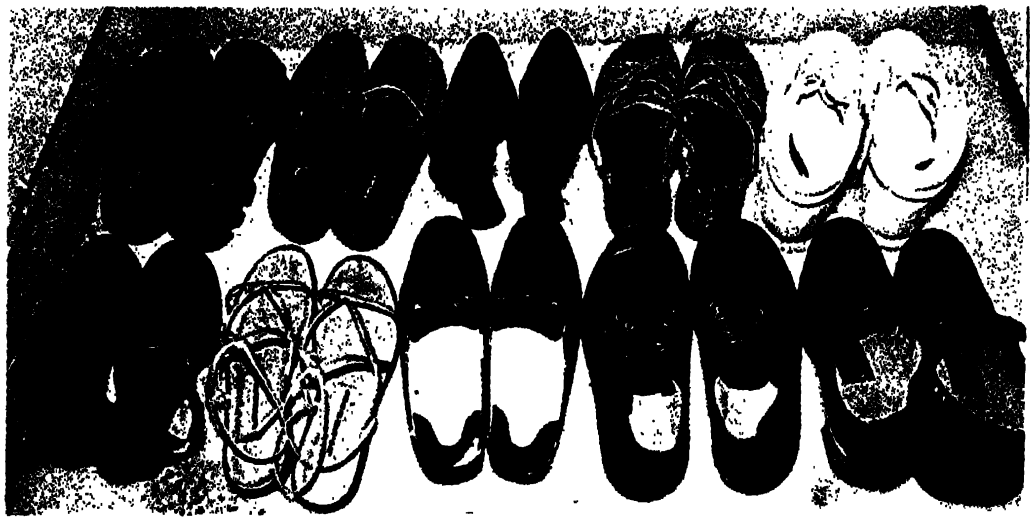




ARKO DUTTA

CLASSICAL TOUCH

I buy a lot of separates or classic designs. I used to buy a lot of DKNY but now I've taken a liking for Helmut Lang. In my closet you'll also find outfits of some Japanese designers and garments from Ghost and Joseph. For casuals, it's always Marks & Spencer and Gap jeans



evening. Earlier I was crazy about shoes and my cupboards would be bursting at the seams with as many as 200 pairs. But then I got smarter and realised that I wasn't getting the chance to wear some of them. Now I restrict myself to the bare essentials.

My cupboard also has its share of swimwear, shawls, sarees and even my heated rollers. I like using make-up and this year I have been especially favourable to Bobbi Brown. There is a bag tucked away in the closet that contains all that I need by way of colour cosmetics.

I don't really wear too much jewellery but when I do, I wear traditional gold pieces, some of which I keep at home. I'm very careless and lose jewellery all the time, so most of the stuff is kept in my locker. But then I lose the locker keys pretty frequently.

Sometimes my children's toys too find their way into my closet. Or when the maid is new, she's even put my clothes in the kids' cupboards!

I don't spend too much time before my closet when I have to dress for an occasion. If my models can get dressed under a minute then there's no reason why I can't manage to get ready in less than five minutes.

If I have a dinner or wedding to attend, I never plan days ahead as to what I will wear. It's always half an hour past the time that I should have arrived for the party that I get down to dressing up for it and begin rummaging my closet for something.

I have no favourite pieces or outfits and just make do. I guess that's where the advantages of being a designer come to the fore.

Even right now I'm in junk. I never know what to wear to my factory given the fact that I must watch the neckline, the armholes and the fit. However, I always manage to find something in my closet that befits the occasion. ■

AS TOLD TO SAMITA BHATIA

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 32-year-old young professional. I wear reasonably expensive and well-tailored clothes but I never seem to stand out. Do you think I could bring about a change with a trendy hair style? Would streaking my hair in the front giving it a mahogany or copper tint make me look more dignified?

NANDANA BAGCHI, CALCUTTA

Please don't underestimate your looks so much. I would suggest that you take a long, hard look at yourself in the mirror, first. Every person has some features that can be played up and some that can be played down. It is not necessary that only expensive and well-tailored clothes give you a dignified look. Even inexpensive clothes can flatter you and your complexion and may not necessarily be the 'in' thing in fashion and yet look absolutely stunning. Experiment a little with colours as there may be certain colours that may enhance your looks.

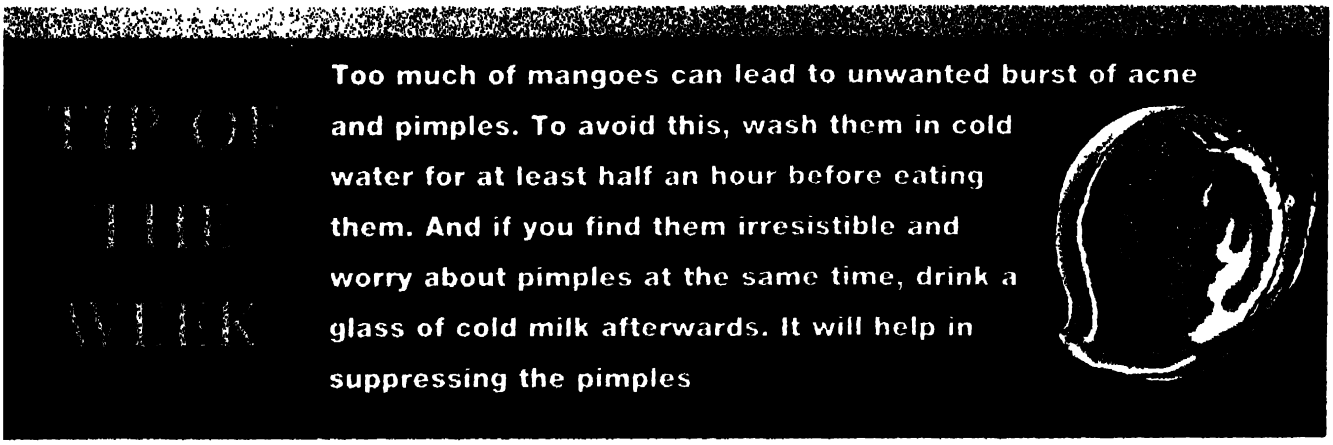
If you think you need a new hair style, consult a professional. It is not necessary to streak your hair with chemicals but simply styling your hair in a can alter your look completely. And above all, walk with an air of confidence about the way you are looking — that's true dignity.

I am a 37-year-old man. I used to suffer from acute acne problems early in youth because I was in the habit of picking them, they left behind large marks and holes. As a result, I now have a face full of scars. I was thinking of bleaching my face. Do you think that it is advisable? Please advise.

SOM CHATTERJEE, HOWRAH

For God's sake, bleaching is not the solution. It will only worsen the problem. I do wish, however, you had woken up much earlier. Picking or bursting pimples has left your skin scarred and damaged for life there is no way you will have a smooth complexion. The scars can be lightened, however, with a dermabrasive method at a professional skin salon but it will take time and regular treatments. At home, it is important that you keep your skin clear at all times. Make a face scrub with the following ingredients — finely powdered *masoor dal*, rice, oatmeal, kaolin clay. To this, add an egg and juice of one lemon. Apply thickly all over face and leave until dry. Dab with milk and scrub off in gentle rotating movements. Wash face with cold water. This is to be done daily for a month before you can see the results. It's your skin so treat it gently and with care, and watch it glow.

I am a 10-year-old girl and have long, thin hair which is very limp. What should I do to have thick and



lustrous hair?

CHANDRIMA BISWAS, ASANSOL

It's quite heart warming to know that I have such young readers reading my column. What is important is this growing awareness in youngsters to take care of their skin and hair from an early age. Believe me, it will go a long way in the years to come. Oil your hair with warm coconut oil once a week. If you have long, thinning hair, go in for a trim to have it evened out. What is important is a healthy, balanced diet. But unfortunately, most of us know what a balanced diet is but we don't follow it. Lots of fresh, green vegetables and fruits, dairy products — cheese, yoghurt, milk etc. Drink plenty of water. Try and avoid sweets and fried stuff. I am not saying don't have them at all but try and reduce the intake. Boil 100 gms of *amla*, *reetha* and *shikakai* and wash your hair with this mild shampoo. It will make your hair softer and more luxuriant. Check to see that you do not have dandruff as this also thins the hair. A regular hair care programme with the ingredients I have suggested above, will definitely reflect on your hair very soon.

Most people say that there is no cure for dark circles. Is this true? I am 24 years old and have had them for the past two months. Please advise.

SHAHANA BOSE, ASANSOL

Well, you should not be having dark circles at this age at all. Try and make a self-assessment of your lifestyle. Are you tired? Have you recovered from an illness? Do you sleep late? Are you under stress and tension? Do you have a job that is very demanding? All these factors have to be taken into consideration when dealing with dark circles. If the dark circles are too pronounced, it is difficult to get rid of them completely but they can definitely be lightened with the use of natural products. Massage the area around the eyes with pure almond oil mixed with coconut oil daily at night. Let your skin soak them up for about half an hour. Then, wipe off with a moist cotton wool pad. Grate raw potato, mix with egg white, lemon juice and half a tsp of cream and apply around the eye area. This eye pack should be kept on for about 20 minutes before washing with cold milk. This is to be done thrice a week for two weeks for best results. Also drink at least 10 glasses of water daily to flush out the toxins from the body.

I am 17 years old and have a dull, dark complexion. My friends tease me saying that I have developed a complex because of this and avoid company and any social dos. Please recommend a pack to make me fairer.

SUNITA KAPOOR, DURGAPUR

I wish people would appreciate the quality of their skins rather than the colour. Having a dark complexion is okay but there's no reason why at 17, it should be a dull one. You can make your skin lighter and glowing with natural products but you cannot change your skin colour completely. Make a paste with the following ingredients — gramflour, lemon juice, grated potato, sandalwood powder and rice powder. Apply this on face and neck and leave on till dry. Wash off with cold water. This can be applied on alternate days to improve your complexion and make it glow. Also, what you eat is important as it will reflect on your face. Avoid junk food, fried and sugary foods, instead concentrate on a high fibre and high protein diet.

I am a 23-year-old woman and have an oily skin. It looks greasy all the time. Please suggest a skin care routine.

JASHODHARA DEY, CALCUTTA

Greasy and oily skins need extra attention. You must be extremely careful about what you eat and avoid oily and fried foods as well as sugary food and drinks. Wipe your face with cold rose water or a mint-based skin tonic several times a day.

You can also apply a pack of fullers earth, mint paste, two drops of peppermint oil and lemon juice. This can be applied every alternate day. I would also suggest that you exfoliate your skin daily to prevent whiteheads and blackheads. Take green pea powder and rose water and gently scrub on the face, especially the nose, forehead and chin areas. If done regularly, you will find your skin glowing naturally.

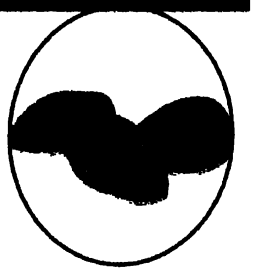
I am a 24-year-old woman. My eyelashes fall off at an alarming rate. I have a dry skin and occasionally suffer from constipation. Please help.

ANANTA KUMAR, CALCUTTA

Use a drop of castor oil on the eye lashes regularly for a month. You will see that not only will they stop falling but become thicker also. I would suggest that you get a medical check-up done for any internal weakness. Take lots of green vegetables — spinach and other leafy greens as they provide the required iron and vitamins necessary for your system. Avoid eating late and take plenty of water and fluids like fresh juices and vegetable soups. Anything natural will take its own course of time and so it will not help to follow a beauty regimen in fits and starts. ■

TO REMOVE STRETCH MARKS

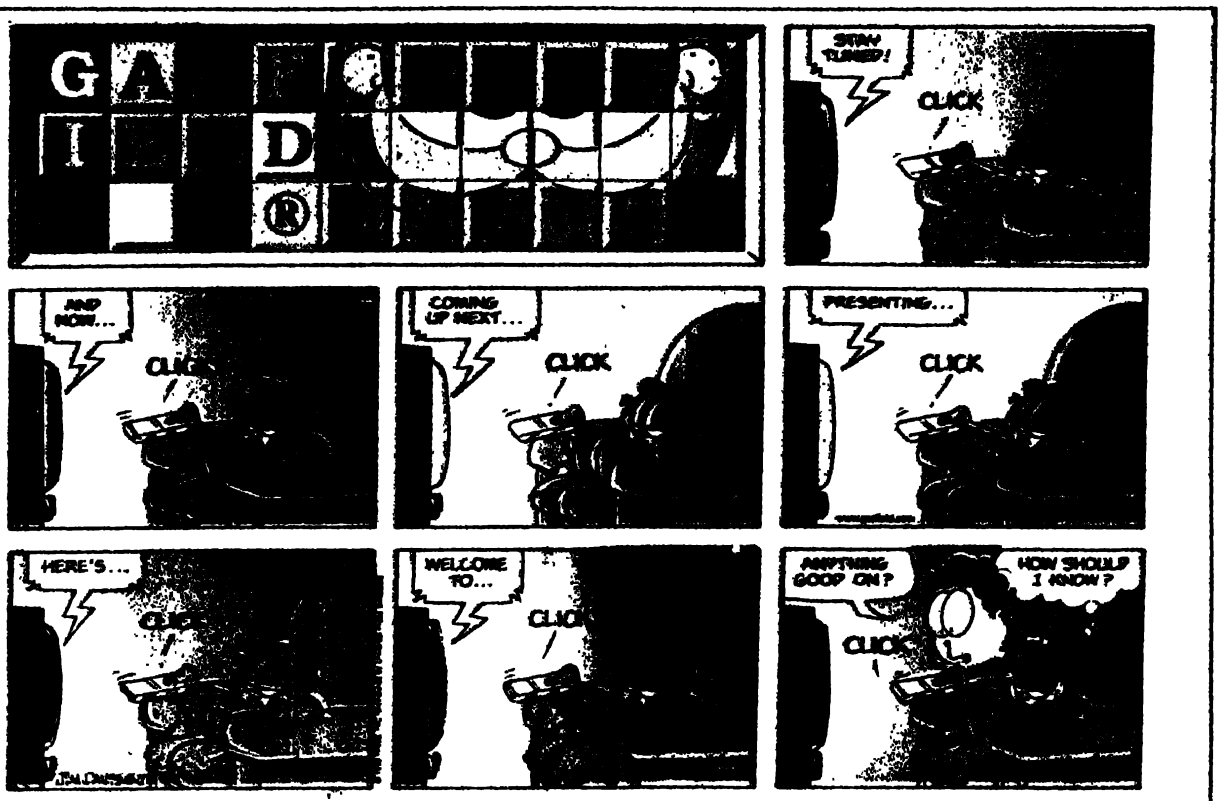
Mix together equal quantities of almond oil, coconut oil and Vitamin E oil and massage daily in firm strokes



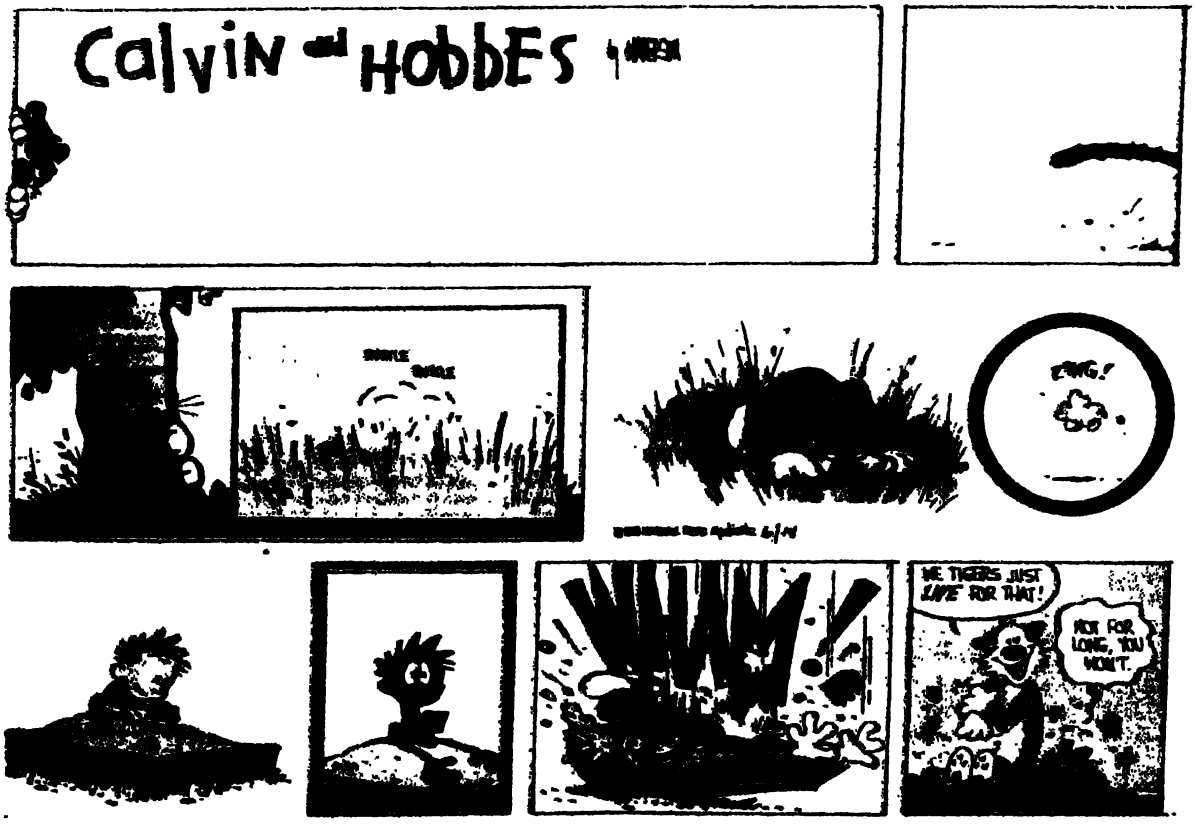
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W 511	1345	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-257	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W 902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC-856	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC 704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	0950	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC 770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0610	1, 3, 5	CD 256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC 713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	9W-201	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1810	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
GIRDHARDAS					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-082	0915	1	BG-081	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-081	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-084	1645	2	BG-083	1545	2
BG-086	2105	daily	BG-085	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2110	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU-536	1120	4	SU-537	1810	4
SU-536	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-105	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-106	0940	2, 6
			KB-106	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1600	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
2311	10-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
2305	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	2306
2309	20-40	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	2304
2381	6-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-00	Jodhpur Express	6-40	2308
2819	6-55	Shalimar (Kalinga Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2820
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Sunlight Express Dep., Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	06-00	3046
4058	23-30	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	4057
3047	19-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	3048
3059	10-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3060
3037	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3038
3005	21-45	Delhi Janata Express	3-15	3006
3041	23-00	Amritsar Express	17-00	3042
3007	22-00	Kalinga Utkal Express	11-00	3008
3021	10-45	Mithila (Howrah) Express	3-10	3022
3023	22-45	Kosoya (Guwahati) Express	4-00	3024
3025	22-45	Black Diamond Express	21-00	3026
3027	23-00	Coalfield Express	10-30	3028
3029	23-00	Asansol Express	6-30	3030
3031	23-00	Dumdum Express	6-30	3032
3033	23-00	Jamalpur Express	6-30	3034
3035	23-00	Sonthalkanya Express	6-30	3036
3039	23-00	Rampurhat Express	6-30	3040
3043	23-00	Chandrail (Kharagpur) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-00	3044
3049	23-00	Sitaram (Kalyani) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-00	3050
3051	23-00	Shalimar (Adityapur) Express	7-00	3052
3053	23-00	Chandrail (Ajoy Canal) Express Dep:Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-00	3054

Southside

3101	10-15	Tundla-Howrah Express	6-45	3102
3103	19-20	Howrah Mail	7-35	3104
3105	20-40	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	13-15	3106
3107	6-15	Kanchanjunga Express	16-15	3108
3109	9-15	Ghaxi Express	16-15	3110
3111	17-00	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	10-45	3112
3113	23-00	Kalinga Express	6-40	3114
3115	23-00	Howrah-Puri Express	6-40	3116
3117	23-00	Mughal Sarai Express via SRC Loop	6-40	3118
3119	23-00	Shalimar (Lokmanya) Express	6-40	3120
3121	23-00	Durga Nagar (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	6-40	3122

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
6003	20-15	Madras Mail	8-55	6004
6001	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	6001
2809	18-25	Ghanjal (Bombay) Express	15-30	2809
3021	8-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-00	3022
8004	20-30	Ahmedabad Express	5-40	8003
8002	19-45	Howrah Express via Nagpur	16-00	8020
2001	14-00	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-30	2002
2703	7-50	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	16-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-30	8014
3011	8-00	Ispat (Bamnipal) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Bamnipal-Rajgangpur Express	5-50	8006
8015	21-05	Howrah Hatia Express	6-20	8016
8007	22-00	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-30	8008
8409	19-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	6-35	8410
2021	8-45	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-15	2022
8045	10-15	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	15-00	8046
8017	16-45	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	12-55	8018
8019	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-15	8020
1030	16-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday; Arr.: Sunday	5-10	1029
2421	18-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	10-00	2421
2422	11-45	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
8302	03-00	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-00	8302
8021	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	10-45	8021
8023	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	10-45	8023
8024	03-00	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-00	8024
8304	23-30	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr: Friday & Monday	21-45	8303
8025	08-00	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-00	8026
8027	13-00	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	10-45	8028
8306	23-30	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	10-45	8305

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2208045-54 for in-coming trains; 2208045-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2208040-2000 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1361 (for canceled information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train enquiry at Sealdah: 2508/2527.
Interactive Voice Response System (8 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 8 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 139 (computerised); Dial 2208/4000 (manual enquiry).

THE Best



RAINDROPS KEEP FALLING

Manisha Pande samples the variety of umbrellas and raincoats available in the market

RAIN, RAIN, DON'T GO AWAY

The use of Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck in rainwear has made these very popular with children



Scene I: Raj Kapoor and Nargis huddled together under a huge umbrella, confessing their love for each other in the heavy downpour.

Cut.

Scene II: Sridevi and Sunny Deol reeling under the influence of beer singing and dancing away in the rain.

Both scenes are almost identical in every way — hero and heroine singing a love duet in the rain in the wee hours of the night — but for the rainwear.

While many things have remained the same in the film industry over the years — for instance, the storyline or the plethora of songs — rainwear is one thing that has kept pace with the changing fashion in its own way. From the trite black to the trendy blue, rainwear has come a long way.

The difference between Nargis holding a conventional black handle-bar umbrella and Sridevi attired in a transparent raincoat with a matching cap and umbrella, when taken in a wider prospective, is a bold statement in itself. Clearly, people's tastes with respect to rainwear have undergone a drastic change and so have the industries manufacturing them.

Inspired by the foreign market, indigenous manufacturing units have now started concentrating more on the variety of design and durability of rainwear, rather than stress on mere utility. Says Bharat Shah, a Mumbai-based manufacturer who markets his products under the brand name Highland, "Our goods are qualitatively as good as the foreign brands. We use imported material like nylon and plastic for our products. And we are the only ones to have acquired a licence from Walt Disney to use their cartoon characters on our products."

PEMAZ MASANI

Singer

Though I have a whole collection of umbrellas, I don't get to use them as I travel by car. However, I like huge umbrellas. They should be very lady-like with frills and all



KIRON KHER

TV Anchor

I hardly use an umbrella. But when I do, it is more for protection than anything else. I like colourful, well-made umbrellas which last for a long time. I buy my umbrellas whenever I am on a world tour

The use of Disney characters such as Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck on umbrellas and raincoats has given Highland umbrellas an edge over its competitors. But Highland is not alone in this. Most manufacturing units have design departments which keep the products in tune with the rest of the market.

More than raincoats, which appeal more to children, it's the umbrellas that catch people's attention. Fluorescent, red, green, blue, yellow — the range of colour is unlimited, matching all kinds of moods. And so are the patterns which vary from multi-coloured stripes to Scottish checks and geometrical designs to Disney cartoons to simple transparent umbrellas trimmed with coloured frills. One can even find the much idolised DiCaprio, of *Titanic* fame, peering through folds of umbrellas.

Says Rajnikanth of Sun umbrellas, "We have 80 models in umbrellas. Forty for women and children and 40 for gents. We have even named each one of our models." Sun's USP, according to Rajnikanth, is its variety of designs. "The material are imported and durable," he says.

The companies have even experimented with the shape of the umbrellas. For instance, one of the Highland models is in a squarish shape with jagged edges. The other, which has become a rage with kids, is cap-shaped. Then there are golf umbrellas which are huge and provide a cosy shelter for lovesick couples.

While the elite have almost given up on rainwear, the middle and upper-middle classes have been at their buying best. In fact, it seems more and more people are buying trendy rainwear with each passing season.

"We get about 100-150 customers every day," says a shop attendant at Eternia, a tony department store in Mumbai.

Vora from Amarsons, another upmarket department store in Mumbai, feels that the increase in sales is due to innovative designs in umbrellas. "I recently bought a white umbrella trimmed with multi-coloured frills," says Krutika, a student of Wilson college. "I liked it at first sight because it was so feminine." While the womenfolk are going ga-ga over the latest designs, and of course DiCaprio, for the gents it's the usual black or at the most blue.

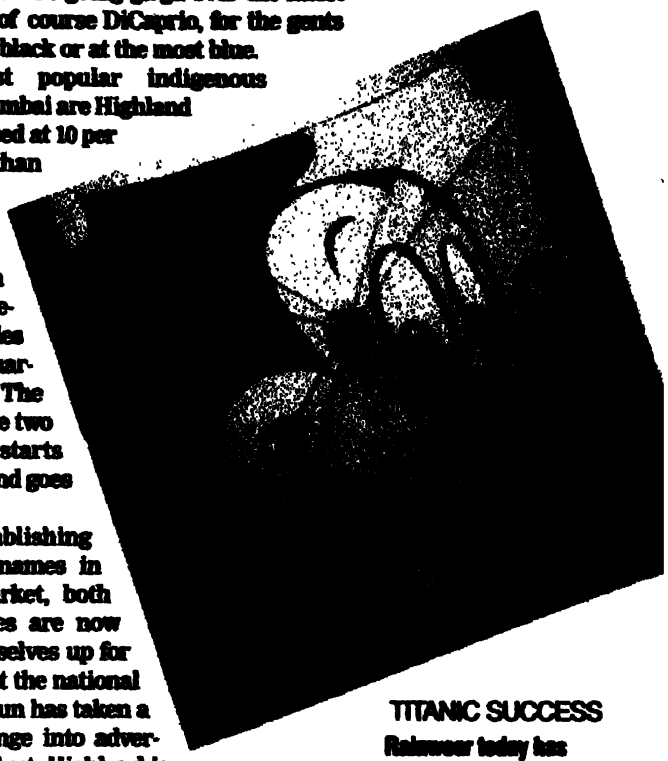
The most popular indigenous brands in Mumbai are Highland and Sun. Priced at 10 per cent more than its rivals, Highland is targetted at the premium market whereas Sun occupies the middle market slot. The range of these two companies starts from Rs 100 and goes up to Rs 450.

After establishing their brand names in the local market, both the companies are now gearing themselves up for competition at the national level. While Sun has taken a headlong plunge into advertising its product, Highland is considering extending its market to Calcutta.

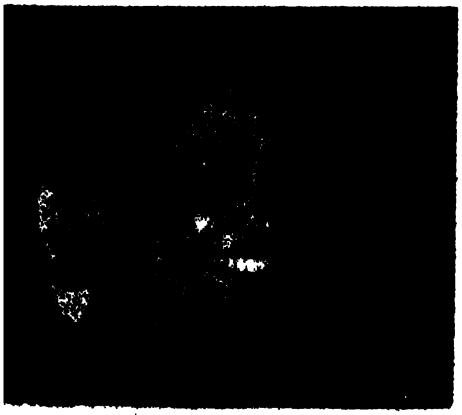
Curiously enough, while everyone else is going colourful during monsoons, there is a certain group which continues to hold on to the good old handle-bar. Just like the white *kurta-pajama*, our politicians seem to have stuck with the traditional umbrella through the years, right from the chief minister down to the ordinary. So, are they politicians trying to preserve old traditions or is this another way they can project a sober image in public?

Who knows? One can only say that this has simplified at least one mystery: What's black and white and shady?

Answer: a politician carrying a black umbrella.■



TITANIC SUCCESS
Rainwear today has become more popular than ever before, given the variety that has flooded the market. It could also be due to the famous scene which has DiCaprio peering through folds of umbrellas



ARCHANA PURAN SINGH

TV anchor

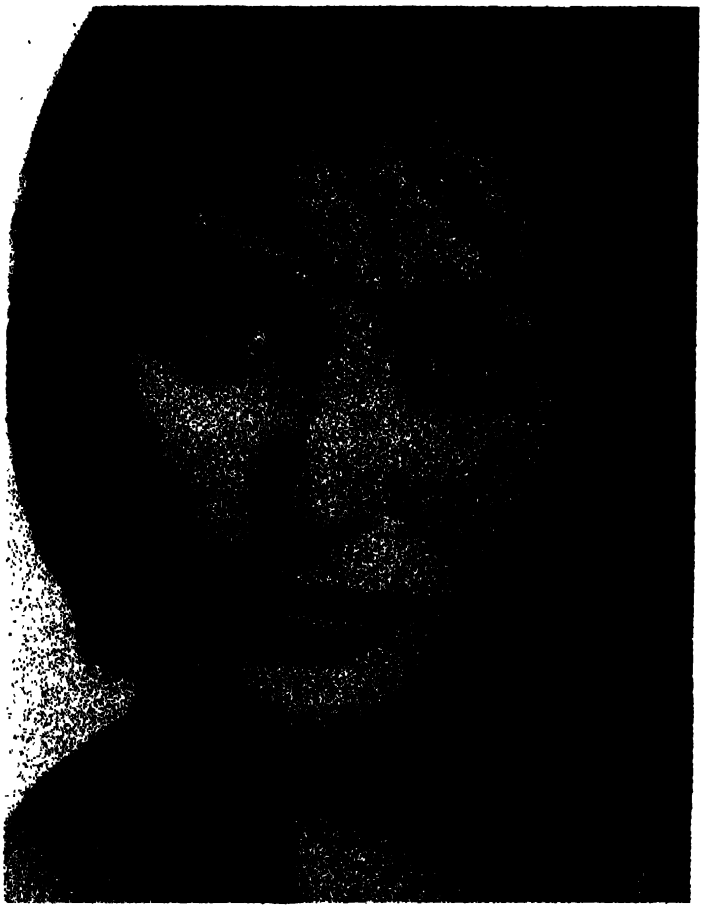
For people like us, umbrellas are a necessity. Outdoor shooting means working for hours under the sun and that's when umbrellas come in handy. I like big and brightly coloured umbrellas. Folding ones are a no-no. Also, they should be simple in design. I usually purchase my umbrellas abroad



MY PERSONAL *Style*

PLAYING WITH COLOURS

VJ Laila Rouass likes to enliven her rooms with vibrant hues and designs



RED HOT

One of the walls in the outer room is painted a dark red. Now that would seem daring to anyone who hasn't seen it. But when you mount large, black-and-white framed pictures on this space, the result is stunning

I like homes that feel cosy. Which is why I love big sofas and carpets and lots of cushions strewn on the floor, for I love to sprawl on them lazily. I dislike blinds because they keep away the world from the inside of the home.

My home on Pali Hill, Bandra, which is actually a couple of rooms on a roof top, embodies this sensibility. It makes for a rather unconventional home for a regular *Mumbaikar*, which is why, perhaps, the place was locked up and out of use for many years, till I saw it.

On this open roof stands one room on one corner that doubles as a visitor's room and workstation, and then there is a much larger inner room which I have done up to suit my comforts. I love Mediterranean colours — bold reds and blues, for instance.

One of the walls in the outer room is painted a dark red. Now that would seem daring to anyone who hasn't seen it. But when you mount large, black-and-white framed pictures on this space, the result is stunning.

When I lived in England I loved using furnishings from Osborne and Little. In India, I love Rajasthani furniture. But they should be used with subtlety, for if they are used in excess the entire room can get to you. And then your house will look like a museum.

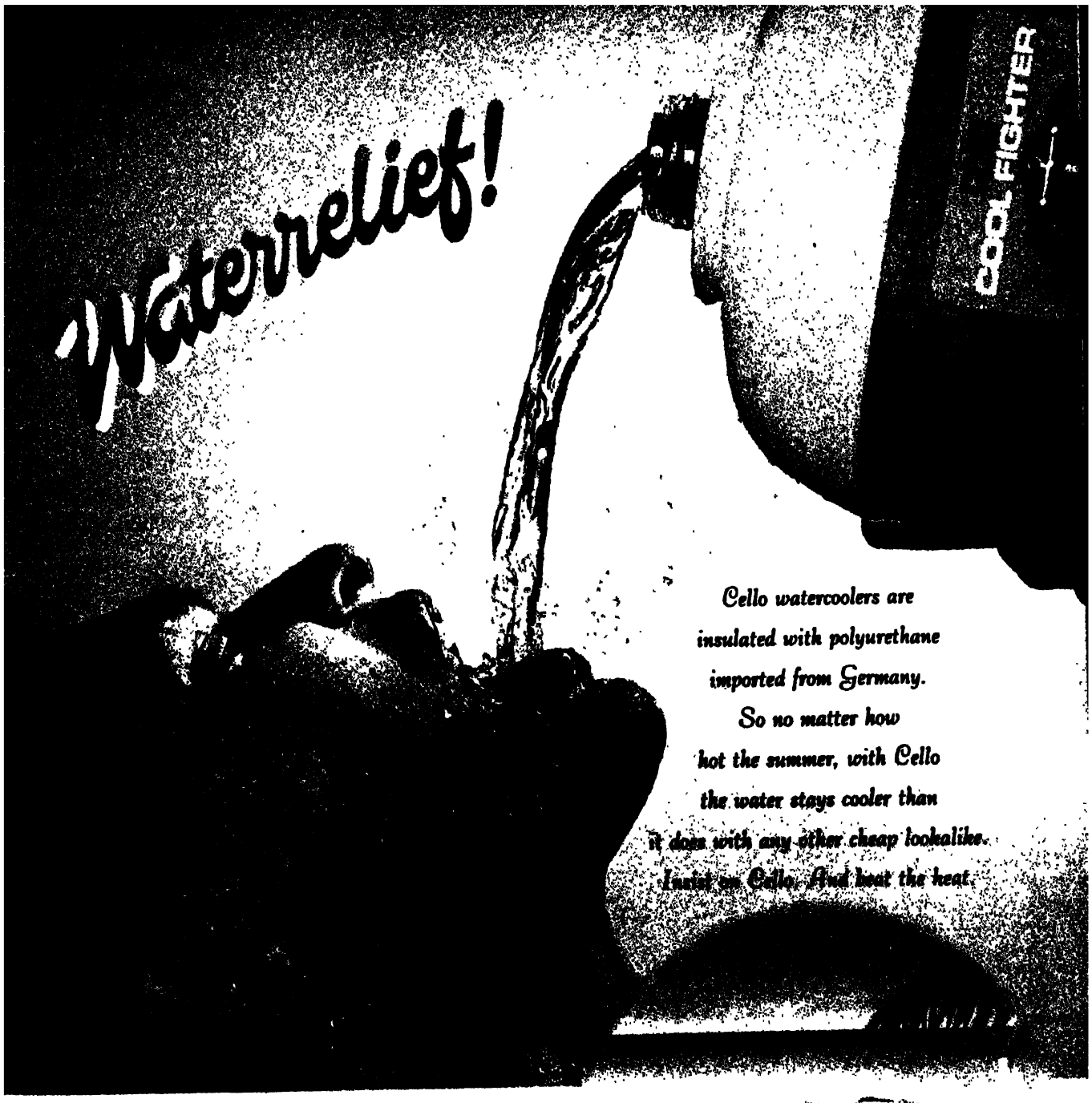
We are a family of seven brothers and sisters and each of our rooms spoke about the people we are. I had this room on top of the house, the attic actually. I had my own TV here, a little gym, a study and shelves all around the room to house little *objets d'art*.

Since we used to shuttle between Morocco and England when we were growing up (my dad is a Moroccan and mom, a Goan from England) I had the opportunity to soak up diverse cultures right through my adolescence. Which is why I dream of owning this four-storeyed Victorian house in the middle of Primrose Hill in England, and then a villa in Morocco.

In downtown London, I would like to live in a split-level apartment. That gives enough privacy to everyone living in the household, while at the same time there is a feel of oneness under a single roof.

I am so taken with Rajasthani furnishings that I would like to creatively use it in both my dream villa and the Victorian house. I am presently doing a course in interior design from the University of London by correspondence. And after I am through with the course and, of course, television, I hope to take it up as a full-time profession and build in various hues of design and colours I have imbibed travelling in various parts of the world, and particularly my three-year stay in India.

AS TOLD TO SUDIPTA BASU



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GARNIER

WRITE IN



Address your letters to Write In, Graphiti, The Telegraph, 6 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Calcutta 1

MUSIC WAR

The cover story on Channel V and MTV was immensely readable ('Channel [V] vs MTV', July 19). One often tends to confuse the two channels because both, as the article rightly points out, could pass off as siblings. The story was thus a guide on ways to distinguish between the two. In this highly competitive world, it is imperative to plan new strategies to stay in the race for survival. Your cover story thus made interesting reading as it revealed ways in which these channels intend to do so.

SHREYA DUTTA, CALCUTTA

POPULARLY YOURS

The war between the two music channels made interesting reading. Indeed, it is due to the competition they face from each other, that they strive to provide quality programmes. The presence of the two of them makes life much more exciting for the average viewer. It is indeed far more worthwhile listening to one's favourite music and chartbusters rather than sitting through inane and soppy serials that the other channels force on the poor viewers. One can only advise the channels to keep up the good work and keep us entertained.

M. Ghosh, Calcutta

CROWNING GLORY

With so many brands of shampoos vying with each other for the consumer's attention, the buyer is often left in a quandary ('Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow, July 19).Your article on 'The Best' in shampoos was thus helpful. It was also amusing to find that Kapil Dev prefers a Calcutta-based shampoo to any other brand! Kapil Dev *da jawaab nahin!*

Anjum Murshed, Calcutta

BY DEMAND

The new zany, zappy avatar of The Telegraph magazine, Graphiti is much appreciated by all the members of my family. We would, however, be very grateful if you could publish a feature on Renuka Shahane, the idiot box's most sought after actress. Her smile lights up the screen and it would be a real pleasure for us if it lights up the pages of Graphiti as well.

S. Vyas, Calcutta

Why must we readers of the Graphiti constantly be subjected to the inane views on clothes of fashion designers and models? ('Out of the Closet') Surely, there are more engrossing facts to be digested by the readers on a Sunday morning than the fact that Rina Dhaka buys all her undergarments from Marks and Spenser in London? We would appreciate it if you publish more articles with a local flavour and sans any trappings of (pseudo) style and wealth.We would love a piece reflective of Calcutta's rich heritage.

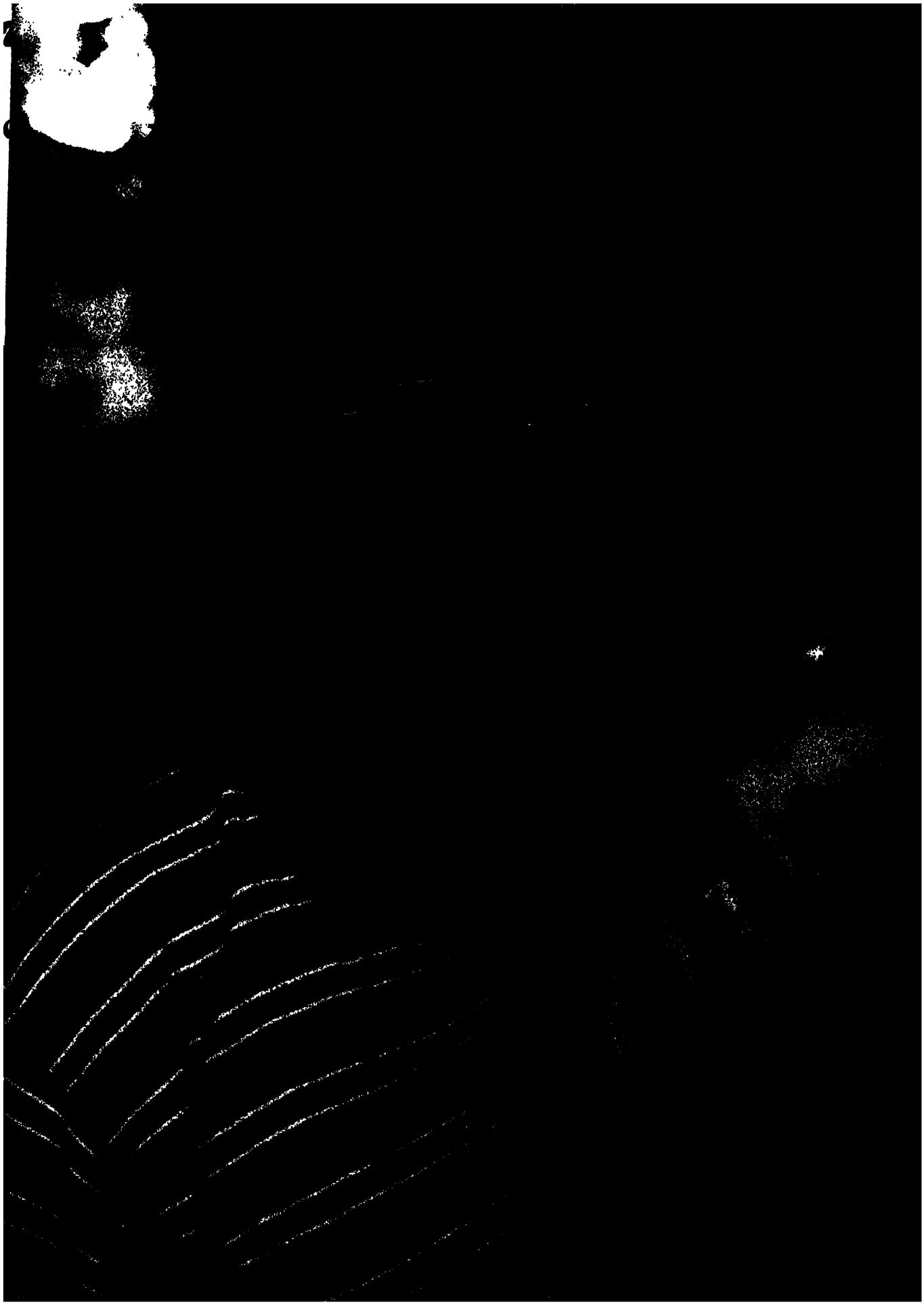
Sunaina Mohan, Calcutta

Jiggs Kalra's recipes might be a real gastronomical delight. But at the same time, it would be a better idea to include some other chef's delicacies. Kalra's cuisines although good to savour, are rather hard to follow, especially for beginners. Most of the ingredients mentioned in the recipes are not available in the local markets. It would be a good idea to give us the Hindi equivalent of some of the exotic ingredients.

Gargee Banerjee, Howrah

graphiti ★ 6 September 1998

4 CHECK MATE Vishwanathan Anand is all set to conquer the world 10 MASQUERADE A day in the life of a travel agent 12 INNER EYE 13 SMALL TALK Hillary Clinton vs Monica Lewinsky 14 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES 16 MIXED BAG 18 RASOI 20 OUT OF THE CLOSET Sonal Mansingh throws open her wardrobe 22 BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY Suparna Trikha's recipes for looking and feeling good 26 TIME TABLE 28 THE BEST Silver is the new gold 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE Suneet Varma entertains in style, and with panache



CHECKMATE

VISHWANATHAN ANAND IS ALL SET TO CONQUER THE WORLD. MALINI NAIR CATCHES UP WITH THE CHESS CHAMP

He is the Grandmaster with winnings worth Rs 30 crores under his belt, a Chess Oscar to his credit, and perhaps, the next world champion crown in his destiny. But despite all these achievements, "lightening kid" Vishwanathan Anand is still the quintessential Chennai boy: courteous, friendly and totally unassuming. The chess champ who is only a step away from the world title is completely untouched by celebrity airs. But don't underestimate his fame. In south Chennai's beach-lined Besant Nagar, you don't really need to know Anand's address. Ask any child playing on the roads, and you'll be led to 'Garga', a simple bungalow with none of the trappings which would indicate the millionaire status of its inhabitant.

Anand is back from Moscow with his wife Aruna after winning the prestigious Chess Oscar for 1997. The couple, who live in Madrid for the most part, are here for a fortnight's break before heading back to their villa. Then it will be a couple of months of hard training and quiet living for Anand before the high-profile December world



THE YOUNG CELEBRITY
Stardom has not gone to his head, for Vishwanathan Anand is still courteous, friendly and unassuming

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS
The simple Chennai boy with his parents (it was his mother who initiated him into the game) and (right) with wife Aruna. Although he would not like to relate the two, but Anand admits that ever since he got married he has been 'playing well'





championship in Las Vegas.

The Grandmaster is just coming to terms with his stardom. There are rendezvous with glamorous talk hostesses, interviews with magazines and photo-sessions. But none of it appears to have gone to Anand's head as he settles down on the small drawing-room sofa. He will take any inane questions, pose for any photograph. It's not media-savvy, just plain good-nature.

Funnily enough, it was his simplicity that got him a '10' rating with wife Aruna, a petite former ad executive. Two years ago, they had a typical arranged marriage – 'girl-seeing', horoscope-matching, the works. It was a chance they took since they were too busy with their careers to find partners for themselves.

But the gamble paid off. Anand and Aruna are a happy twosome, holding hands through the publicity blitz and thoroughly enjoying themselves.

"The first time I met him, he did not give me this 'I am a great chess player' talk that anybody with his record would. Of course, I knew who he was but he made no mention of his achievements. He was like someone you met on the road", says Aruna, dimpling at the recollection.

Anand and Aruna had a typical arranged marriage two years ago. It was a chance they took since they were too busy with their careers

The first thing that you notice about Aruna is her gurgling infectious laughter. She bursts into peals of laughter often and immediately Anand's serious face softens into a grin as he indulgently listens to her friendly chatter.

The couple have come to India straight from Moscow where Anand received the prestigious Chess Oscar Award for the 'Best Player of 1997'. He won nearly every tournament he played last year, and became the only non-Russian to win this award. In fact another contender for the award this year was Gary Kasparov, but Anand beat him to it.

"It was flattering to get the award seeing that there were players like Kasparov in the running for it. It was a confirmation of my performance last year", says Anand.

After a disappointing near-miss early this year in the world championship against Karpov, Anand will battle the reigning champion again in

December at Las Vegas. And friends and well-wishers are hoping Anand will manage to tide over the much-talked-about psychological hurdle that has made him blow championship games at critical junctures.

Far too often has Anand lost the world championship after battling it all the way to the final stages. Early this year, after thrashing Anatoly Karpov thoroughly in the early rounds, he finally lost the match. Chess observers have it that of late a Dutch psychologist is seen sitting in with Anand during his games, presumably to iron out the mental glitches that fail him at crucial points.

However, Anand would rather underplay the theories of a psychological debility. "I do not know why it happens. It has happened at critical junctures. I do seem to break down a bit. I try to pinpoint it but each time the problem surfaces in a different way," he admits.

But Anand dismisses the kind of psychobabble that analysts and sports writers indulge in. "These are all terms coined by writers. The reasons could be more than just psychological. Besides, I have also won many matches and am steadily improving," he says meditatively.

What Anand would admit readily is that marriage and better chess play have come together. "Yeah, I have been playing well since I got married. But I don't think that I want to relate the two. I mean, if Aruna could be the reason for my good performances, she also has to take the blame for the bad ones! But seriously, I like to keep my personal life and the game separate. But I have a happy marriage and I am more relaxed", he says.

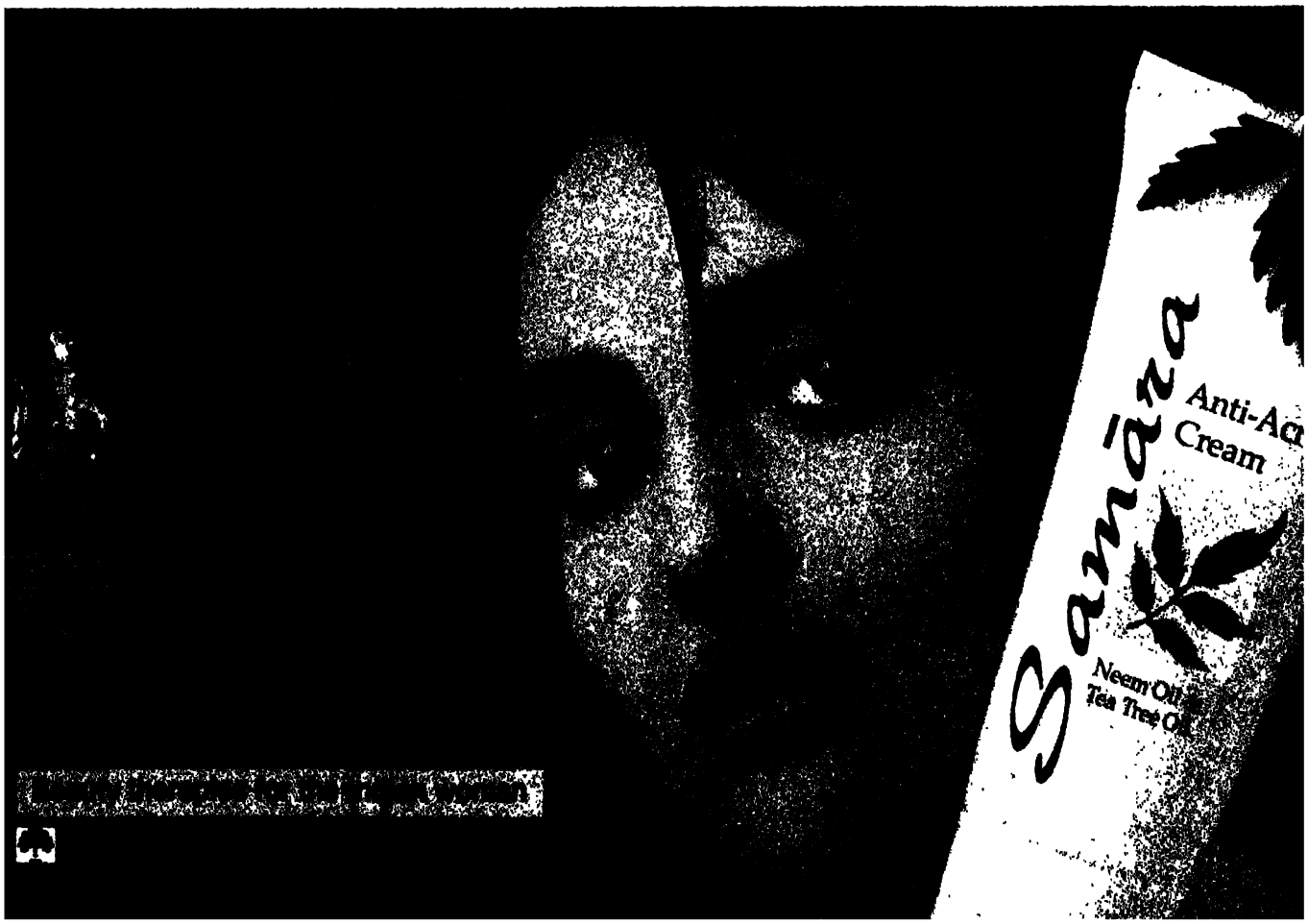
Aruna says she was clueless about chess till she got married. Now she can play the basic game. "That is, I don't lose in the first ten rounds or something!" she says.

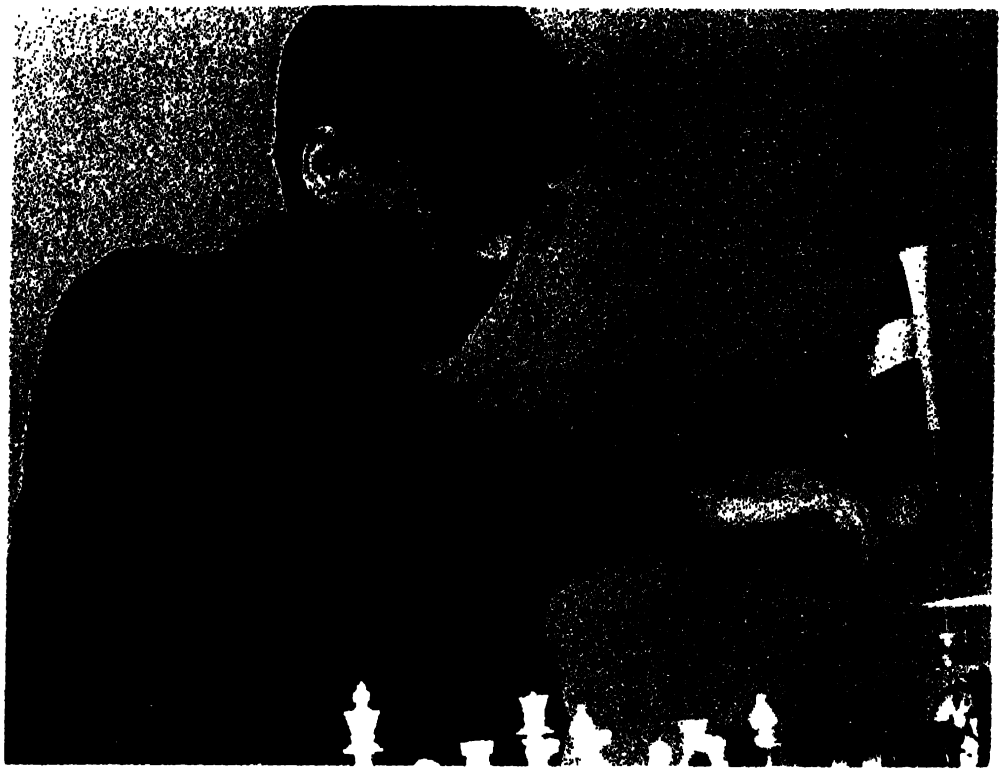
Chennai is unwind time, and Anand and Aruna are upto some pretty uncerebral things in their hometown. Pigging out at the city's restaurants is one of them, with the immensely popular southie fast food joint, Saravana Bhavan, being a favourite stop. Others on their must-visit "sappad" (food) list are the ancient eateries that dot the old, traditional Mylapore area. Rayar's Cafe, Karpagambal Mess — small joints where you get down to the business of digging into the scrumptious spread, and never mind the ambience.



"I just love it. We get huge tiffin carriers full and keep telling ourselves 'all this for one dollar' and we wolf it down", says Aruna, giving a fine imitation of their gastronomical treat.

Eating out is a passion with the two and in Madrid, Anand and Aruna love to





THE GRANDMASTER
Losing a game is not the end of the world for Anand. But to tide over the much talked-about psychological hurdle that has made him blow championship games at critical junctures, he now has a Dutch psychologist sitting in with him during his games

check out the restaurants that offer spicy Asian fare. The two have graduated to non-vegetarian food over the years though it is never cooked at home.

"In a place like Madrid, you cannot possibly stay vegetarian. You ask for vegetarian and they will serve you grass or something. Or serve you beef and look blank," says Anand.

Anand settled for Madrid because it saves him travel time. With most matches happening in and around Europe, it was an ideal city to find anchor. Besides he had many good friends who helped him settle in without too many of the heartaches involved in moving into a new town and country. But it is not as if he is not an Indian citizen, he hastens to add.

"I travel most of the year, I am here for two months and that leaves us in Madrid for just three months or so", he points out.

Both Anand and Aruna find Madrid immensely enjoyable. "The people are very friendly and hospitable, almost like Indians, so we don't really miss home. And we are out partying or entertaining a lot. It is good fun right now", says Aruna.

An average day for the couple starts with a late and lazy breakfast. It is two hours of cycling then for Anand to keep fit, lunch, and then on to working at the chess boards with trainer Ubilova for five to six hours. Apart from training for the game, Anand tries to keep fit by cycling and swimming to keep the mind alert.

Aruna uses this time to attend a course in ceramics and painting. A Bharatnatyam dancer -- trained by a Kalakshetra guru — who has given a few performances in Chennai, she is keen to stay in touch with the arts. And ceramics, she says, have always fascinated her.

Evenings in Madrid are reserved for socialising, trying out restaurants and then it is back home "to television, to a lot of television! You get to see a lot of talk shows around that time", says Aruna.

However, once the tournaments begin, life gets rather frantic for the couple. Anand could be at tournaments at two-week intervals, travelling continuously for three months. He has been playing without a break since November last. And fatigue can take a heavy toll in the game, one reason why he may have lost the world title last year.

But Anand is a lot more philosophical about winning and losing than the obsessively driven champs of the West. He is brilliant and quick, but definitely not your typical eccentric, intro-

"I enjoy playing so much that it is not like a fight for me.... It takes me two or three days to recover"

verted chess-maniac who shuts out the world for the game. Losing a game is not the end of the world for Anand.

"Yes, I can get out of it. I enjoy playing so much that it is not like a fight for me. I am not obsessive about it. It takes me two days, may be three, but I recover. I don't worry unduly", he admits.

This is what also marks Anand's philosophy towards playing against computers. He played a machine in Germany and then in Italy. He lost some, won some. "It is a totally different approach to the game. There is no high-level strategy involved, no unexpected moves. But the computer just calculates with the entire library of human effort in its memory and you are just trying to trick the machine", he points out.

Reaching the top has not been an easy climb for Anand. He started when he was six, initiated into the game by his mother. He would play at the Tal Club in Chennai, with no trainers to help, learning the ropes by himself. Attendance at school was a problem but the Don Bosco principal and teachers would understandingly look away. In the 11th standard, the young Anand put in exactly 30 days of study.

As his mother jokingly says, the teachers still recall that they could remember the number of days Anand attended school rather than the days he absented himself. "It was not easy then," she says remembering the travels around the country. She would accompany him at all matches till he turned 19.

Travelling around for junior championships in those days meant roughing it out and taking whatever the organisers gave. Anand recalls having to stay at a seedy '*dharamshala*' outside Delhi for a match, making do with cold water in winter.

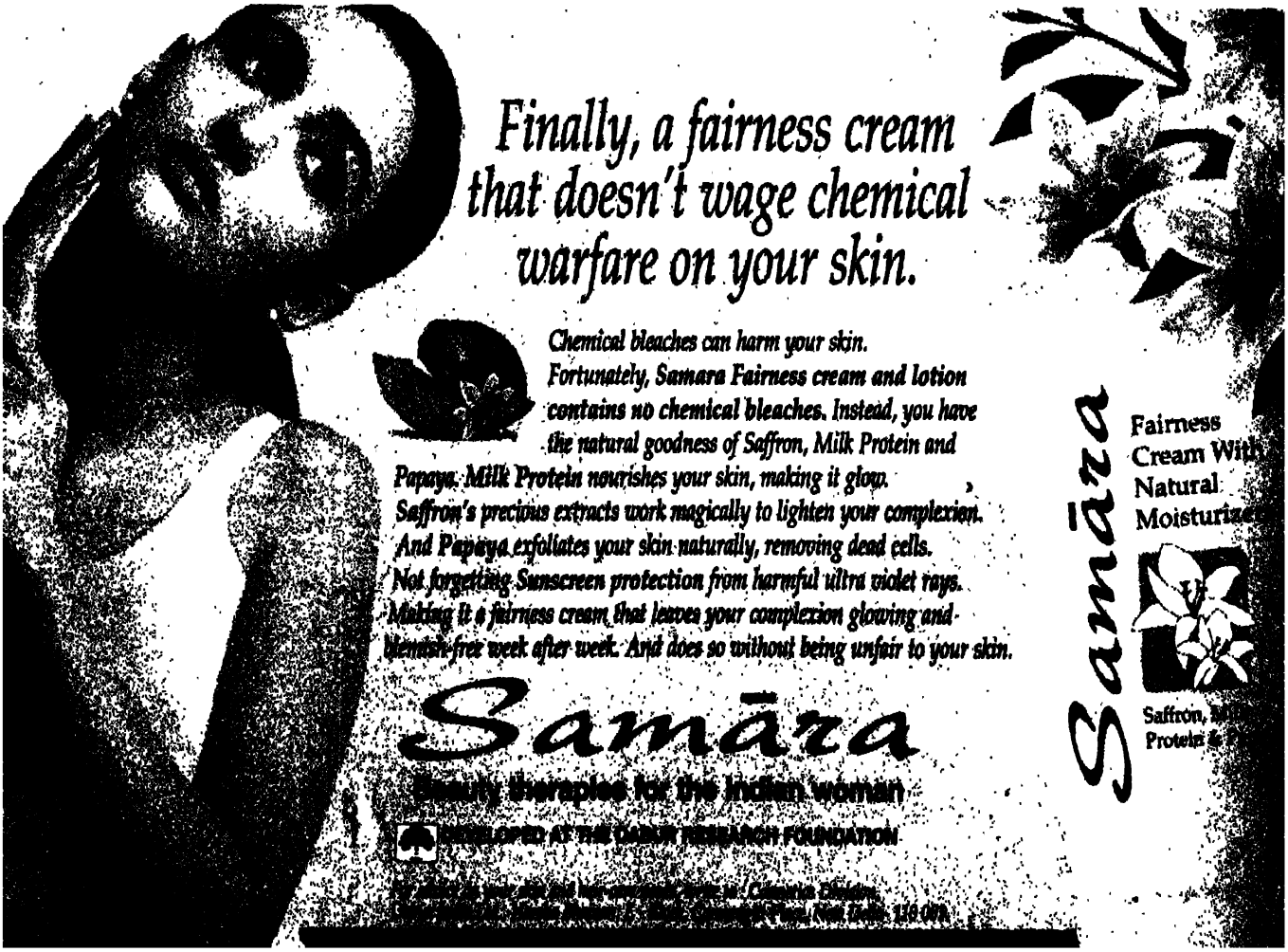
Today there is the Internet to give you access to theory books as soon as they are printed. Distance is not a hassle. There are better opportunities and facilities for youngsters today, more awareness of the game, better coverage. "But the competition is also much harder, more aggressive," Anand points out.

But Anand has a soft corner for the Indian youngsters who are aspiring to reach his level. Every time he is down in Chennai, he interacts with them at some level, particularly with the Tal Club whiz kids. Last year it was a lecture, this year it was an exhibition match playing six children simultaneously!



"I do what little I can. Later, may be I can think in terms of starting some kind of institution here but that is just a plan," says Anand.

For now, however, it is home and peace for Anand. But only until the next championship fight beckons the lightening kid. ■



MASQUERADE

Samita Bhatia pretends to be a travel agent for a day

One way ticket to the blues



LIVING LIFE KING SIZE: **Heftily discounted tickets, barter tickets, free hotel nights; cruises down the Amazon or around Alaska...that's how it's like for travel agents, right?**

Travel agents, I think, live life king size: they have big cars and bigger bucks. When KLM isn't calling, it's Surprising Singapore on the line. Summers are spent skiing in the Swiss Alps, and winters on the warm waters of the Mediterranean. For them, holidaying even in the most fancy locales comes cheap.

After all, heftily discounted tickets (ADs in their parlance) are up for grabs; as are barter tickets; free hotel nights; cruises down the Amazon and sometimes around Alaska ... And in-between all this travelling, there are those "tiresome theme parties" to be attended. Bashes where the ambience, cuisine and entertainment combine to promote a particular destination.

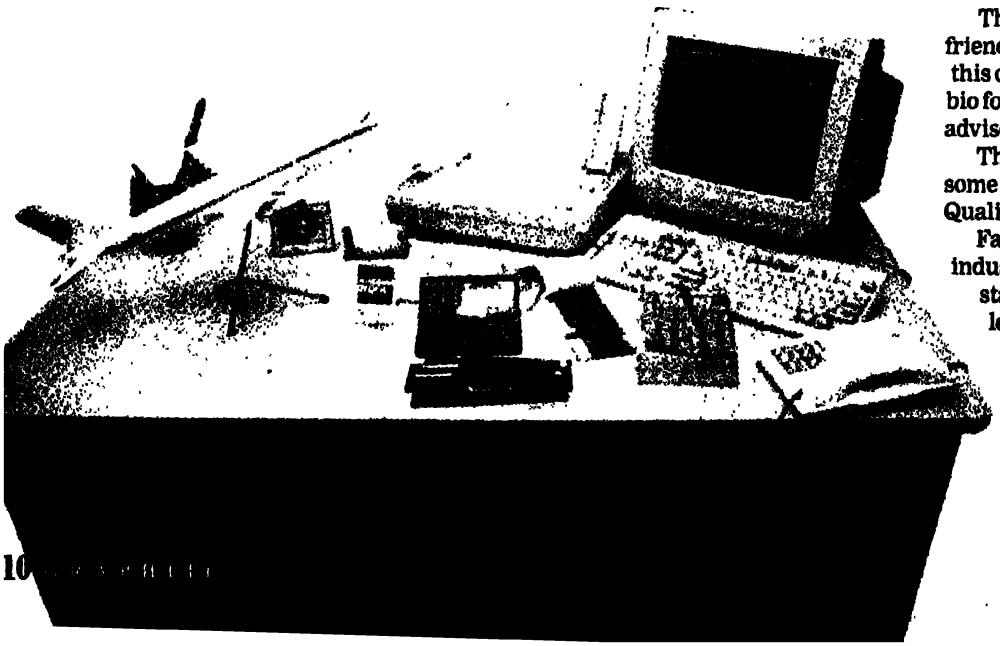
Business booms in September through June, when leisure and business travellers arrive in droves. But a bad day in the other months still means enough *moolah* by way of commissions that make a fairly 'decent' month's salary look like petty cash. Clearly, life's good in certain circles.

Given a fraction of business acumen I might just have run a travel agency. But for now I'll settle for make-belief. And I know of just the place where I can get away without a trace of suspicion. Outbound Travels. On its way to IATA recognition, highly recommended by *The Lonely Planet* guide to India and with several celebrity clients under its belt...it would do.

The bonus: the director is a good friend and yes, very open to the idea of this charade. "But just bung in your bio for complete authenticity," he advises.

The bio is duly submitted with some major tampering under Qualifications. I write:

Familiar with the Indian travel industry (read: know where all the state emporia are); have worked on leading CRS systems (read: have reported on Press briefings of some CRS systems); conducted tourist groups through Rajasthan (read, have taken the family to Jaipur



one weekend).

Without trepidation then, I push open the doors of Outbound one drizzly morning. It's 9.45 am, and I think I am one of the early birds. But I am in for a surprise — and a reprimand. "The new recruit are you? Prateek (the friend) told me about you. You're late," says a voice from behind a screen after I'd supplied my name and nature of business to nobody in specific.

And you must be the partner, I bark back, inaudibly. Recruit ... really! But unexpectedly, the indignation makes way for butterflies in the stomach. "Boys and girls, we have a new person on board," Pankaj Gupta announces, emerging from behind the screen.

The partner thinks this is as good a time as any to check the credentials of the new recruit. "You can read an airline schedule," more a statement than question. I jog my memory to occasions when I'd played tourist and had pored over gatefold airline schedules in all of 7 points print size. "Yeah," I say weakly. "Great, we're hooked onto Galileo." (Isn't he dead?)

Then to the more immediate business of the day. The partner throws at me: "A group is checking in later in the day after which they proceed for tea at an Indian home..." Why? Take them to a coffee shop instead, I interrupt enthusiastically; know most of them; great food and tourists love them.

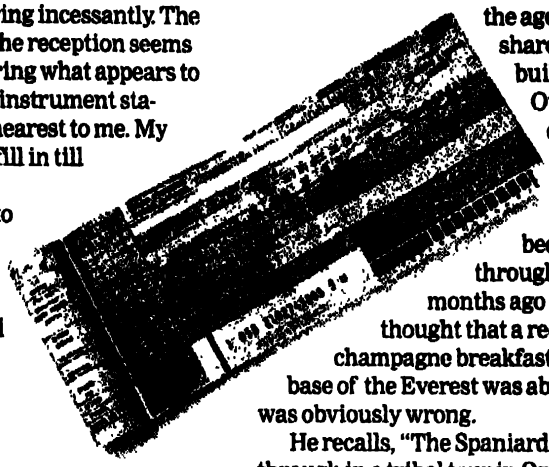
In a distinctly wintry tone he continues: "... as the itinerary has to build in an Indian experience." But why is he speaking to me like I was his nine-year-old daughter? The orders come next: act guide and group leader. "Given that you've led groups through Rajasthan in your last assignment, it should be a piece of cake for you."

Is this a veiled threat or my imagination working overtime? Anyway, the gauntlet had been thrown and I am missing office already.

Tourists arrive from all parts of the world but why should it fall in my lot to tackle an incentive group from China? (yeah, they too have incentives). Big bucks for Outbound Travels. For me: not even good copy. Where the dickens was Prateek? And how does one spell Deng Xiaoping?

The telephones ring incessantly. The lady manning the reception seems bent upon transferring what appears to be every call on the instrument stationed on the desk nearest to me. My brief is vague: just fill in till Prateek returns.

That translates to taking calls from clients making a booking on national and international sectors — noting details; cancelling bookings and some emergency reservations. Inquiries have also to be made from hotels for which bookings are sought.



> "Business booms in September through June, when leisure and business travellers arrive in droves"

"Are there rooms going in the chain's Jaipur property?" asks the second in command. Yes, indeed. I'd double checked and it was safe to pack the client off. "Pool?". "Of course, kidney shaped, cool waters, set amidst emerald green trees," I say. "I meant the tables actually." And round one to you.

Lunch hour comes around just as Prateek does. Lunch is laid out in the dining room. Conversation veers between discounts, new destinations, IATA's inability to process Outbound's applications with efficiency, and inevitably, industry failings.

Says Pankaj, "Agents don't get a fair deal from a lot of airlines or international tourism departments. How can I sell a destination without having seen it? Indian tourist trains, for example. I sell them all the time without having been on one myself. And guess who gets to travel everywhere for free, the red carpet rolled out all the way? Journalists."

Eavesdroppers, they say, (and obviously masqueraders) never get to hear good things about themselves. I bristle silently.

Then onto the eccentric demands some travellers made of agents. Navneet Sahni, director, Ivy League Travel Services, the agency that shares the building with Outbound, couldn't believe what he'd just been through. If some months ago he'd thought that a request for a champagne breakfast at the base of the Everest was absurd, he was obviously wrong.

He recalls, "The Spaniards I just led through in a tribal tour in Orissa were a difficult lot. One of them insisted on buying the headgear of the chieftain as souvenir. It took a lot of convincing that it wasn't decorative but ancestral."

Being an agent obviously has its moments.

The afternoon passes with some more reservations and one crisis. A cancelled flight runs the risk of throwing an entire itinerary to the winds, if it wasn't for the sporting tourists who opt to drive 14 gruelling hours to their next destination.

And I move on to mine. At home with the Chinese (thank God they brought an interpreter) in a sprawling south Delhi bungalow; an evening of bonhomie, exchanged addresses, flash bulbs, *samosas* and herbal tea. I want to ask them how to cook an authentic chopsuey, but desist.

When it is time to call it a day I realise that I have worked around the clock. Much later, even as I channel surf to settle for *The Bold and the Beautiful*, the phone rings.

It is the friend and he's in a hurry. "A client just called. He is on the 2 am flight to London; an emergency call and I've had to organise the tickets at an hour's notice."

So where do I fit in all this? "Since he's a valued customer, I'm meeting him at the airport to hand over the tickets and in case you'd forgotten, you're still on the rolls."

Correction. I worked more than around the clock that day. ■

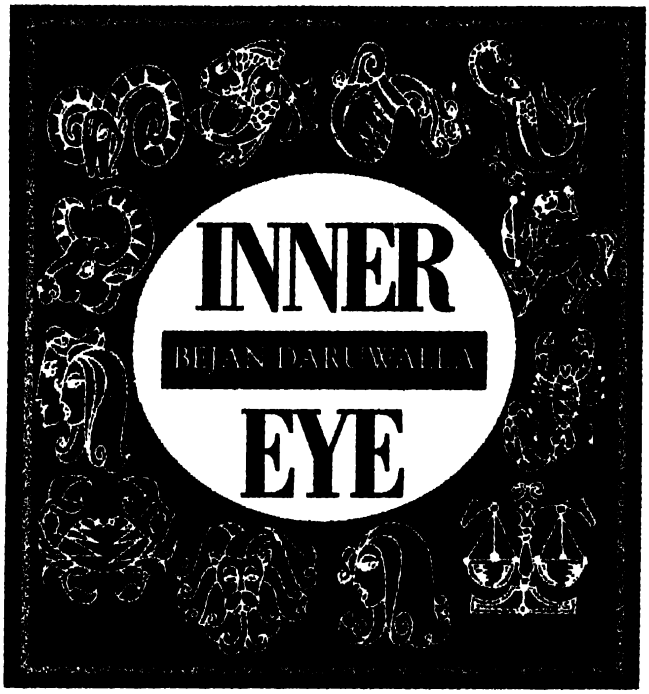
ARIES, (March 21- April 20) The full moon helps you forge links and ties, thus augmenting income and doubling your pleasure, and surely that's what life is all about.7-9 is about journey and news, visits, interviews and meets,11-13 is about career advancement and a little bit of fun. Take good care of your health as prevention is always better than cure.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) You will have to work with a will and vengeance. From the 14th, children, buying, selling and partying will be fascinating for you. Pets and projects, loans and funds do take up your time and energy. Well worth it, too. Marriage and romance are on cards and it would be good for you to welcome the same with a glad and grateful heart.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Success through less than normal channels! Mutually beneficial situations will work best now because of the full moon impact. Expansion is your mode of operation, therefore, please be jovial and optimistic. The essence and emphasis is on love and group activities. Therefore, you are bound to have a good time. Enjoy yourself!

CANCER, (June 21- July 20) Good time to make sweeping changes in your life which shut down an old situation and move you to a new one altogether. You will be honing your ambitions and skills very considerably. The home, too, will require a fair share of your attention. Do not invest in any stock or shares at the moment as it could prove disadvantageous. Children need your attention.

LEO, (July 21- August 21) You could drop a project for a hare-brained new idea or campaign ! Love may tug at your heart. Contracts and deeds will have to be signed. There is just too much going on in your life at the moment for real peace and rest. Don't worry as this is merely a temporary phase. You often tend to be conservative and matters require risks now.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) Don't be afraid to mess up as this is the only way one learns the tricks of the trade. Loans and funds and monetary dealings are emphasised for the next 23 days. You may rewrite your contracts, go to new commitments, upgrade and thoroughly modernise machines and more importantly, your mind and ideas. Shortly, you will learn to be more at ease.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Personal equations will clamour for a solution — love, marriage or even a business problem. You will have to attend to it. This week sees you involved in intense, hectic activity. Also the right time to play upto your hunches and give intuition a free rein. Be concrete and focussed as far as achieving your goals are concerned.

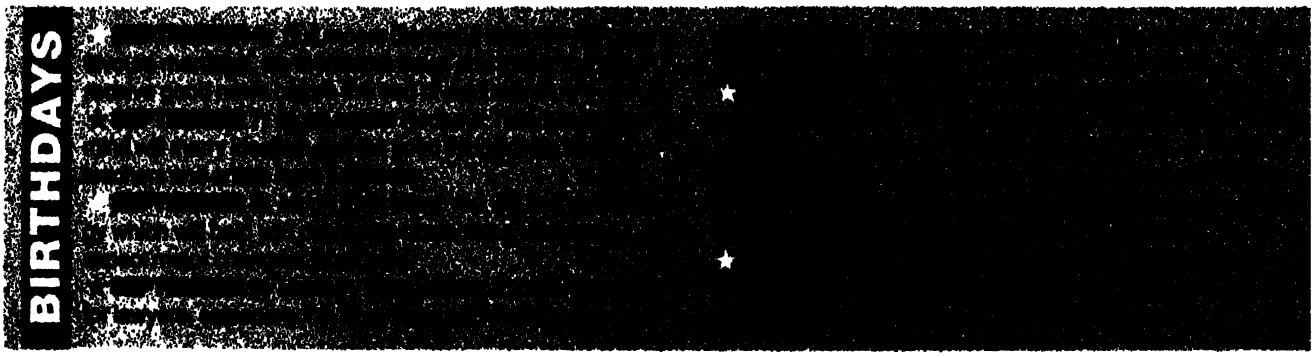
SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Having defined goals and objectives, realigned priorities last month, you now pursue these goals with single-minded dedication, shooting straight past the goal keeper in real French football style. The presence of Mars energises you, imbuing you with renewed zest and enthusiasm. All this makes for greater power and the determination to overcome all the obstacles on the way.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) Ganesha says work in secrecy and reserve your ammunition for your foes and rivals. Conflicts of interests are likely. Agreements could fall through, turn things around for you or may be get them amended or modified. Do a look-nice job, as the Americans say. Give things and matters a second look before agreeing.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) Clarify all information you receive and you will receive more than you can possibly chew. Moonlight and roses, love and story book romance, leisure and pleasure, funtimes and children is what this week has in store for you, but also playing Russian roulette in a game of chance. Ensure that you do not lose the affection of those you cherish.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Despite the introspective and detached tendencies that were initiated last week, there is a fair bit of running around and socialising. While on one hand, there is wish fulfillment, there is also plenty of anxiety. A paradoxical week with many opposite pulls; you are bound to be hated and loved in equal measure

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Though the health of someone really close to you, possibly someone older like you parents or in-laws, cause you grave concern, this is the time for reaping the benefits of your efforts and grinding hard work. The sweet music of money in the coffers, the social standing and the perquisites that you deserve come your way. Self-restraint ensures success.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Seema Goswami on Hillary Clinton Vs Monica Lewinsky

Going by appearances alone: There seem to be many similarities between the First Lady and Monica. Both have the same thick-set figures, with fat ankles and plump thighs. But while sensible Hillary sticks to knee-length skirts, the more adventurous Monica goes for hems that stop mid-thigh, thus providing several sizzling photo-opportunities while climbing in and out of the car.

Both also have the same perfectly-groomed, shoulder-length hair now, though Lewinsky preferred a wild, sexy, big-hair look in her pre-Grand Jury days.





That's where the similarities end, right?: While Hillary Clinton comes from a stable home, and has always been a high achiever, Monica Lewinsky's parents divorced when she was a little girl. A troubled teenage followed, during which Monica shuttled between schools, parents, and several psychiatrists. There was a lot of money, but not enough security, though Lewinsky did remain very close to her mother.

By the time she was in her 20s, Hillary was already on her way to becoming a successful lawyer — though she would have been far more successful if she hadn't decided to follow her husband, Bill Clinton, to his hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas (the equivalent of moving to Jabbalpur, Madhya Pradesh, after getting a management degree from IIM, Calcutta).

At the same age, Monica had no qualifications to her credit but had managed to use her connections to wangle a job as an unpaid intern at the White House. As she told an old friend, "I'm off to Washington to earn my presidential knee-pads," — a prophetic announcement, given the events that followed.

Look a little deeper, however: And there really isn't that much difference between the two women. For both of them, their men come first.

Hillary could have become the most successful lawyer of her generation, and made a place for herself in the political arena. But she preferred to devote her energies to bolstering her husband's political career, standing by his side as he first became Governor of Arkansas and then President of the United States of America. Whether it was the Gennifer Flowers mess or Monicagate, it was Hillary who helped Bill out of the mess. As far as Hillary was concerned, Bill had priority over everything else.

For both Monica and Hillary, their men come first

So, too, with Monica. Despite the fact that her life was shot to hell after the publicity surrounding her 'inappropriate relationship' with the President, Lewinsky resisted testifying against Clinton right until the bitter end. And even as she was wheeled on in front of the Grand Jury, her spokesperson announced to the world that this was the saddest day in Monica's life. She would have given anything to protect the President, but alas, that wasn't to be.

It is ironic, therefore: That now when President Clinton needs the support of these two women more than ever before, both of them appear estranged from him.

Hillary fought tooth and nail to have all mention of Monica deleted from Clinton's address to the nation (the original draft had the President apologising to his wife and daughter, to Monica, and to the American people). But as more and more details emerge about the Presidential affair — including stories of a naked Monica dancing in the Oval Office to amuse Bill, and the Presidential cigar being put to rather innovative uses — Hillary is appearing to distance herself from her husband.

Monica, too, was said to be devastated by the fact that Bill had dismissed their relationship as a series of casual sexual encounters, whereas she thought their's had been an emotional bonding. Informed sources had it that she felt betrayed and let-down — and you know what they say about a scorned woman's fury.

So, it seems as if a move to impeach may be the least of President Clinton's problems in the coming months. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Q : I am a 27-year-old unmarried girl and the only child of my parents. My mother is a school teacher. She has suffered a lot due to my father's irresponsible nature (he has been unemployed for the last 30 odd years). As a result, my mother expects a lot from me. I, too, have tried to do whatever has been expected of me but somehow, she never seems to be satisfied. Furthermore, I have no self-confidence and cannot do anything without my mother's approval. I am suffering from tremendous mental anguish and have no one to turn to. Please tell me how I can live upto the expectations of my mother and fulfil all her dreams.

PARNA GUPTA, CALCUTTA

I generally feel that it is not a good idea for parents to transfer the onus of guilt for the hurts they have suffered to their children. It is not really possible for you to live upto your mother's expectations, for she has not equipped you with the necessary confidence and faith in yourself. Each human being needs a centre, a core of self-confidence and belief, and we all have to protect our inner selves zealously. I would suggest that you forget your mother's dreams and expectations, and instead think of your own. What is your image of personal happiness? What are the things that make you feel secure and good, that give you satisfaction? Visualise the scenario which is most suited to your dreams and which is also compatible with the immediate reality of your life and work towards it. It is possible, if you have the right attitude, to grab happiness from each and every situation.

I WANT TO BREAK FREE

Q : I am an unassertive man coming from a conservative family. Though I am well-qualified, I work as an ordinary assistant in a government office. As my parents insist that I stay and work in Calcutta itself, I have had to forego innumerable job opportunities outside Calcutta. Except for security, my present job has very little to offer in terms of financial remuneration, promotional opportunities, social prestige and job satisfaction. Apart from this, my wife and I realised, soon after our marriage that we had very little attraction for each other. Besides, she is very ill-tempered and cantankerous. Presently, we do not have any kind of physical relationship. Thus, I lead a meaningless, wretched existence, starved of all love, romance, social recognition or any sense of achievement. Every day, I pray that the day passes by without having to hear harsh words from my wife and parents, but this is rarely the case. Please offer your valued suggestions.

PRADEEP ROY, CALCUTTA.

MONEY MATTERS

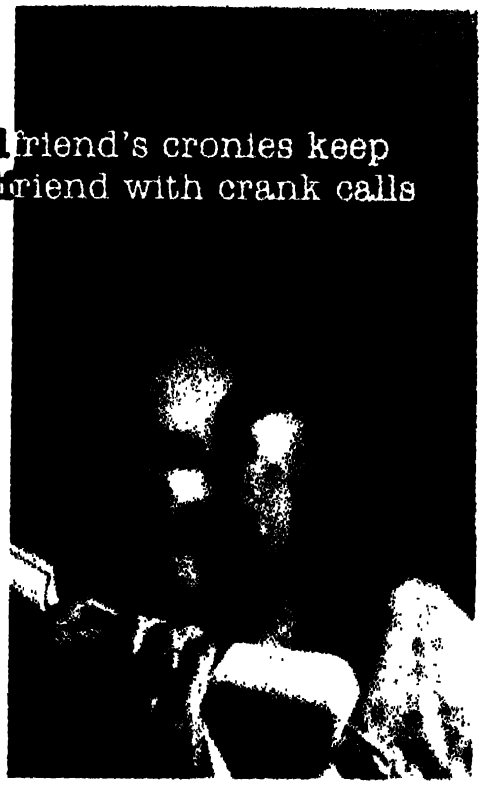
I am a 20-year-old girl studying in college. My parents have given me all kinds of material comforts. However, when any kind of small conflict arises, they always insult me saying that they are spending a lot of money on me and that I am a liability for them. They always bring everything down to the monetary level. They also never take me seriously and make me feel financially dependent on them. This makes me feel very depressed. Please advise.

MOUMITA GUHA, BHUBANESHWAR

Probably your parents are not even aware of how much their insensitive remarks are hurting you. The answer to your dilemma is obvious. You must work towards a career and financial independence, for clearly your nature resents dependence and condescension. Apart from this, do not waste your time being touchy and nursing a grouse. Instead, concentrate on building your independence, self-confidence and self-worth. Good luck!

You are yet another victim of misguided parental aspirations. I would suggest that you immediately take your life into your own hands. Find a job that gives you a sense of satisfaction and self-worth and take it, wherever it may be. Leave your parents and wife to themselves for a while, although you must ensure that you do your duty in financial terms by apportioning a part of your salary to them. Dare to bo yourself, and face the consequences. The only rule in the game is not to shirk your responsibilities. I wish you joy, happiness, adventure
and success.

Some of my ex-girlfriend's cronies keep harassing my girlfriend with crank calls



PABITRA DAS

A FAILURE IN LIFE

Q : I am 51 years old and have been a complete failure in my life in all respects. I spurned good job offers on a whim, I am divorced and have poor relations with my children. I have a relationship with a married woman but even that is in a mess, thanks to my tantrums. I suffer from quick temper, I am very demanding and I can't get along with people. I am lonely and miserable all the time as most of my friends have also deserted me. Can you help me?

A. SEN, CALCUTTA

Now that you have listed out all the factors that have lead to your isolation from friends and well-wishers, I feel you are just a step away from sorting things out. I think you are an impulsive, impetuous sort of a person who has not spent enough effort on your communication skills. It is only by maintaining a sincere degree of conversation and communication with other human beings whose lives are bound up with ours that we can achieve personal harmony. I would suggest that you spend time, effort and ego in rebuilding bridges with your children, your lady friend, your other friends, and possibly even your ex-wife. This will initially be viewed with surprise and suspicion, and then a lot of old hurts and griefs will be aired, but at some stage, the whole exercise will be positive and beneficial to all concerned. And yes, you absolutely must set new career and achievement goals for yourself. Remember, life begins at 51. Keep in touch.

SILLY SUGGESTIONS

Q 6: I am a 16-year-old girl studying in Class XI. I think I am not very good in studies and therefore, I have taken up Arts. As a result of this, I feel hopeless. I wish to do some good in life but do not see how that is possible. I am, however, good at singing though I may be mediocre in studies. Please tell me how I should lead a more meaningful life?

SWEETY, SINDRI

Every single life is meaningful and no human being is ever mediocre, it is only our environments and opportunities that may be deficient in unlocking our actual potential. It is clear that somebody has been hammering at your self-esteem for not having an aptitude for Science. Please have the good sense to ignore such silly suggestions. The Arts provide a wonderful opportunity to understand the entire range and scope of human nature. Read a little apart from your text books and then see what draws your interest and aptitude. There is a range of career options available after a Humanities degree. Continue to concentrate upon your singing, and aim for the stars in whatever you do.

PAST AND PRESENT

Q : I am a 28-year-old professionally qualified man. Some time ago, I was involved with an Anglo-Indian girl.Soon I found out that she was secretly dating other boys as well. When I confronted her, she became volatile. She also turned her parents against me and the affair ended very messily. Presently, I am dating a very attractive 24-year-old girl. However, my erstwhile girl-friend is creating problems. Some of her friends keep making crank calls to my girl friend, harassing her by telling her baseless things about me. I have often thought of informing the police but decided against it as it would hurt the parents of my ex-girl friend. I still respect them a lot as they are quite nice to me. Please advise.

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA.

The best option is to completely ignore your ex-girl friend, as any reaction will only provoke her to more vituperation. However, whenever she does interact with your present girl-friend, you could advise the latter to report any crank calls to the telephone department to be traced. Your girl friend could also tell your ex that she has no interest in your past, and generally maintain a cool and indifferent facade. You could also try meeting her parents and ask them to explain things to their daughter, for apart from harassing you, she is also exposing herself to public embarrassment and ridicule. In my experience, such messy and silly situations just recede if at least one of the parties concerned manages to maintain their composure and dignity. ■

MIXED Bag

CRY FREEDOM

● The celebration of 50 years of India's Independence have witnessed a burst of creativity, not always meaningful. To question the frenzy of jubilation, two graduates from the Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia University, Shefali Bhashan and Sudhesh Unni Raman, decided to make a film, *Azaadi*, exactly a year ago.

This was a reaction to the commercialisation of the 50th anniversary celebrations, with patriotism being reduced to nothing more than a marketing gimmick. Since there wasn't any hope of raising funds, Bhushan and Raman took the initiative of using their savings and even "begging and borrowing" to execute their dream.

On August 15, they flagged off their venture through a street-corner screening because the film would have lost its impact if seen in a closed hall. The idea was to reach out to anyone who cared to stop and watch.

The film, a 12-minute documentation of the gruesome reality of India, jeered at the wide incidence of pop patriotism which has become fashionable. Stark images of child labour, incessant agitations and manual labourers working under inhuman conditions were juxtaposed with ads of fizzy drinks, which seem to have become our emblem for celebrating 50 years of freedom.



Keeping the Spirit Alive

The golden jubilee celebrations of the country's independence seem to be far from over. Keeping the spirit of of *azaadi* alive was 'The Ballad of Freedom' that came just when we thought the celebrations had drawn to a close. The ballet, a confluence of talents, tapped a varied spectrum of creative arts — from Indian classical dance to French ballet. The credit for the conceptualisation and presentation goes to Provista, an entertainment company involved with creative arts. The Indian facet of the ballet explored the diversity, antiquity and richness of Kathak through the experienced renderings of noted danseuse Shovana Narayan. The Western edge in the ballet was provided by Gille Chuyane, a French ballet dancer, who excels not only in Western but Indian classical dance forms too. An integral part of the presentation was the flute recital by noted flautist G. Rajan while television and theatre personality Sunit Tandon played the *sutradhar*.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Tone up your midriff; cropped

Designs on Dhaka

Krishna Mehta has been retailing her ethnic ensembles out of Designer's Den, Dhaka, for the last one year. This season she has the opportunity to showcase her line of ethnicwear for a good cause as well. Mehta is having a solo show-cum-auction in Dhaka at the Pan Pacific Sonar Gaon Hotel, the proceeds of which will go to a Bangladeshi charity for street children, The Foundation for Social Justice.

The show, on September 22, will be choreographed by Hemant Trivedi and 15 of



SPREADING THE GOOD WORD

Osho (previously known as Bhagwan Rajneesh) lives on, through his books and discourses. At Delhi's Book Fair, two of Osho's books — *Vyast Jeevan Mein Ishwar ki Khoj* in Hindi and *The Message Beyond Words*, a translation of the *Kathopanishad* in English — were released by Union home minister, Ramakrishna Hegde.



In *Vyast Jeevan Mein Ishwar ki Khoj*, Osho talks about the search for the divine even when one is busy with day-to-day activities. "To look for the divine there is no need to do anything separate. The search for the divine is a consciousness, it is not an act, it is a doing...," he writes.

In the *Message Beyond Words*, young Nachiketa enters into a dialogue with Yama, the Lord of Death. Osho's observation runs thus: "To know life, one has to learn the art of dying. And one who is afraid of death, will remain unacquainted with life, because death is the innermost and the most mysterious centre of life."

Osho is not a conventional author in the sense that he has actually never written a book. He has spoken spontaneously on many topics and discourses which have been transcribed and compiled into books, most of which have been translated into 45 different languages.

Over a million Osho books and tapes are sold annually and on every second day an Osho book is published. As columnist M.V. Kamath puts it, "Perhaps in the next 100 years, Osho's books would have sold more than the *Bible*."

SUFI ROMANCE

● His works are admired far and wide. But not many people know that a bulk of them have been inspired by Sufi poetry and music — something that Manjit Bawa has practically grown up with. But if you believe that Bawa's romance with Sufism was confined to making it the inspiration of his canvases and of his musical evenings (he even sings Sufi songs!), think again. Bawa now plans to make a film on Sufism.

The idea came to Bawa and his friend, Madan Gopal, with whom he sings Sufi *kalaam* at informal gatherings with friends. It became stronger after the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, the maestro of Sufi *kalaam*, promised to lend his voice



and music to the effort. His untimely death did put a damper on the project, but Bawa says it is still very much on. He hopes to rope in Mani Ratnam or someone of his calibre as director.

But what kind of a film will this be? Bawa wants it to be one that would appeal to mainstream film-buffs. So, in all probability, it will be a love story that will weave into its frame the magic of Sufi philosophy.

and belly buttons are the flavour of this season



the country's leading clotheshorses will walk the ramp to display Mehta's line.

"We are hoping to raise two-three million takas through the event, which will go towards women and children seeking social justice against violence in the country," says Rizwan-Bin-Farouq, organiser of the show.

It took the designer five months to put together the eight sequences and 140 garments on display. Mehta has desisted from borrowing from ethnic Bangladeshi motifs; rather her clothes represent an ethnic Asian melting pot.

On display will be lace sarees and *ghagras* teamed with embroidered blouses; *bandhej* sarees and *ghagras* with tissue blouses; and silk *kurtas* teamed with heavily embroidered velvet boleros. "All items here are such that people from all over the Asian continent will identify with them. Essentially, what goes here for a Pakistani lady will at once appeal to her Indian, Sri Lankan or Bangladeshi counterpart as well," says Mehta of her latest collection.

Prices at the top end hover around Rs 1.5 lakh for a *lehnga*, which dips to just about Rs 15,000 for a *choli* or a *kurta*. Some of the models who will be walking the ramp are Noyonika Chatterjee, Madhu Sapre, Bipasha Basu, Ujwala Raut, Rajlakshmi Soni, Bikram Saluja and Himanshu Malik.

RASOI

The food column



Back to the roots

Jiggs Kalra on some lost recipes to please the palate

Team Rasoi's search for the culinary Holy grail has come to fruition. We have wandered long and far, pursuing lost recipes for aphrodisiac foods. We have been fortunate to have for a guide Hakeem Safdar Nawab, the eighth generation practitioner of *Unani Tib*. The recipes below are not what the doctor prescribed for the ailments. They have, however, retained the distilled essence to please the palate. The *nushka* has been altered to prevent its abuse.

Lehm-e-Murghan

INGREDIENTS

- 24 ***Machchli*/ boned shanks of kid/lamb**

The Marination

- 20ml/4tsp (30 ml/2tbs) ***Chakodra* juice (lemon juice)**
- 0.75g/1/4 tsp ***Zarraqoosh* powder**
- **Salt**

The *Lehm-e-Murghan Majoon*

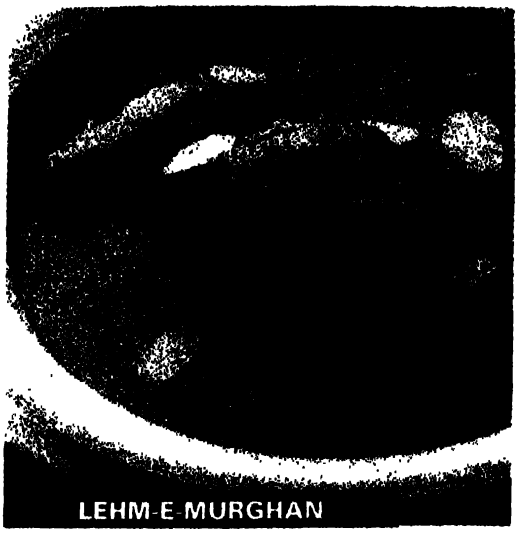
- **16 Cashewnuts**
- 10g/2½tsp ***Chironji***
- 4.5g/1½tsp ***Nariyal ka burada/kopra*/dessicated coconut**
- 3g/1tsp ***Khus khus*/poppy seeds**
- ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter to fry**

The Bouquet *Garni*

- 8 ***Lavang*/cloves**
- 4 ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom**
- 2 ***Motti elaichi*/black cardamom**
- 1 flower ***Javitri*/mace**
- 1 stick ***Daalchini*/cinnamon (1")**

The Gravy

- 100g/1/2 cup ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 60g/2oz **Onions**
- **Salt**
- 5.5g /1tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 1.5g/1/4 tsp **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 60g /2 oz **Yoghurt**
- 4.5g/1½ tsp ***Dhania*/coriander powder**
- 1.5g/1/2 tsp **Red chilli powder**
- 600ml/2½ cups **Clear kid/lamb stock**
- 2.25g/3/4tsp **Black pepper (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)**
- 0.375g/1/8tsp ***Haobaer* powder**



LEHM-E-MURGHAN

- 0.375g/1/8 tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- A small pinch ***Motti elaichi*/black cardamom powder**
- A small pinch ***Javitri*/mace powder**
- A small pinch ***Lavang*/clove powder**
- A small pinch ***Jaiphal*/nutmeg powder**
- 1 drop ***Kewra***

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

PREPARATION

- The Marination: Put all the ingredients in large enough bowl, add 240ml/1 cup of water, mix well, evenly rub *machchli* and reserve for 15 minutes.(*chakodra* or *khatta* is a rough and thick-skinned 'member' of the lemon family and the sharp tanginess of its juice makes for an excellent tenderiser and marinade. (*Chakodra* is usually pickled. It is easily available. Just in case you cannot find it, use the juice of lemons instead).

- The *Majoon*: Heat enough oil in a frying pan, add cashewnuts and fry over medium heat until golden, drain and keep aside. In the same oil, fry *chironji*, poppy seeds and dessicated coconut, drain and keep aside. Put all the ingredients in a blender, add 30ml/2tbs (or a little more if required) of water and make a smooth paste. Ideally, grind the paste with a *sil-batta*.

- The Bouquet *Garni*: Put all the ingredients in a mortar and pound with a pestle to break the spices, fold in a piece of muslin and secure with enough string for it to hang over the rim of the *handi*/pan.

- The Gravy: Peel, wash and slice half (30g/1oz) the onions, grind the other half into a smooth paste. Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander and red chillies, and whisk to homogenize.

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add the sliced onions and saute over medium heat until golden. Increase to high heat, drain (to remove excess marinade) and add meat and salt, *bhunno*/stir fry for 1½-2 minutes to sear. Reduce to medium heat, add onions, garlic and ginger pastes and *bhunno*/stir fry for a minute. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in the yoghurt mixture, return the *handi*/pan to heat, add the bouquet *garni* and *bhunno*/stir fry until the fat leaves the sides. Then add the stock, bring to a boil, reduce to medium heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the meat is cooked. Reduce to low heat, stir in the *majoon* and then cover and simmer, stirring occasionally for 5 minutes. Now reduce to very low heat, add pepper, *haobaer*, green cardamom, black cardamom, mace, cloves and nutmeg, stir, cover and simmer (remember over very low heat) for ten minutes. Remove from heat, remove and discard the bouquet *garni*, add *kewra*, stir and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

Remove to a service dish, garnish with green chillies and coriander, serve with *roomali roti* or *phulka*.

Kaliya Amber

INGREDIENTS

The Mangoes

- 8 Raw mangoes (medium)
- 110g/1/2 cup Sugar

The *Majoon*

- 16 Almonds
- 4.5g/1½tsp *Nariel ka burada*/kopra/dessicated coconut
- 3g/1tsp *Khus khus*/poppy seeds
- *Desi ghee*/clarified butter to fry .
- 0.5g/1tsp *Zaafraan*/saffron (sun dry and crush flakes)

The Bouquet *Garni*

- 4 *Lavang*/cloves
- 4 *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom
- 2 *Motti elaichi*/black cardamom
- 1 stick *Daalchini*/cinnamon (1")

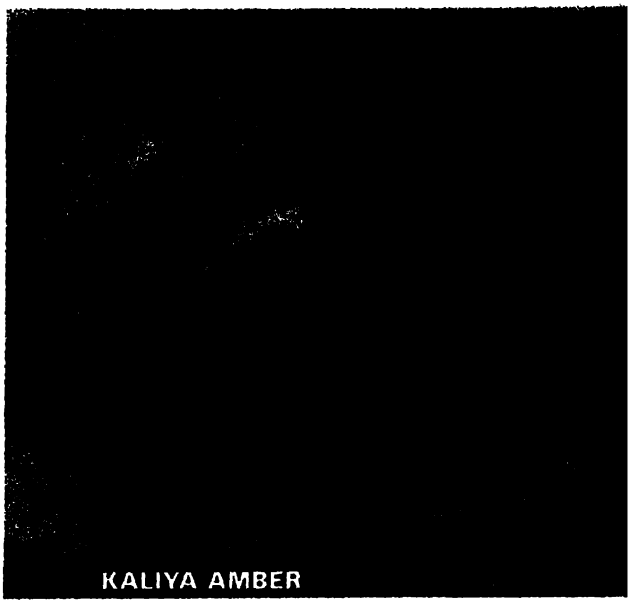
The Gravy

- 75g/6 tbs *Desi ghee*/clarified butter
- 45g/1/4 cup Onions (pulse to a smooth paste in a blender)
- 10g/1¾tsp Ginger paste (strain)
- 5g/1tsp Garlic paste (strain)
- 150g/5 oz Yoghurt
- 4.5g/1¼ tsp *Dhania*/coriander powder
- 3g/1tsp *Kashmiri deghi mirch* powder
- 2.25g/3/4 tsp *Haldee*/turmeric powder
- .375g/1/8 tsp *Haober* powder
- .375g/1/8 tsp *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder
- 720ml/3 cups Clear vegetable stock
- A small pinch *Motti elaichi*/black cardamom powder
- A small pinch *Javitri*/Mace powder
- A small pinch *Lavang*/clove powder
- A small pinch *Jaiphal*/nutmeg powder
- 1 drop *Kewra*
- Salt

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 35 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The raw mangoes: Peel, cut horizontally along the pit to obtain two slices and discard the pits. Boil sugar with 60ml/1/4 cup of water over medium heat for 2 minutes, stirring constantly to make syrup, add mango slices, bring to a boil, remove and reserve. Hold slices aloft to drain excess sugar just prior to cooking. Discard the sugar.
● The *Majoon:* Heat enough oil in a frying pan, add almonds and fry over medium heat until golden, drain and keep aside. In the same oil, fry poppy seeds and desiccated coconut, drain and keep aside. Put all the ingredients in a blender, add 30ml/2tbs (or a little more, if required) of water and make a smooth paste. Ideally, grind the paste with a *sil-batta*.
● The Bouquet *Garni:* Put all the ingredients in a mortar and pound with a pestle to break the spices, fold in a piece of muslin and secure with enough string for it to hang over the rim of the *handi*/pan.
● The Gravy: Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander, *deghi mirch* and turmeric, and whisk to homogenize.


KALIYA AMBER

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add onions, saute over medium heat until translucent and glossy, add ginger and garlic pastes, and *bhunno*/stir fry until onions are light golden. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in yoghurt mixture, return *handi*/pan to heat, add bouquet *garni* and *bhunno*/stir fry until specks of fat begin to appear on the surface. Then add stock and salt, bring to boil, reduce to medium heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until reduced by a third. Reduce to low heat, stir in the *majoon*, simmer for a minute, add mangoes and bring to a boil. Reduce to low heat, add *haobaer*, green cardamom, black cardamom, mace, cloves and nutmeg, and simmer, stirring occasionally — and carefully — for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat, remove and discard the bouquet *garni*, add *kewra*, stir and adjust the seasoning.■

OUT OF THE *Closet*

SONAL MANSINGH

Proves that her wardrobe is as colourful as her life

Let me confess at the outset, my closets are not among the tidiest. I have so much of stuff, my dance costumes and other clothes, and chunky jewellery that most of my wardrobes are simply stuffed with them. So I am going to lay open one of the better ones for you!

I have a very sharp and clear idea of colours and design and unlike my sister, who takes hours shopping and stopping at 15 shops before she picks up one thing, I take minutes to decide what I want and buy it.

I basically like strong colours because they make a certain statement and reflect a strong identity. Often people don't prefer to stick to one colour range. I cannot stand pastels. Somehow, even looking at them makes me sick. I find them too dull and boring. As for the textures, I like silks and cottons, as textured fabrics.

I have had these phases when I have preferred a particular kind of apparel. Years ago, I was on a *lungi* trip, then came the skirts, trousers and *saris*. So I have in my wardrobe, a sizable collection of skirts and *lungis*. One of them is an old *ghagra* (now it fits as a skirt) that my mother had bought for me from Kutch, when I was in class V! It is an exquisite piece. The blood red colour of the *khadi* is so vibrant and the mirror and thread work is intact. I wear it to dinners with a sleeveless top and it makes a perfect evening outfit.

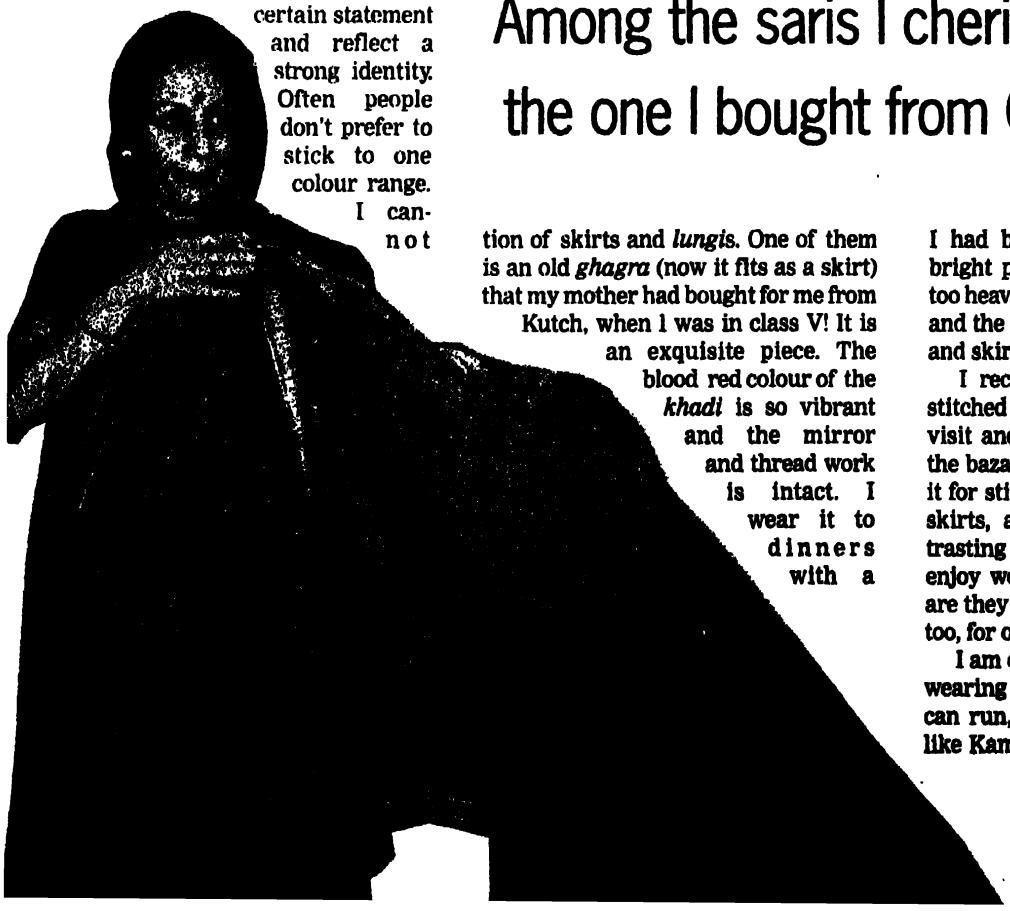
Then there is a Mexican *ghagra*, which is one of my favourites. It is gay and bright without being aggressive. In fact, it is a costume of one of the Mexican provinces that I had visited, and I fell in love with it the moment I saw it.

I also have a rather old *lungi*, which I had bought from Malaysia. It has bright peacock colours that would be too heavy on the eye. So I wear the *lungi* and the top separately with a plain top and skirt.

I recently had about six *ghagras* stitched from Jaipur. I was on a short visit and bought the material outside the bazaar near the City Palace. I gave it for stitching there itself and got the skirts, all ready with beautiful contrasting borders, the next morning. I enjoy wearing them because not only are they convenient but very practical, too, for our Indian weather.

I am on a sari trip these days. I love wearing them on all occasions. In fact, I can run, walk, skip and trip in them like Kamal Hassan! Among the saris I

> "I am on a sari trip these days. Among the saris I cherish the most is the one I bought from Chattisgarh"









KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

VIVID AND VARIED

There is a Mexican *ghagra* which is gay and bright without being aggressive. I also have a rather old *lungi*, which I had brought from Malaysia. It has bright peacock colours that would be too heavy on the eye. So I wear the *lungi* and the top separately with a plain top and skirt. As for jewellery, my personal inclination is towards silver and pieces made from materials like wood, bead or even jute

cherish the most is the one I bought from Chattisgarh 20 years ago. The weave, the cloth, the design are all simply stunning. Even after 20 years, neither has the *rani* pink colour faded nor has the weave thinned at any place.

The Chattisgarhi sari, for instance, has two *pallavs*, because the womenfolk work in the fields. So to avoid wear and tear, they have this second *pallav*, which is thick and wraps around the waist and lasts longer.

Heavy jewellery does not interest me specially when I look at women loaded with gold and diamonds and rubies and uncut emeralds, loops of pearls, chokers, shiny gold bangles and bracelets right up to their elbows. It makes me feel like a Robin Hood who would like to rob them of their glittering gems to nourish and feed at least a few thousands.

My personal inclination is towards silver and pieces made from materials like wood, beads or even jute. Metals like copper and brass lend themselves very well for costume jewellery which can more than match those glittering diamonds.

What lies under the sari wrap is my sundry collection of *salwaar kameezes* which I find very convenient to wear for both formal and non-formal occasions. Also, there lie, framed, wrapped and packed, three paintings which I picked from Peru. The paintings are prized possessions because they depict Mary in different attire. In one, she is standing dressed like the Empress of Spain, stiff but beautiful. In another, she is wearing a Spanish flamenco dress, with plumes and what have you, and baby Christ is nestling in her arms.

I firmly believe that less is more. Elegance and aesthetics stem from an intuitive understanding of the environment and one's own responses to modern-day problems created by too much technology. I strive to live normally and without too many artificial encumbrances.

AS TOLD TO GEETA SHARMA

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 23 years old and have a severe problem of acne to the extent that there is pus in the pimples. Please suggest a remedy. I have tried so many remedies but to no avail.
SANGITA ADHIKARI, CALCUTTA

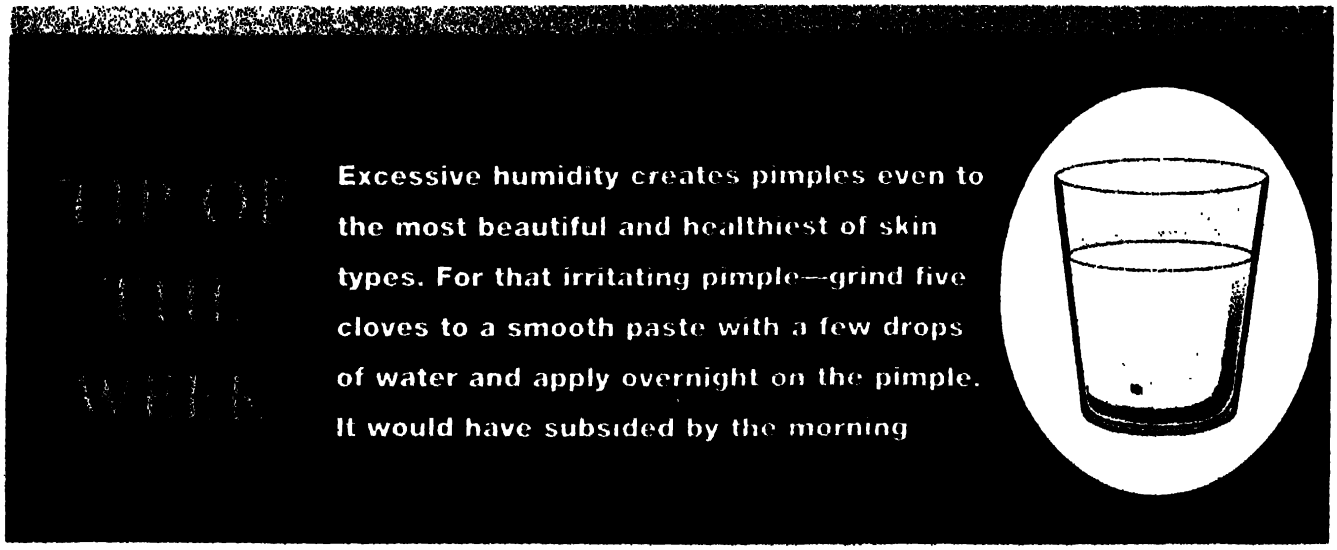
It is not just what you put onto your skin but also what your whole lifestyle is all about. I would advise you to stop eating fried, heavy gravy foods, sweets and any aerated drinks. Check to see that you have a clean stomach, if not, use a natural digestive like spinach or a glass of warm milk at night. Wipe the skin with a camphor and mint based tonic, or rosewater to which you have added one tsp of powdered camphor. There should be no oiliness and greasiness on the skin. Also start to use a face pack of neem leaves, fullers earth and rose water and apply all over the face. Leave on till dry and wash off with ice cold water. The most important rule about treating pimples is to keep the skin scrupulously clean. Wash the face regularly and never ever pinch or squeeze pimples.

I am 18 years old and a regular reader of your column. I would like to know whether bleaching is bad for the skin. I have been bleaching for years now and whatever one may say, it does make the skin look fairer instantly.
ABHA MATHUR, PATNA

I wonder what is more important to you, a temporary fair skin which will be damaged in the long run or a healthy looking skin that glows. Bleaching is harmful for the skin and can lead to skin burns as well as pigmentation. Because of the strong content of chemicals, it can often damage the skin beyond repair. Try using natural skin lighteners like lemon, potato, cucumber, milk and sandalwood extracts to make your skin fairer. I have seen the most tanned complexions become complete disasters when they have been bleached. Right now, you have a young skin which can take a lot but as the skin ages, there will be less resistance especially from chemical based products. Avoid chemical based products and see your skin acquire a permanent smile.

I am 27 years old and have just delivered a baby girl. I have stretch marks on my stomach and arms. Please suggest a way to get rid of them.
LILY CHEN, DARJEELING

Stretch marks can be stubborn, so you must handle them with care and patience. Massage the area with almond and coconut oil mixed together. This must be done daily before bathing in firm, upward strokes. Have a balanced diet without consuming too much of fat or carbohydrates. Try to take up some sort of



fitness routine like jogging, brisk walking or light stretching exercise to tone up the muscles and prevent further sagging of the skin. Basically, stretch marks are caused due to sudden loss or gain of weight. With patience and a regular beauty care therapy, you will definitely see positive results.

I am 15 years old and have a normal skin and hair type. But somehow, my hair doesn't seem to shine at all. Please advise.

ASHU KOHLI, CALCUTTA

Just like our bodies require nourishment, so does our hair and skin. Perhaps your diet is not really sufficient—take lots of fresh fruits and salads. Plenty of dairy products like butter, milk, curd, cheese and even pure *ghee* are good for you. Make it a point to oil your hair at least once a week followed with turban therapy. Avoid sugary food and drink and take plenty of fresh juice and water. Home made fresh vegetable broths are excellent at times and not only will it give you internal nourishment but also make your hair shine. I have come across many youngsters who are on a permanent diet for reasons unknown, and end up having extremely unhealthy looking skin. It is mainly a result of improper eating habits. Similarly, even the hair is affected by bad eating habits and inactive lifestyles. So beware and live a healthy lifestyle and watch your hair shine. Keep your combs and brushes extremely clean.

I am 22 years old and have just started working. I used to have a very healthy skin but now it has started breaking out into pimples, making it look dull. Please advise.

SUROMA ROY, CALCUTTA

It is possible that your eating habits have changed and you tend to eat at odd hours and consume outside food which is often oily and unhygienic. Start using neem based soap and keep your skin clean at all times. Wipe your face with cold rose water and do not pick at pimples.

I have often seen that the tendency to be constantly sipping at cups of tea and coffee is quite characteristic of young working people. Avoid this at all cost and instead start to take fresh lime water, soda or simply water. When you invite someone for tea or coffee, restrain from taking it yourself as it will only worsen your pimple problem. Also, try to regularise your life. Many times, erratic lifestyles also cause chaos to the skin and hair.

I am 20 years old and have an extremely dry skin in spite of the fact that I use cold cream on my face daily. I tried using sandalwood and *besan* but they were not really useful.

tried coconut oil but it wasn't very effective. Please help me get rid of these marks.

SUNITA AGGARWAL, CALCUTTA

It is unfortunate that you have these marks for they will take a long time to disappear. Why don't you try the following *uptan:* the ingredients you could use are ground *masoor* dal, powdered rice, gram flour (all one cup each) mixed with lemon juice and milk. Apply this mixture over the affected areas.When dry, dab with milk and scrub off. The more you scrub, the more you will benefit. But remember to do this in gentle, circular motions. After three weeks, you will see a difference to the skin. But you have to be patient and apply the mixture every day.

TO MAKE YOUR SHAMPOO AT HOME

Mix ingredients like *amla* powder, *shikakai* powder, *reetha* powder, lime juice, glycerine, *khus* and char. Boil all in water until the mixture reduces to half its quantity



Please suggest a natural remedy to keep my skin soft and moisturised.

KUSUM CHATTERJEE, DURGAPUR

You may need internal nourishment as well external. I would advise you to massage your face with fresh cream and honey daily for about 10 minutes and then wash off. Include lots of dairy products in your diet as well as nuts, almonds, figs etc. Avoid using soaps on your skins or any such drying agents. I would also advise you to use honey as a face pack to nourish your skin.This can be done about twice a week for good results. In fact, you will see the effects in the next few months.

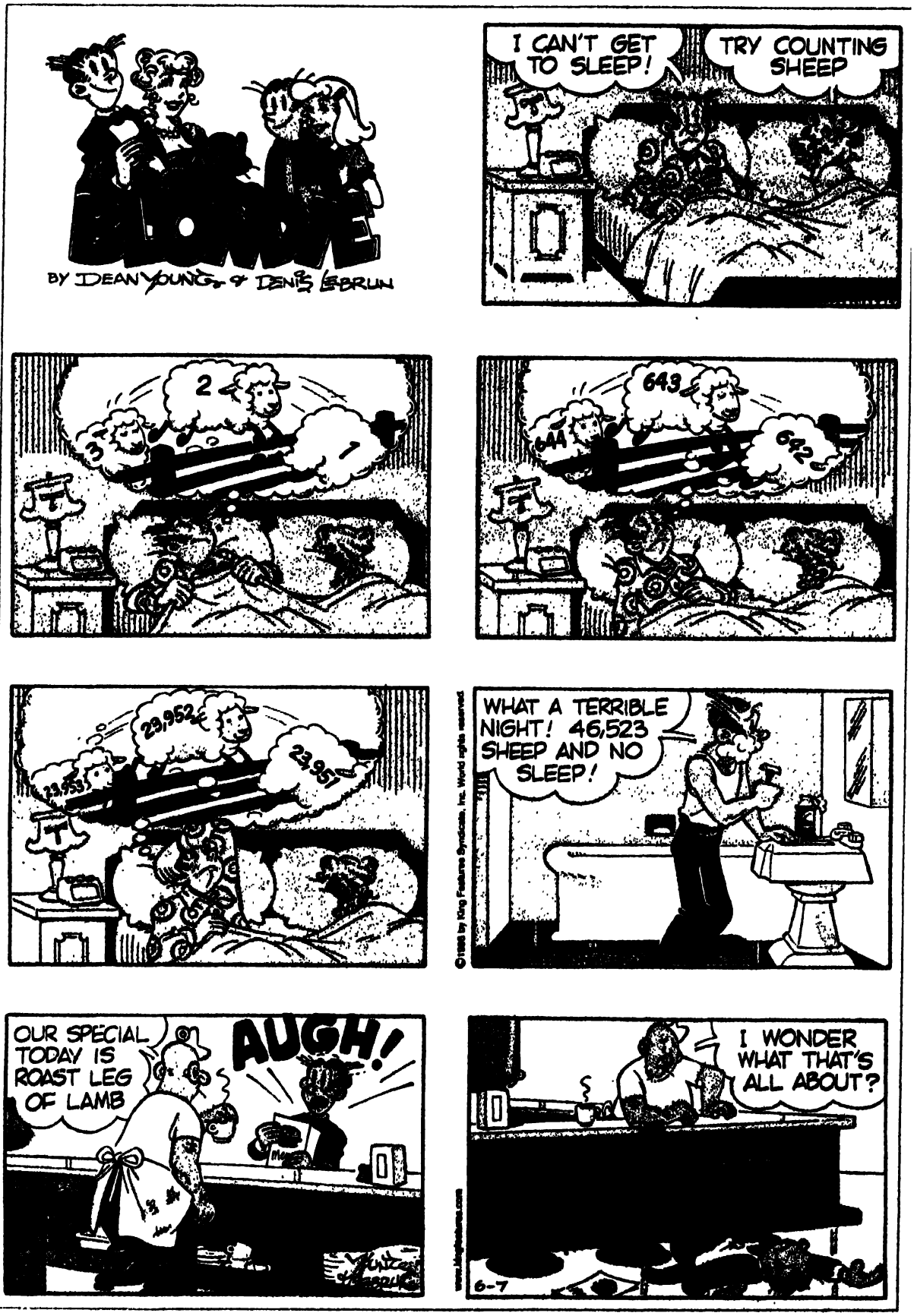
I am a 15-year-old girl. When I was a kid, I used to scratch on mosquito bites, little realising the consequences. Now I have ugly, black marks all over my arms and legs. I have

I am a 20-year-old woman and suffer from bad breath. I find your tips very helpful. I never believed in home remedies but your column has been an eye opener of sorts.

AMEETA ROY, CALCUTTA

Well thank you, and I am glad that there is a movement back to nature. I'd suggest that you first get a dental check-up done to check for any decay in the teeth or gums or even any sort of infection. Also, check to see that you do not suffer from constipation as this could lead to mouth odour. Make a mouthwash at home with the following ingredients: aniseed, cloves, cardamom, mint leaves and cinnamon. Take 10 gms of each and boil in a litre of water until it reduces to half. Use daily as a mouthwash. ■

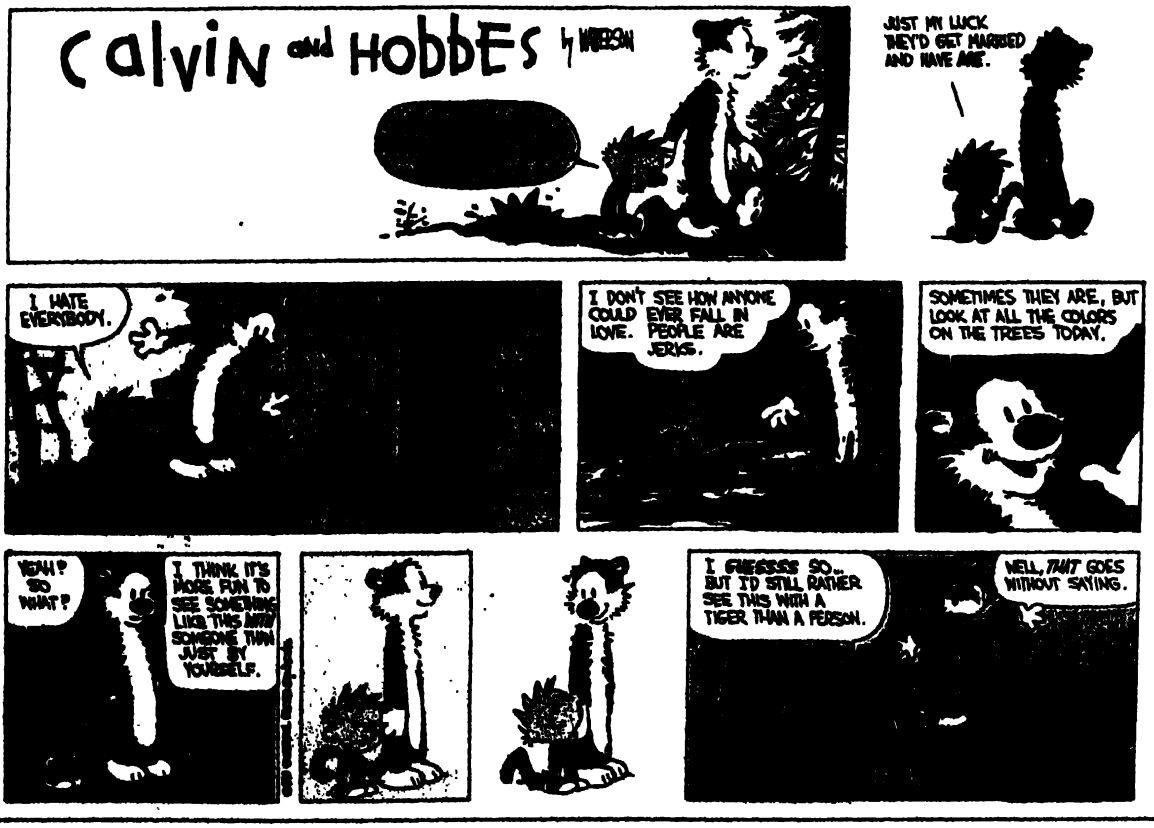
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Stan Drake



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2 5 6	IC-744	1220	1 2, 5 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2 4 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1 3
			IC-202	1405	6
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1345	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 777	1815	1 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1 3, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
■ DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0955	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3, 5 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	0950	1, 2, 4 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2 4 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
■ IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC 716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
■ PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal***

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1120	4	SU-537	1810	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	15-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep. Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr. Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed & Sun., Arr: Tues & Sat.	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	8-05	Shalabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-50	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.	09-50	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	19-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	8-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3039	21-40	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	18-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3021	16-05	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	8-00	3022
3089	16-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	8-30	3090
3317	9-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	11-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3030
3037	16-30	Asansol Express	8-45	3038
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-50	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	9-15	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	10-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
9303	19-45	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	9305
1445	19-55	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	4-55	1447
1181	20-05	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

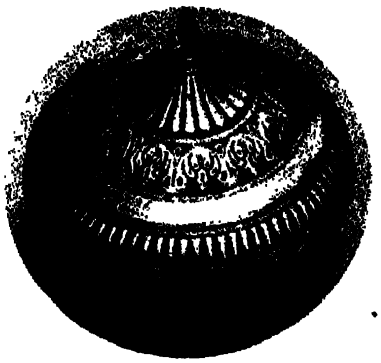
Time		
	Teesta-Torsa Express	8-35
	Darjeeling Mail	8-35
	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15
	Kanchenjunga Express	20-35
	Gaur Express	5-15
	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	8-45
	Kalimpur Express	9-15
	Jammu-Tawi Express	15-50
	Mughal Sarai Express via SBC Loop	12-35
	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	10-35
	Ganga Sagar (Darbhanga) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	4-55

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
8008	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	8007
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	9-20	8001
2860	12-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-20	2859
2021	9-00	Shalabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-15	Ahmedabad Express	5-45	8033
8030	10-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-00	8029
2841	13-15	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-30	2842
2703	7-05	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	8-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8035	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	8-00	8036
8015	21-25	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-30	8016
8007	21-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	6-20	8008
8409	18-20	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	9-00	8410
2821	8-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-15	2822
8045	9-35	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	18-15	8046
8017	16-40	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	11-35	8018
8079	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-00	8080
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Weekly Express Dep.: Sunday; Arr: Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	16-40	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-35	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-40	2422
6322	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Monday only	03-30	6325
6321	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Thursday only	13-45	6321
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Tuesday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Thursday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-25	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Sunday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625
6324	22-25	Howrah-Trivandrum-Howrah Bi-Weekly Express Departure & Arrival: Monday & Friday	13-45	6323

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203498-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3505535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203498 (manual enquiry).

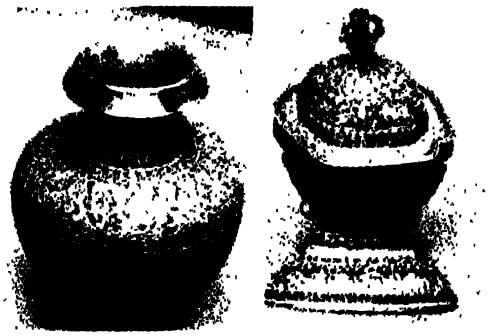
THE Best



Silver makes for great jewellery as well as lovely *objets d'art,* says **Samita Bhatia**

AS GOOD AS GOLD

Silver, a metal that was for long considered the poor man's gold is today's fashion statement — as an adornment, tableware or as a home accessory. Surprisingly, old silver has found its niche in the urban market which displays an affinity for traditional silver jewellery and *objets d'art.*



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

DAZZLING BEAUTY
Although not considered a good future investment anymore, owning silver in delicate designs is still a great pleasure

Travel 120 kilometres out of Delhi to tourist haunts like the Neemrana Fort Castle and you're likely to bump into traders peddling chunky silver jewellery at exorbitant prices. These are old family pieces that are being sold off by those in need. But gold and silver are no longer good investments, says Poonam Gupta, general manager, Ravissant, the designer brand known for its *haute couture* and silverware. "Earlier, the prices of gold and silver rose by the day and thus precious metals made for good investments," she says. "However, over the last eight years, the price of silver stagnated under Rs 7,000. The recent rise in the price of silver is only a temporary phenomenon," she opines.

However, others like Chanda Narang, CEO, Frazer and Haws, believes that consciously or unconsciously, we buy silver as an investment, "for the future," she adds.

Besides, there's always the sheer pleasure of owning the gleaming metal. There are a wealth of designs available in innumerable shops. From Old Delhi's silver street, Dariba Kalan, to upmarket stores like Tribhovan Das Bhimji Zaveri and Cook & Kelvy, the variety can dazzle your eyes.

While you can buy silverware by its weight, you can also pick it up by the piece. Day to day fluctuations in the bullion prices are not reflected in the price of such creations. Says Gupta of Ravissant, "Recently when the prices of silver rose sharply, we registered a loss in revenue. This, because our prices are fixed."

The purity of silver is an important factor when you get yourself a piece. You should play safe and buy sterling silver which contains 92.5 per cent silver — the highest possible percentage that can be used. However, in silver jewellery it is rare to find anything purer than 90 per cent while the most in use is silver with a purity

ROMI CHOPRA

Ad man

My favourite piece of silverware is a 19th century glass engraved in the tradition of the Burmese craftsmen. The carving depicts a subject of Chettinad origins. Through the repousse work, an entire tale of kings and nobles has been told on the surface of the glass



GEETANJALI KASHYAP

Designer

A candelabra that I bought from Ravissant is the best piece of silverware that I possess. It is aesthetically designed and has a wonderful finish. I have placed the candle-stand on an antique table — a happy blend of the ethnic and modern

between 75-95 per cent.

Indian artistes have over the last few decades designed silverware for the Western markets. More recently Hennell of London, the world's oldest silversmiths, began retailing in the country under the aegis of Frazer and Haws.

Says Narang of Frazer and Haws, "We had been creating English silverware for the past ten years and were oriented towards those designs. One of the problems we had here was to re-orient ourselves to traditional Indian motifs."

However, Narang's clients assured her as their English designs were a sell-out, the prices notwithstanding. "All our pieces are hand-crafted and our clients get a guarantee card with each purchase. Besides, it is possible for you to pick up an array of gift items even at Rs 300." At the top end you could also spend Rs 4 lakh for a candelabra.



But Frazer and Haws is going Indian. A special collection available recently was a range of *rakhis* priced between Rs 350-475. Besides you can also avail of custom made items with personal messages etched on them as per your requirements. A special feature is that your handwriting can be engraved on the piece, which makes for a very personal gift.

Exclusive silverware is also available at Ravissant. Poonam Gupta of Ravissant explains the label's diversification into silverware, "We feared that the art of silversmithing was vanishing from the country. Thus, we trained craftsmen at premier schools for silversmithing in Europe and had them design silverware for Ravissant."

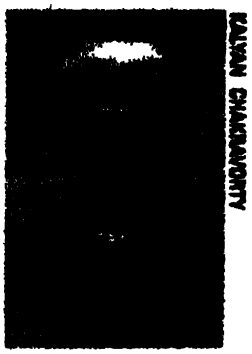
Every September, Ravissant introduces a new collection for the year with price tags that make the mind boggle. A three piece tea or coffee set costs anywhere between Rs 60,000 to Rs 1,80,000; a full dinner service can be bought for upto Rs 8 lakh. Like Frazer and Haws, Ravissant too affords a humbler purchase. Pill-boxes, photo-frames, cigarette boxes, key-chains and other bric-a-brac priced between Rs 500 to Rs 3,000 make for great give-aways.

Prices maybe prohibitive but cease to matter for those looking out for a quality buy. And at Ravissant your hallmarked purchase comes with a stamp stating the year of manufacture, the designer's mark, the mastercraftsman's signature and an identity number.

Exquisite silverware brings with it the onus of looking after it. Prevent tarnish formation, advise designers. Tarnish clings to silver when its outer layer reacts with sulphur that can come from your hands and from the atmosphere.

Besides regular polishing, it is possible to store your silver in a way that tarnish formation is reduced. Wear cotton gloves when handling silver. This prevents the oils and acids from your hands from ending up on the object. Do not display your silver with objects that contain sulphur. Store your silver in an airtight container with a small sachet of activated charcoal which acts as an air scrubber.

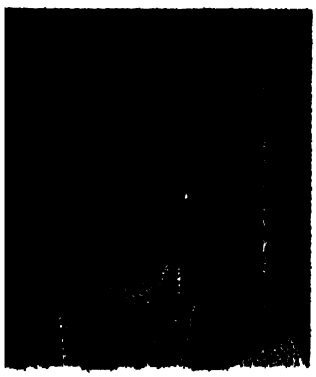
But in the final analysis don't lock it away. If you've got it, flaunt it. Add the sparkle to your person or home with the gleam of silverware. ■



LAXMAN CHAKRAVARTY

SAYING IT WITH SILVER

One can avail of custom made silver items with personal messages — even in your own handwriting — engraved on them and this makes for quite a fascinating personal gift



UMA GAJAPATI RAJU

Media person

I'm not so fond of silver jewellery as I am of silver artefacts. I do possess some exquisite silver frames and goblets, but my favourite is an old Tibetan lamp that was handed down to me by my mother-in-law. My father-in-law procured the lamp during the days he was trading with Tibet. I light this lamp during Diwali and other special occasions



MY PERSONAL *Style*

Suneet Varma entertains in style, and with panache

DINING IN STYLE

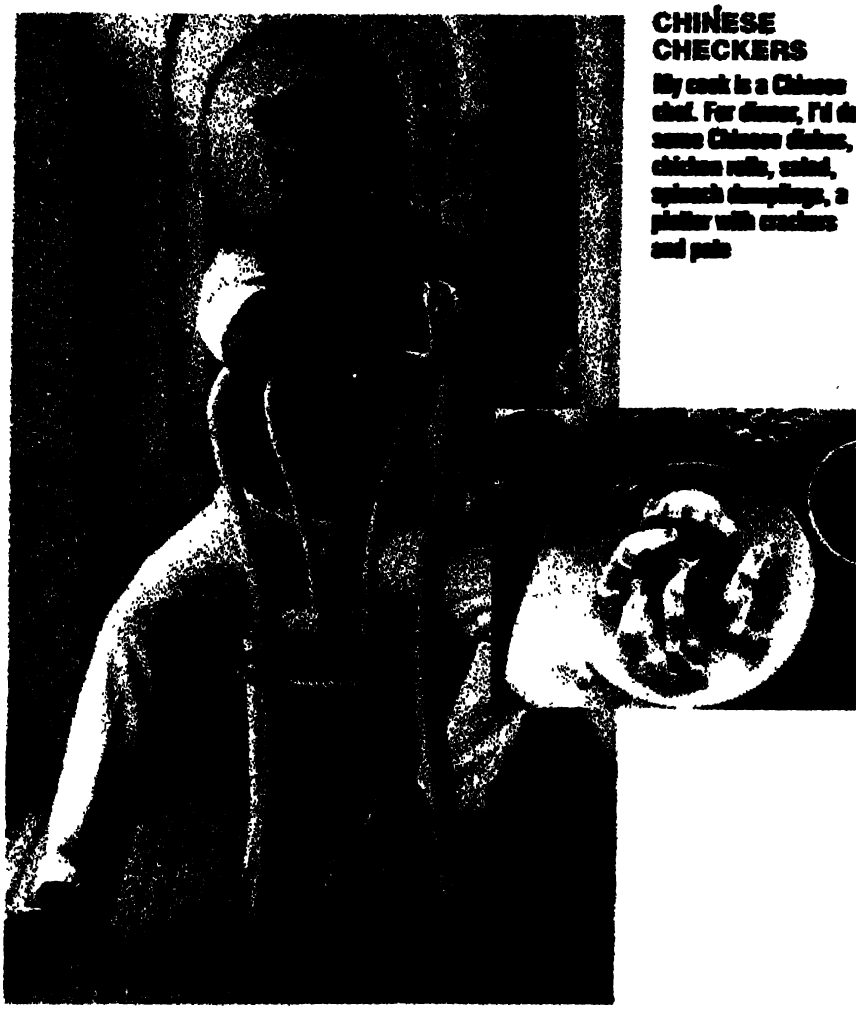
My style of entertainment is linked to my interiors. To me, it is a package deal because when you are inviting guests, you are letting them into your privacy. When they come into your flat, the warmth, the interiors and the lighting are as important as the food.

I am more eclectic in my style of entertaining. I don't necessarily like formal dinners unless it is a drink invitation where we can serve snacks. My dining table allows me to entertain eight people and it isn't as if there is a large chandelier or anything really fancy looming over our heads. I ask my guests to be there by nine. An old Kerala massage table has been converted into a bar.

My flat does not look like a hotel lobby —glass, brass and no class. It is a functional home. On either side of the Kerala table is a baroque candlestand which I had picked up from a Goa church. Within my living room, I can seat 12 people on huge white sofas. Drinks and snacks are served in the living room.

My cook is a Chinese chef. For dinner I'd do some Chinese dishes, chicken rolls, salad, spinach dumplings, a platter with crackers and pate. In winter, I would serve hot snacks keeping the light starters for summer. People underestimate the importance of juices in summer. I serve watermelon juice with vodka, so people end up feeling light. I have a big wooden table for my guests to put up their feet — and feel at ease — or place their glasses straight on the table without bothering about coasters. I light an old antique wrought-iron candelabra which can hold upto 15 candles for dinner.

I am particular about the crockery. If the crockery is blue, then wine glasses and napkins would have to be blue and white or all blue. The table must look beautiful and not intimidating. I do not like wedgewood or crystal because they are too formal. My salt and pepper shakers are shaped like two stools. It is important to have humour when you are dining with people.



CHINESE CHECKERS

My cook is a Chinese chef. For dinner, I'd do some Chinese dishes, chicken rolls, salad, spinach dumplings, a platter with crackers and pate

Most of my dinner parties start off with a soup. A salad, wine, chicken or meat dish, rice and two vegetables are a must. The idea of loading my guests with plenty of food appeals to me. If someone wants to drink wine, I serve red and white wine. I am definitely fond of after-dinner conversation. If someone wants desserts, I will have two ice-creams, brownies and liqueurs.

The evening ends off with tea, coffee, wine or fruits. When I do go out, I usually eat out with a group of not more than two or three friends. Five-star hotels are a far from cosy experience. I would rather eat at Sukho Thai for its Thai food, Miyako for Japanese cuisine and Coconut Grove in Kamlahka for their Chettinad chicken.

AS TOLD TO RAJAKUMARI BHATTACHARYYA



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Painting by Francisco Goya

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BENGAL BELLE

Bipasha Basu's story of fame ('She's got the Look', July 26) shows the best and the worst of the modelling world. Her youth and 'exotic' look called her through the Ford Supermodel Contest (India). But the same look did not quite conform to the international definition of 'exotic Black'. So it was back to her own country, and Lakme, Benzer and the much discussed Calida shoots. So where does that leave a talented aspirant? Home, sweet, home.

DHRITISHA ROY, CALCUTTA

EAST OR WEST

The cover story on the gorgeous and glamorous Bipasha Basu made great reading. She has taken the modelling world by storm picking up innumerable prestigious assignments.She represents the hip and modern teenage generation—a unique blend of Eastern and Western beauty. Every girl tries to copy her style and her way of dressing.She is an inspiration for every aspiring model who wants to make it big in the fashion world.

Mayuri Paul Choudhury, Calcutta

Bipasha Basu says she finds nothing vulgar about her Calida campaign where she and her co-model were shown in their bare minimum. But the dividing line between aesthetic sensuality and obscene vulgarity is often imperceptible. A woman exhibiting her body might or might not be vulgar, but the action is definitely not representative of Bengali culture.

Wasim Reja, Bhangar

MORE STYLE

This letter is about your column, My Personal Style. Instead of featuring socialites and their manner of entertaining or doing up interiors, you can feature achievers and doers having the cutting edge. They can speak about their work and how they motivated themselves to success. That should make a more interesting foray into the individual personalities.

Aveek Bose, Siliguri

GOING MOBILE

Undoubtedly, the use of cellular phones is adding momentum to our daily living ('Upwardly Mobile', July 26) This has helped everyone in this jet age era where time, more than money, matters.Mobiles are the new necessities of life.

Surojit Pal, Calcutta

BIG TALK

The column, 'Small Talk' ('Random Strokes', July 26) portrayed the importance of three women politicians of India.However the Graphiti was wrong in heaping praises on these women. All three have displayed, in recent times, a lust for power, for recognition and a total disregard for the true and genuine concerns of the people of the country. Ms Jayalalitha has innumerable corruption charges against her amounting to more than Rs 100 crores. Mamata Banerjee, on the other hand, has proved to be a waste. She used all her energies either to threaten the state government or sponsor *illegal bandhs*. Sonia might be persuasive but has a slim chance of being a PM.

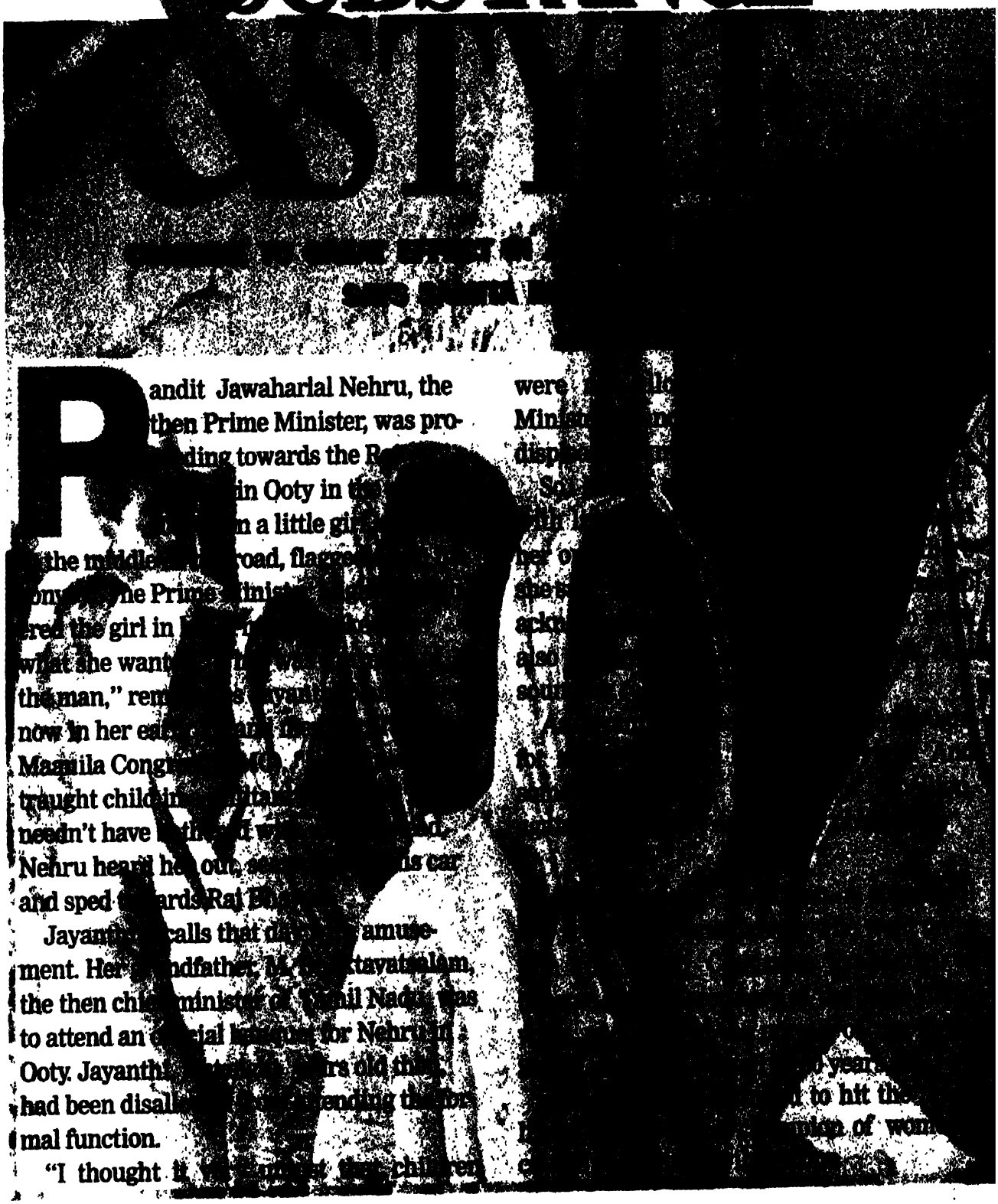
Santosh K. Sharma, Kharagpur

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

graphiti★ 13 September 1998

4 SUBSTANCE AND STYLE Combine to great effect in Jayanthi Natarajan **10** OUT TO LUNCH Chef Richard Neat serves up some bitter-sweet truths **13** SMALL TALK Should the media focus on the ill-health of politicians? **14** SURVIVAL STRATEGIES Namita Gokhale tells you how to deal with your personal problems **16** MIXED BAG **18** RASOI **20** DESIGN CORNER Pottery goes designer **22** BEAUTY — THE NATURAL WAY Suparna Trilidra's recipes for looking and feeling good **26** TIME TABLE **28** THE BEST The secret of sparkling teeth: the perfect toothpaste **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE Subhalakshmi Khan goes in for an eclectic look

SUBSTANCE



Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister, was proceeding towards the R[illegible] in Ooty in t[illegible] a little gi[illegible] the middle [illegible] road, flagge[illegible] one [illegible] Prime [illegible]tini[illegible] red the girl in [illegible] what she want[illegible] the man," rem[illegible] now in her ea[illegible] Mamula Cong[illegible] traught child in [illegible] needn't have [illegible] Nehru heard he[illegible] and sped [illegible]ards Raj [illegible]

Jayanth[illegible] calls that d[illegible] amusement. Her [illegible]ndfather, M[illegible]ktayatsalam, the then chi[illegible] minister of [illegible]mil Nadu, was to attend an [illegible]cial [illegible] for Nehru in Ooty. Jayanth[illegible] [illegible]rs old then had been disal[illegible] [illegible]ending the [illegible] mal function.

"I thought [illegible] [illegible] children

were [illegible] Min[illegible] disp[illegible] So[illegible] [illegible] ner o[illegible] sport[illegible] ackn[illegible] also [illegible] sou[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [



V RAJAGOPAL

CHAMPION OF CAUSES
Had it not been for her mother, husband and son, admits Jayanthi Natarajan, she would not be in Parliament raising issues as diverse as women and civil aviation

Women in charge

And how they rate

MAMATA BANERJEE



Firebrand, unpredictable and loud, she was minister for sports in the Rajiv Gandhi government. Under Narasimha Rao's tenure she was relieved of her ministerial duties as she wanted to work for the state. She made no deep impression as her heart was more into street fights than policy.

RENUKA CHAUDHURY

Affable, articulate and very visible, she was inducted into the Gujral government as minister of state for health. She succeeded in giving the portfolio a high profile, and made a difference in such areas as women's health and AIDS



control.

VASUNDHARA RAJE



Minister of state for foreign affairs, Vasundhara Raje began her tenure with a scintillating speech in Parliament on foreign policy. She was kept busy mending fences post-Pokhran with the foreign policy having gone topsy turvy. She was also known for infusing an exotic Rajasthani touch into a hitherto antiseptic office.

centrestage as an engine of growth for the economy. As minister of state for civil aviation, she drafted a policy that, she says, will set the pace for the next 20 years.

Rebellious and forceful she decidedly is, but she carries with her a permanent guilt. She says emotionally, "If it wasn't for my mother, husband and son's unconditional support to exercise my individuality I wouldn't be in Parliament raising issues. I owe them a debt that I can never repay."

Hailing from aristocratic Tamil Brahmin stock, Jayanthi is today a force to reckon with in Tamil politics. Law may be her first love, but politics is where she really belongs. And no one is surprised, for Jayanthi grew up with a "highly pro-active political background".

It began with her great-grandfather who was the first person to be arrested in the Quit India movement in Tamil Nadu. Her grandfather, Bhaktavatsalam, was in jail when Jayanthi's mother was born and continued to remain in confinement for the better part of her mother's adolescent years. Jayanthi's grandmother, meanwhile, was involved in the underground movement, stocking literature that the British thought was seditious.

Not surprising then that Jayanthi grew up not on a staple diet of fairy tales but stories about the freedom movement.

But she felt a little distanced from politics after she plunged into her law practice in 1977. "I felt that young people would not be taken seriously in any political activity," she explains.

The immediate catalyst for taking the plunge was Rajiv Gandhi who proved to be a source of inspiration. She remembers, "Here was this young man who was saying things that I believed in without sounding foolish. For, at that point, it seemed almost woolly-headed to talk about ideals or politics sans power-brokers."

But there were problems. When she became MP in 1986 she was a "greenhorn". She remembers, "For a young woman in politics you had to either deny your femininity or be prepared to deal with excessive media attention. That included being hounded about the clothes I wore, my eating habits, hairstyle and every other inconsequential matter."

It always veered round to how she looked and who she was sitting with. "If I made a speech it didn't matter to people whether it was a good or bad speech, but the fact that I delivered it wearing a red sari."

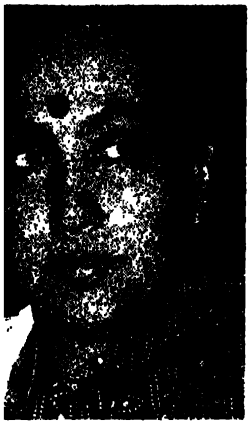
She adds, matter-of-factly, "If I'd always taken care of how I dressed, it certainly wasn't something I was ashamed of. Everything inside me rebelled against changing my personality. And why should I have denied what I was?" She never did, retaining the reputation of being one of the best-dressed politicians in this country.

And then came the innuendoes and allegations. She recalls, "Certain sections of the Press were very unkind, going out of their way to sensationalise my personal life." She reacted with anger and frustration, blaming herself for her inability to deal with the Press.

The demands of her public life also took their toll on her career as a lawyer. "Utter confusion" prevailed when she tried to weave both law and politics into

MARGARET ALVA

Minister of state for personnel in Rajiv Gandhi's government, Margaret Alva was known for her poise and good speeches. But she seemed to lose her sparkle during Narasimha Rao's tenure. Unfortunately, though, she lacked mass support and had to be content being a Rajya Sabha member.



SHEILA KAUL

Long serving Congress member from UP, Sheila Kaul's last stint as minister for housing ended in notoriety and a huge housing scandal. Hauled up on charges of corruption, Kaul's was an ignominious exit.



KUMARI SELJA

The youngest minister to be sworn in, Selja was one of the junior ministers in the human resources development ministry. Though she won with a huge margin in 1996, she lost in the 1998 elections.



KANTI SINGH

Didn't leave a lasting impression in the coal ministry. Is remembered more for touching Laloo Prasad Yadav's feet after the swearing-in ceremony.





KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

FORCEFUL PRESENCE
Law may be Natarajan's first love (and something she does not want to give up), but it is politics where she really belongs

the fabric of her life. Today law takes a back seat though she does try and fit in a couple of important cases in a month. She says firmly, "Law is my high, my intellectual challenge and something I don't want to give up."

What she did give up on, however, was the Congress, which she left for the TMC. This, despite the fact, that she hailed from a family that has shared the fortunes of the Indian National Congress movement over the last hundred years. "For me it was a wrench to leave the Congress, and frankly I never thought that I'd ever do it."

But leave she did. Not for a ticket, power, or the chance to be in Parliament. She was a member of Parliament and would have continued thus for several years but she quit the party knowing that she might be disqualified for a principle. "Which was that we will not encourage corruption. That Mr Narasimha Rao may decide to go with Jayalalitha but we will not be a part of it knowing the kind of corruption that was prevalent at that time."

She ascribes the debacle of single party governance to the fact that once parties cease to represent the national spectrum they lose their relevance on a national level. To succeed, single parties must, she says strongly, keep the diverse interests of the country under their umbrella. "Today India can only be ruled by a coalition that reflects these diverse interests," she says.

The TMC, she says, is a regional party with a national outlook and adds, "Power is not an end in itself but a means of reinforcing integrity in public life, of being accountable."

Since the setback to the DMK-TMC alliance in the '98 elections, Jayanthi feels that it's very important to tour the state and tell people what they believe in. "We're beginning to find a important niche in national politics,' she says with satisfaction. The eterna optimist, she adds, "I foresee that w will be in government in Tamil Nadu in the year 2001."

She's obviously not giving up or idealism and hope. This, despite the fact that the nationalistic fervour she grew up on has dwindled into cynicism. As Natarajan explains "Enlightened self-interest followed by competitive populism, has eroded our value system. Today there is a pressing need to reinvent ourselves."

That's primarily because the four pillars of democracy — the judiciary, the legislature, the executive and, "yes even the Press" — have been systematically eroded and have lost their relevance.

We are careening downhill, Jayanthi maintains. The reception that the Women's Reservation Bill received in Parliament is proof enough, she adds. She believes that if the majority of Parliamentarians felt that the Bill deserved to be defeated they could have voted against it. "However, allowing 30 MPs to physically prevent the Bill from being discussed is a travesty of democracy."

The fact that the Bill was defeated, conclusively proves the need for it. Besides, "Even the Economic and Social Council of the UN states that 30 per cent represents a critical mass. Numbers which are essential to be adequately heard in any forum or to influence issues," she says.

Women's issues, she emphasises, go far beyond domestic abuse and rape, which are, in fact, not so much women's issues but issues of crime. She punches out a barrage of ques-

"Are we addressing women's problems? Are we providing them with adequate health facilities?"

tions: Are we addressing problems of women and housing? Are we providing women with adequate health facilities and nutrition? Are they being educated?

"Thirty nine per cent women in this country are still illiterate. When a woman in the village menstruates, she doesn't even have a patch of sunshine to dry her bit of cloth. Which is why urino-genital tract disorders are commonplace among village women. Are we talking about these issues?" she asks, acid dripping in her tone.

Women may be at the centre of her concerns with a lot needing to be accomplished, but she can safely look back at her stint in the civil aviation ministry with a sense of satisfaction. For it was during her tenure that the replacement of outmoded radar systems was activated. She also wrangled separate air corridors for inbound and outbound Westward traffic over Delhi's airspace.

Most importantly, she worked hard at making Indian airspace safe. If it's mandatory today for every aircraft that flies Indian skies to be fitted with Aircraft Collision Avoidance Systems (ACAS), we have Jayanthi to thank for it. "This is my most important achievement to date," she says, happily.

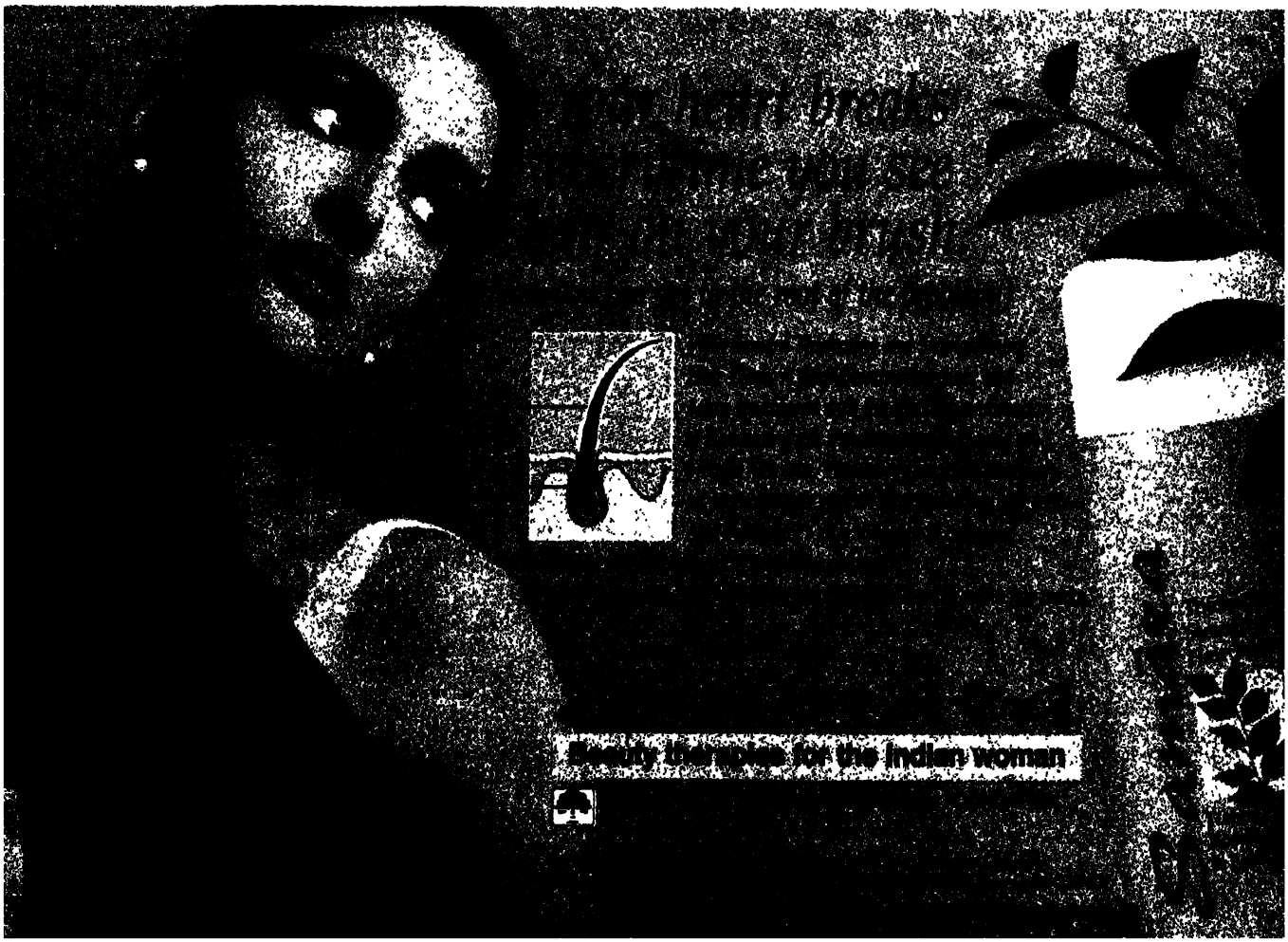
As minister of state for civil aviation, coal and parliamentary affairs between '97 and '98, she realised that civil aviation was prohibitively expensive. She found that civil aviation had no budgetary support which is why it had become a rich man's preserve. She says, "We succeeded in reducing the price of the aviation fuel." An airport infrastructure policy, practically the nuts and bolts of civil aviation, too, was also passed around the time.

So what ails the sector, "besides financial constraints, is a lack of holistic approach to a problem."

Does she ever stop, you might wonder. For, when she is not shuttling between Chennai and the capital she's conducting whirlwind tours of Tamil Nadu touching down as many as four towns a day. There's little room for leisure. Her 9.30 am-to-10 pm day oscillates between courtroom squabbles to political meetings. She confirms: "No outing, no private life. Yes, I miss it very badly."

But this self-confessed information junkie finds an escape in books, classical music and surprisingly enough, in the willing suspension of disbelief — Tamil films. "I've been accused of being indiscriminating but I don't care," she laughs, the solitaires on her fingers sparkling defiantly as well.

Then she discreetly consults her watch and you realise that time's out. Her diary is choc-a-bloc with appointments before she heads back home by the evening flight. She sighs as a sign off -- "There will always be more things to do." ■



OUT TO *Lunch*

WITH **RICHARD NEAT**

Seema Goswami gets the master chef talking about restaurants, food, and more

When you're having lunch with an Englishman, it's almost *de rigueur* to be on time. But even as I'm congratulating myself on having got to the Parkroyal Hotel a couple of minutes before I'm due to have lunch with Richard Neat at the Empress of China, I run into the breathless PR manager, Abha Negi, in the lobby. "Where have you been?" she asks, in distraught tones. "Richard has been waiting for you..."

I fairly sprint into the Chinese restaurant, wondering whether I have given Neat the wrong time. After all, it is just about turning 1.30 in the afternoon. But Richard cuts my breathless apologies short. "No, no," he says, "I've only been here for a couple of minutes." But in that time, the waiter has run up to the table half-a-dozen times — to straighten the cutlery, pour out the water, ask him if he wants a drink, etc., etc.

Not that you can blame the poor man for trying hard. It's not too often that a chef with two Michelin stars to his credit - while he cooked at Pied a Terre, on Charlotte Street, London, a couple of years ago — visits his restaurant. But Richard hates being fussed over, and so, has been sulkily poring over a copy of *Newsweek* instead.

But as we settle down, menus appear miraculously, and the arduous task of choosing from the huge menu begins. The spring rolls are out, as both of us are trying to lose weight. But then we cheat a little and order the spiced chicken winglets as a starter — not, you will agree, the least calorific of options — and then compensate by ordering soups to follow.

Neat is on his way out of India. His contract with the Taj Group of Hotels — for whom he used to run the French roof-top restaurant, Longchamp, at the Taj Mansingh in Delhi will expire in September, and Richard, along with his wife Sophie, will fly out to his new home in Cannes. So, what better time to quiz him on his gastronomical experiences in India?

The only problem with that is that Neat hasn't exactly been the most adventurous of foodies while in this country. In fact, he confesses, he hasn't really eaten that much local food in India. "We used to eat a lot of Indian food while we were in London, at the Bombay Brasserie and places like that. But not in India."

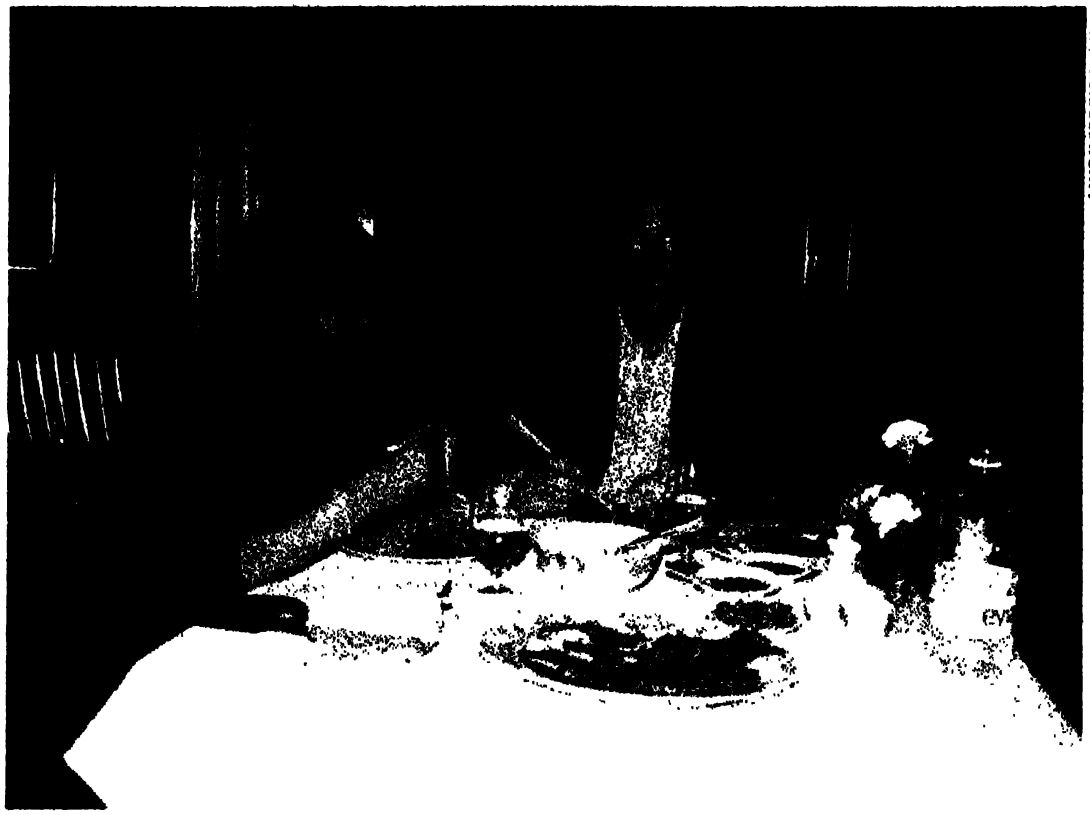
> "We used to eat a lot of Indian food while we were in London, at the Bombay Brasserie ....But not in India"

Sure, he has made the obligatory visit to Dum Pukht, and even liked the food, but apart from that, nothing. The problem, says Neat, is the produce. He finds that kitchen supplies in most Indian restaurants are substandard ("the meat is chewy" etc.) and so has restricted himself to eating at Continental and Thai outlets.

Of these, his favourite is Spice, the Thai restaurant run by the Duggal sisters-in-law, in the Ambavata Complex on the outskirts of Delhi. He and Sophie are regulars there on Sunday afternoons, where their staple is usually the chicken with basil, cooked in a light coconut sauce.

Neat has also had some nice meals at the Thai Pavilion (President Hotel, Mumbai) and recently celebrated his anniversary at The Orient Express (Taj Palace Hotel, Delhi). He loves the easy informality of La Piazza (The Hyatt, Delhi), but draws the line at visiting the competition at La Rochelle, The Oberoi, Delhi. "I've had some gruesome fare there," he says, with an expressive grimace.

His criticism is cut short by the arrival of the food. It's pretty spartan fare as far as Chinese meals go: diced chicken in a black bean sauce, crispy lamb in a red sauce, and Hakka noodles. Richard — who has the healthiest



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

SPARTAN FARE
Richard Neat goes mainly for continental and Thai food and is quite discerning about the Chinese dishes — so it's diced chicken in black bean sauce, crispy lamb in red sauce and Hakka noodles

appetite of any man I know — tucks in with vigour, quite oblivious to the photographer clicking away. That's no mean achievement, given that it's near impossible to look good while eating Chinese food (you try smiling sweetly even as an errant noodle is slipping down your chin).

"I've enjoyed my stay in India," offers Neat, dexterously popping a bit of chicken into his mouth. "And I plan to come back pretty often, especially as I haven't really seen the south of India."

Then, it's time for nostalgia, as we chew the cud (so to speak). Richard reminisces about his first stint in the restaurant business, as part owner-cum-chef at Pied a Terre. "That was great fun," he says. "David (his partner) and I used to really enjoy ourselves, even though we had to work 18 hours a day."

Pied a Terre had a huge base of loyal customers, says Neat, some of whom became good friends. But the chef himself came into his element when he had to deal with difficult customers (the bane of any restaurateur). "There was this one lady who was creating a huge nuisance of herself," he recalls. She complained about the appetizers — which were free, anyway, says Neat. She ordered skate, and then complained about the way it was cooked. "I always poach it at home," she said, in a voice loud enough to carry.

That was it. Neat and his partner marched up to her table, and insisted that she leave. When she protested, she was marched firmly towards the door, followed by her spluttering husband.

Somehow, it's difficult to see Richard pulling off something like this in a Taj restaurant, even one which he runs himself. And Neat readily admits that his style has been somewhat cramped by the corporate culture of the Taj Group.

But even within the limits set by a five-star hotel, Richard does manage to get his point across. He recounts the time somebody ordered duck as his main course at Longchamp. The dish was duly produced before him; the guest took one bite and summoned the waiter. "This is not duck," he declared. "This is chicken. And I didn't order chicken."

The hapless waiter tried hard to convince him that it was duck he was eating, but to no avail. Finally, he gave up and appealed to Neat in the kitchen. An incensed Richard chose the direct approach. He sent the waiter out with a tray containing one raw duck and one raw chicken.

The waiter thrust the tray under the guest's nose, while Richard slashed both carcasses. Even as the man blanched visibly, Neat explained to him, "See this meat is white, and the other one is red. The red meat is that of the duck, and that's what you have on your plate."

The guest conceded the point — though it is doubtful if he ever ventured into Longchamp again.

But Neat is through with Longchamp now, and looking forward to opening a new place in Cannes. He has already lined up one (tentative, though) backer, and hopes to set up a restaurant in a farmhouse. "This will have an informal ambience," says Neat, "with people sitting around large tables, sharing mussels from one large dish, with carafes of wine being passed around. The feel would be as if you are having lunch in a friend's house."

Of course, at Neat's place, you will have to pay for your supper. But then, as they say, there's no such thing as a free lunch — especially when a two-star Michelin chef is cooking. ■

★ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) Last week's trends follow this week, too. But do not neglect health matters as minor ailements continue to plague you. Concentrate on your immediate priorities and other concerns will naturally fall into place. Also, take some time off to relax and spend time with near and dear ones. A short trip or even a picnic may not be a bad idea.

★TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) Those who are planning to tie the knot or get engaged, may find his/her true soul mate. This is meeting time, dear Taureans. So go all out, talk, laugh and play. But it will also pay to be serious as business matters, or new projects will require immediate solutions. So the ideal way out is to fuse business with pleasure and get the best of both.

★GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) The good time and fun time of last week sees you through this week, too. You can indulge in buying, selling, shopping, spulrging without feeling too guilty about expenditure. The money spent will be for a worthy cause. Try not to be rash when dealing with superiors as that should show you in favourable light. Take care of your health.

★CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) Home away from the home is what you will be striving for and it will be yours. Time to start afresh, explore fresh horizons and test new waters. Try to keep your travelling kit ready as you may require it soon. A mixed week of actions, monotony and some very important news. Reach out to people and places and you will be pleasantly surprised to see the response.

★LEO, (July 21 - August 21) Try and plan in advance if you want to get on with life. It does not always pay to wait for the bone to drop on your plate. Be a go-getter and see the difference. Also, pay some attention to your appearance —external and internal. Have a healthy diet, exercise and indulge yourself with a new outfit, accessory or even a pair of new shoes.



★VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) This is a week when you can relax, take things easy and work at a comfortable pace. Try and organise the work force around you in a more practical manner and you will sefinitely feel the difference. Do go out if you have to, socialise when you can. People and places will play an important role in your life, both social and private. Travel is on the cards.

★LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) A hectic week ahead. Try to manage your time well as that should see you through the mad schedules. Try and be as meticulous as possible with your work and that will help avoid any unwanted delays and last minute changes. But do take some time off for your family and friends as they need you, too. A busy week ahead.

★SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) This is truly action time as all you will end up doing is work, work and more work. Take care of your health and also, of the eldermembers of the family. Besides hectic activities and busy schedules, very trivial but vital problems will be nagging you this week. The trick is to not to lose your cool and tackle them as they come. A lot of leg work needs to be done and a lot will require your personal care.

★SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) The confusion and uncertainty of last week will give way to a more organised and well-planned week. Try to chalk out a plan for the immediate future and don't keep too many things pending, for say, next week. A good week for buying/selling/leasing/mortgaging old properties. Mixed week ahead.

★CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) Apart from romance, candlelit dinners or moonlit parties, you might also be engaged in a serious encounter. A time for renovation, decoration, overhauling, furnishing and repairing old objects of value. Time to socialise, make use of your contacts to further your own prospects. Travel is on the cards, so keep your travelling shoes on as you may need them.

★AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) This will be a crucial week when you will be weighing the pros and cons, making your choices and deciding to go ahead. But do not rush into any hasty or impulsive decisions. Time to be with your friends and well wishers. Though you may try too hard, certain issues will take their own time to be resolved. Take care of your health.

★PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Last week's good fortunes spill over this week, too. Children, elderly parents cause concern. But you need not worry too much as proper care and nursing will see them through. Try to fuse work with a little bit of fun and games. You will be amazed to find how revitalising that can be. Spouse will be a source of great joy.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Should the media focus on the health of politicians, asks **Seema Goswami**

The talking point is:
The Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee, and his failing health. Or rather, what the media has chosen to characterise as his failing health.
There's certainly enough evidence to support this thesis. These days, Vajpayee looks a shadow of his former self. And any man who forgets one shoe behind in his car — and then doesn't even notice it, until his securitymen point out the obvious — can't really be all there.
As if that wasn't enough, there was the spectacle of the Prime Minister stumbling and staggering off the stage after his address to the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort, even as SPG personnel scrambled to help him. The official explanation for this was innocent enough: the PM's leg had gone to sleep while he stood before the microphone, and he got a bad attack of pins and needles when he began walking. Hence, the stumble.

Fair enough?
If we were talking about any ordinary mortal, then there would have been nothing more to say about it. After all, everyone has an off day occasionally, and pins and needles are not exactly something to write home about.
But unfortunately, when you're Prime Minister, these things become the stuff of newspaper headlines.

Surely that's bad form?
That depends on how you look at this. While there is no denying that health is a very private matter, which should not be discussed in public, the rules do — and perhaps, should — change when the head of the government is involved. The people have a right to know if the man in charge of the store is in any shape to perform his duties. And it is then upto them to make judgements about whether they would like him to remain in charge.

Which is why:
The video footage of former President George Bush barfing all over the Japanese Prime Minister at a state banquet was run a million times over on American stations, even though it showed the leader of the free world in an extremely poor light. In the USA, the right to information is considered to be sacrosanct, and when it comes to the chief executive, the people have the right to know everything – right down to the state of his intestines.



So, why all that hullabaloo:
When the Indian Press carried pictures of former President Shankar Dayal Sharma as he lost his balance ? Why should there be double standards when it comes to the head of state?
The answer's quite simple, really. The health of the constitutional head of the country should not become part of the public domain simply because his health — or the lack of it — has no bearing on the health of the nation. Even if – let's assume for the purpose of argument — the Indian President were suffering from a life-threatening disorder, it would not have any direct effect on the governance of the country. The Prime Minister's health, however, is an entirely different ball game.

The people have a right to know if the man in charge of the nation is in any shape to perform his duties

So, should there be complete disclosure when it comes to the chief executive's health?
Well, if you go by the American example, then it most certainly should. In the USA, the President's annual check-ups are reported in detail, with his doctors briefing the media about the state of his health.
This is a precedent that Indian Prime Ministers would do well to follow. At least, that would put an end to all those stories about prostate cancer – and worse. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

LOST PROPERTY

Q : We work for a reputed newspaper and have our things regularly stolen from our cabinets. It is not feasible for us to keep everything under lock and key. We also have an inkling who the person responsible for the loss of goods could be. How do you think we should handle the situation, especially since we are responsible for the items that are often stolen? Please offer your valued suggestions.

NAMES WITHHELD

Those of you who are convinced that you know who is responsible for these thefts should group together and work out a joint strategy. Confront this person together in a quiet and matter-of-fact way. Explain to him or her that you are all suffering because of this lack of respect for the laws of ownership. Hold out whichever threat you think would be the most effective, be it a physical bash-up or an official complaint. Request that the culprit return whatever items and valuables that have been stolen. Be firm but not judgemental— give this person room and space to explain his or her situations and compulsions, whatever they may be.
Of course, needless to say, check, double check, and triple check your suspicions before taking extreme steps.

TO MA'M, WITH LOVE

Q : I have recently started teaching the Higher Secondary section in a reputed school in my city. The problem is that although in the beginning I was very excited about my job, it has now become nightmarish for me. This is because of the fact that there is an abysmal standard of discipline in the school. The students are ill-mannered and boorish. I have tried to tackle them with patience and understanding as well as with sternness but to little avail. Talking to higher authorities does not help as they are indifferent to our views and tell us to fend for ourselves. I cannot leave my job as jobs don't come easily and I have heard from other people that the situation is very much the same in other schools. Please tell me how to tackle my problem.

APARNA BASU, NEW DELHI

You have to establish your personal discipline whatever be the standards around you. Your students are all grown-up themselves, they are quick to recognise any insecurities and exploit them through insubordination and rowdy behaviour. At the same time, many of them may secretly or sub-consciously long for a strong dose of commonsense and discipline.

GRAMMAR WOES

I have a 16-year-old daughter who is normal and healthy. However, she seems to have a problem in that she seems unable to think logically. She is able to follow whatever we teach her or talk about but later she is unable to write about it or describe the occurrences properly. She fares rather poorly in grammar and sentence construction. What could her problem be and how do we go about helping her improve her performance in studies?
NAME WITHHELD

I am not a trained psychologist, but in my opinion, your daughter has underdeveloped verbal skills in linear, sequential terms. She probably reacts to life in a more total and plastic way and relies on her instincts to cope with life. I am sure she is a most intelligent and spontaneous person.The best way to help her cope with her studies would be not to be authoritarian about it. Explain the rules of grammar and sentence construction to her, and ask her to follow it by rote just for the purposes of examination. I have seen a few people with learning disabilities and they have all done very well despite their grammar-teacher's gripes!

The first step would be to make your classes as interesting and participative as possible, for boredom is often the first step to hooliganism. The second point is to be absolutely fearless, uncompromising and inflexible about imposing discipline, after explaining to them that these joint rules apply mutually to you and them, that you can respect them as adults if only they return the compliment.
Once you have taken the stand, stick to your guns, and do not let anything deflect you. Your class will test you out and provoke you in the beginning, but as they get to understand that you mean business, they will gradually get to respect you.

STRANGE MEETING

Q: I have recently lost my mother who I was very close to. After her death, I think I can feel her presence everywhere in the house. I have even seen her visage in the dark, a couple of times. I am a very rational person by nature but I cannot explain these happenings. I also feel very disturbed obviously and cannot lead a normal life.
Please advise.
A.H, CALCUTTA

I am not a rationalist in these matters. As you were so close to her, it is entirely possible that your mother is trying to reach out to you from her present dimension to reassure you of her love. Then also, you obviously miss her a lot, and so your subconscious conjures up a vision of her. Either way, there is nothing disturbing about this phenomenon, it merely indicates a phase where you are coming to terms with your loss.
Next time your mother comes to you, don't react with fear or panic. Instead, give her the natural love and affection you would, were she alive.
Things will normalise with time.



PASTIKA DAS

FAIR PLAY

Q : I am 47 years old and the problem is that my two children, aged 16 and 22, do not seem to be getting along at all. They always have bitter squabbles and my house thus always resembles a battlefront. My husband and I are tired of it all. Please tell me what to do.

M.C, CALCUTTA

Sibling rivalries are the rule rather than the exception, they prove that both your children have healthy, competitive instincts. Please don't make the mistake of setting yourself as the referee for their fights — let them handle it on their own.
Don't take sides either, be as fair as you possibly can. And do make it clear to both of them that your house is your territory and they have no right to make it into a battlefield and skew up your peace of mind.

A FRIEND INDEED!

Q: I am a 16-year-old girl and I have a very close friend. The problem is that my friend has been very unlucky with regard to love. All her previous relationships have broken off either because the men in her life have been unfaithful or have gone abroad. One of them even expired due to a tragic mishap. My friend, as a result of this, has become very possessive about me, her one close female friend. She does not like it if I mix with anybody else. She dissolves into tears if I try explaining things to her. I do not wish to lose her friendship and I wish to genuinely help her as she has been through a lot of trauma.
Please advise.

S.A, CALCUTTA

Standing by your friendship and commitment would involve making your friend stronger, rather than your getting caught up in her traumas and insecurities. It is true that some people seem marked by tragedies all their lives, but on closer examination you will find that, statistically, life's highs and lows do distribute over a period of time.
I would suggest that you work upon reactivating her positive approach by reducing her fear of relationships.
Start going out in groups, insist that she comes out with you to these outings. Make her laugh, see silly and absurd films together, gossip and bitch about your friends and acquaintances, do all the ordinary everyday things that make life bearable.■

MIXED Bag

MOTHERS HAVE THEIR SAY

● Ogilvy & Mather Asia Pacific recently turned its attention on Asian mothers with dependent children and found that these women "simmer within", even while appearing calm and contented. The survey, covering 22 cities in 12 key markets of Asia, discovered that mothers accept, but are not totally content with the roles they have to play in their lives. Unlike Western mothers who claim to be sexy, wild, outrageous, wicked, fiery, strong and even voyeuristic, Asian moms are less demanding about women's lib, the survey found. "To an extent," says the survey, "being a superwoman is less an aspiration, more an everyday reality".

There's more. A typical diary of an Asian mother records regular 16 hour days, beginning at 5 am, devoted exclusively to her five roles: the mother (the nurturer), the maid (keeping up with the chores), the manager (organising household affairs and contributing to the family finances), the mediator (providing stability and solving problems) and, of course, playing the mate.

But it is not pressures alone that make mothers simmer. "Society continues to favour men, while mothers themselves know that they must sacrifice their ambitions, opportunities for self-development and personal time to perform their duties adequately," says the survey.

Indian mothers, meanwhile, are more forthright about their loss of status and freedom after marriage. "They demand that their families not only accept them for what they have become but also value them for their under-utilised capabilities."But is anyone listening?

Forest Sculpture



The venue was the virgin forests in the island of Varyakka, in Finland. The raw materials comprised fresh wood, moss, live trees and of course, the good earth. The participants were sculptors with the purpose of placing art in a natural forest milieu. Noted Indian sculptor Balbir Katt, who also teaches at the Benaras University, used the rich forest wealth to create a sun gate, from freshly-cut pine trees. The more than 18-foot piece sculpture, the tallest installation at the workshop, will serve as an entry point for skiers in the winters when the whole island is covered with snow. Another artist from Spain chose to use twigs and broken branches to depict a marriage between two trees while a Finnish artist gathered moss to create on the earth her vision of Mother Earth. Interestingly, the sculptures will remain in the forest, where nature will shape them over the years and take them over as part of Herself.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Always apply moisturiser after y

Casting the Future



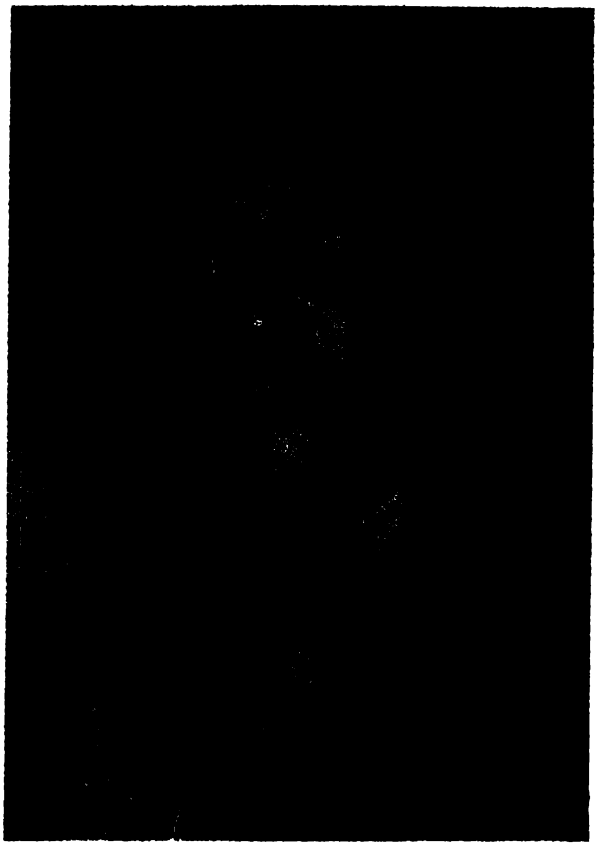
At one stage they were being sold as waste paper to the local *kabadiwala*. When they fell into the hands of Bobby Kohli, the owner of Vision gallery in Delhi, he realised the aesthetic and historical relevance of the priceless reams of paper. The scrolls were mostly hand-painted horoscopes calligraphed by unknown artists from Gujarat, Lucknow and Delhi. The result was an exhibition of Horoscope and Astrology Art (from August 22 to September 18). Casting horoscopes started in India soon after the introduction of Greek astrology which was transmitted to India in the second and third century AD. Indian

CHARITY AND ART

Charity has, of late, become the latest bandwagon that anyone who is anybody wants to clamber on. So be it film stars, sportsmen, socialites or artists, everyone is chipping in to do their bit.

Painter Anjolie Ela Menon, for instance, has floated her own charity for children. Named after her parents, the Omar-Ela trust is currently based and active in Bangalore. Its endeavour is to provide food, medicine and means for education to needy children, and it will work in tandem with her sister's charity outfit, 'Ashraya.'

The trust has already started aiding poor children in the paediatric wards of the St John's hospital in Bangalore. "This way at least one is channelling one's efforts to a single cause instead of pandering to umpteen requests," says a rather relieved Menon.



A HOLIDAY OF A LIFETIME

● Here's your chance to win an exotic holiday. Exotic and expensive. Try Rs 6,45,000 plus for size. Christened 'On Tour', the contest is brought to you by the National Geographic Channel in association with Siticable. The prize promises to be a travel tour lifted straight from the pages of *The National Geographic* magazine.

The 'On Tour' contest is currently open and will run on till the end of November. Siticable operators are running the contest in Calcutta, Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Kanpur. All you have to do is to watch the programmes on the channel and send in the name of any one favourite show, the date, the time of telecast along with the name of your operator. Just bung in this information at the address mentioned by your operator.

A draw at the end of the contest will win a lucky person a trip for two as the mega prize. The winner will get to pick from a wide range of destinations: China, Turkey, Russia, Greece, a cruise on the Danube, British countryside and America's Yellowstone National Park. The itinerary for the winner will be worked out by experts and the winner will get to see much of what the channel telecasts. So there'll be culture, history and wildlife, up for exploration.



've exfoliated your skin to prevent excessive drying



astrologers took into account the caste system, the Indian theory of five elements — earth, water, air, fire and space — to form the *janmangan* or *lagna kundali*. With the easy availability of paper and the growing patronage of kings, princes, nobility and traders, the system of producing detailed and ornate scrolls — which depended upon a patron's capacity to pay the astrologer — seemed to have come in vogue in North India. The exhibits had horoscopic illuminations of different types. They ranged from simple coloured borders, charts, tables, diagrams, geometrical and decorative designs at the outer end of the scroll, to the depiction of figures of planets, signs of the zodiac, deities and astrological themes. In the larger horoscopes, most of the paintings seem to have been executed by a specific class of artists but in the ordinary horoscopic scrolls, astrologers themselves did the colour work. This dying art form may have been replaced by computer horoscopes, but there is no disputing their accuracy or decorative value.

RASOI

The food column



Elixir of Life

Jiggs Kalra on some royal recipes that act as revitalisers

What in popular lore are thought of as aphrodisiacs, are actually elixirs. In the past, these revitalisers were available exclusively to the nobility and were zealously protected like state secrets. The Pistey Ka Salaan with an unusually forthcoming *rikabdaar* was embellished by Hakeem Safdar Nawaab.This and the other recipe can be enjoyed at the Kandahar, at The Oberoi Bombay, where our other team mates are creating potent repasts.

Pistey ka Saalan

INGREDIENTS

- 8 **Breasts of chicken**
- 110g/1/4 lb **Pistachios**
- 1litre/4¼ cups **Clear chicken stock (or water)**
- 75g/6 tbs ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 150g/5oz **Onions (finely chop)**
- 15g/2½ tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 30g/5¼oz **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 160g/5oz **Yoghurt**
- 10g/1¾ tsp **Green chilli paste**
- 4.5g/1½tsp ***Dhania*/coriander powder**
- **Salt**
- I.5g/1/2 tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Motti elaichi*/black cardamom powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Javitri*/mace powder**
- A generous pinch ***Zarraqoosh* powder**
- 1drop ***Kewra***

The Filling

- 16 **Oysters (small)**
- 30g/1oz **Almond flakes**
- 16 ***kishmish*/raisins (refresh in water, drain and pat dry)**
- 2 **Green chillies (seed and finely chop)**
- 0.5g/1tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron (sun dry and powder)**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 30g/1oz **Cheddar/processed cheese (grate)**

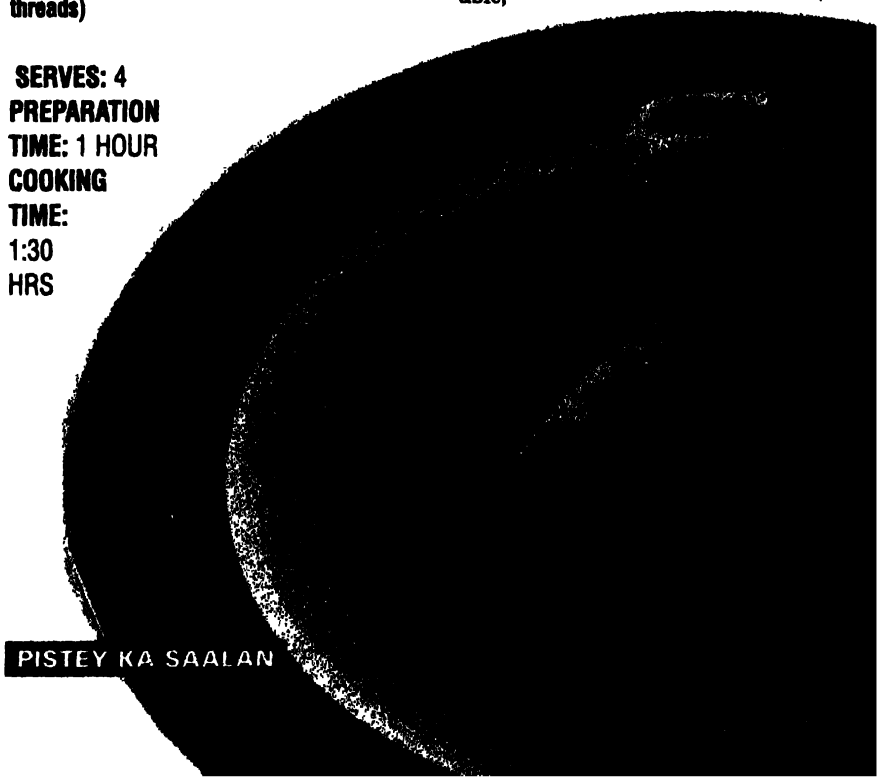
The Garnish

- 8 **Pistachios (blanch, drain, cool, peel and halve)**
- 0.5g/1tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron (sun-dry threads)**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR
COOKING TIME: 1:30 HRS

PREPARATION

- The Chicken: Clean, remove the skin, bone, trim, wash and pat dry. Place the breasts, one at a time, between two polythene sheets and flatten with a bat ensuring that the meat is not ruptured and at the same time, the shape is retained.
- The Filling: Put all the ingredients ina bowl, mix well and divide into 8 equal portions.
- The Stuffing: Place a portion of the filling at a narrow end of each breast and roll tightly to make paupiettes.
- The Oven: Preheat to 300° F.
- The Roasting: Grease a roasting tray with butter, arrange the breasts with the loose ends touching the bottom of the tray, pour on the chicken stock and roast in the pre-heated oven until evenly light golden(if an oven is not available,



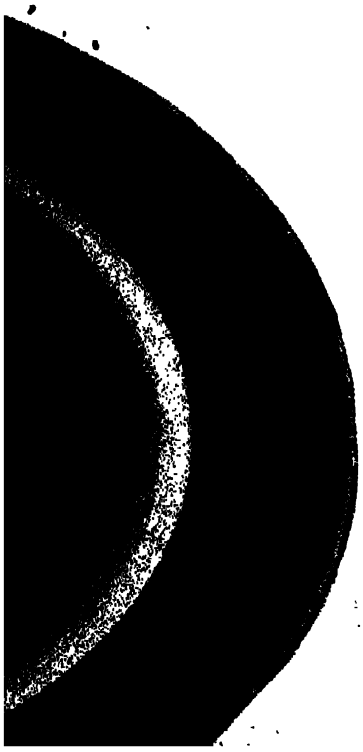
PISTEY KA SAALAN

cover the tray with an aluminium foil and cook on the regular stove). Remove the paupiettes, pass stock through fine mesh soup strainer and reserve for the gravy.

● The Gravy: Blanch pistachio in boiling water for 3 minutes, drain, cool, peel, put in a blender, add 45ml/3 tbs of water and make a smooth paste. Put yoghurt in a bowl, add green chilli paste, coriander and salt, and whisk to homogenize.

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add onions, saute until they begin to sweat and become soft, add the garlic and ginger pastes, and *bhunno*/stir fry until the onions are translucent and glossy. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in yoghurt mixture, return *handi*/pan to heat, *bhunno*/stir fry until the specks of fat begin to appear on the surface (ensure that the *masala* does not get coloured). Then add the pistachio paste, *bhunno*/stir fry for a minute, add the reserved stock, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the gravy is of thin sauce consistency. Now add chicken paupiettes and simmer, stirrring occasionally, for 3-4 minutes. Sprinkle green cardamom, black cardamom, mace and *mushq-e-daana*, stir, add *kewra*, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning. Garnish with pistachio and saffron threads at the time of service.





Saalan Taal Makhaana

INGREDIENTS

- 12 ***Elaichi* raw bananas (3")**
- **60ml/1/4cup lemon juice**
- **30g/1oz *Makhaana*/puffed lotus seeds**
- **Cooking oil to deep fry**

The Bouquet *Garni*

- **8 *Lavang*/cloves**
- **4 *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom**
- **2 *Motti elaichi*/black cardamom**
- **1/4 *Jaiphal*/nutmeg**
- **6 blades *Khus* root**
- **2 blades *Javitri*/mace**

The Gravy

- **50g/1/4cup *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **200g/7oz Onions (pulse to a smooth paste in a blender)**
- **1.5g/1/4tsp Ginger paste (strain)**
- **5.5g/1tsp Garlic paste (strain)**
- **200g/7oz Yoghurt**
- **4.5g/1½ tsp *Dhania*/coriander powder**
- **3g/1tsp *Haldee*/turmeric powder**
- **1.5g/1/2tsp Red chilli powder**
- **Salt**
- **720ml/3 cups Clear vegetable stock**
- **2.25g/3/4 tsp Black pepper (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)**
- **1.5g1/2tsp *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- **0.75g/1/4tsp *Motti elaichi*/black cardamom powder**
- **0.75g/1/4tsp *Javitri*/mace powder**
- **A generous pinch of *Chali Chabila* powder**
- **1 drop *Kewra***

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 35 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The raw bananas: Peel, halve and reserve in lemon juice.

● The *Makhaana*: Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok, add the seeds, shallow fry over medium heat for 15 seconds or until they puff up, drain and reserve in water until ready to cook.

● The Bouquet *Garni*: Put all the ingredients in a mortar and pound with a pestle to break the spices, fold in a piece of muslin and secure with enough string for it to hang over the rim of the *handi*/pan.

● The Gravy: Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander, red chillies, turmeric and salt, and whisk to homogenize.

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add one third of the sliced onions, saute over medium heat until golden, drain and reserve the onions. In the same oil, add the remaining onions and saute until onions are translucent and glossy. Add ginger and garlic pastes, *bhunno*/stir fry until the moisture evaporates. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in yoghurt mixture, return *handi*/pan to heat, add the reserved fried onions and bouquet *garni* and *bhunno*/stir fry until specks of fat begin to appear on the surface (ensure that the *masala* is light golden). Then add stock , bring to boil, reduce to very low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes or unitl the gravy is reduced by half. Then add banana halves, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 3 minutes. Now add *makhaana*, stir and then simmer, stirring occasionally, for another 3 minutes or until the bananas are cooked and not mushy. Sprinkle pepper, green cardamom, black cardamom, mace and *mushq-e-daana*, stir, add *kewra*, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning.Remove the *potli* and adjust the seasoning.

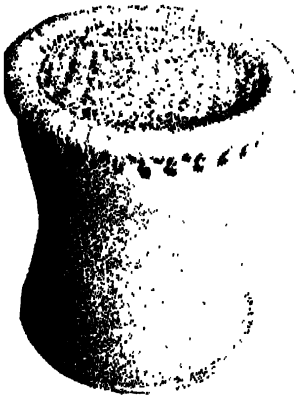
TO SERVE

Remove to a service dish, garnish with coriander and serve with *roomali roti* or *phulka*. ■

DESIGN Corner

POTTERING AROUND

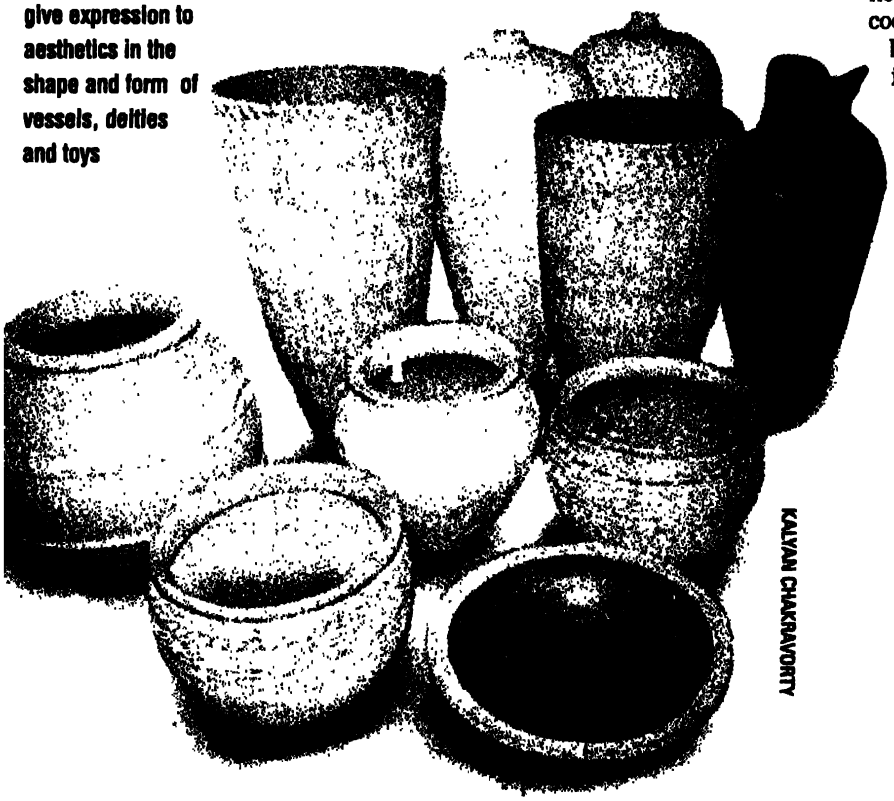
With clay and earth can lead to some interesting products, shapes and colours, says **Geeta Sharma**



FEAT OF CLAY
Clay is a basic medium for man to give expression to aesthetics in the shape and form of vessels, deities and toys

It is among the most pliable, malleable and supple substances on earth. A child can create myriad figures out of it, perhaps just as Brahma created man out of clay. To a potter, too, a lump of clay begins to assume form with the touch of the hand and the movement of the wheel.

But clay is not just a basic raw material for toys. It is also an expression of man's aesthetics, which he has tried to define by giving it the shape of toys, deities and vessels. As eminent Indian potter Gurcharan Singh points out, "The shape creates itself and grows, that growth of the form is the spirit and is the essential part, while the rest is technique. In the mass production of articles made today, the contribution of the spirit is very little. Hence the tragic result is the ugly things around us."



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

And yet, clay, accessible everywhere is esser tial to Indian culture. It takes form with very li tle effort; and its fragility assures its constan renewal. It has been the perfect vehicle fo Indian creativity through the ages. The shape and styles of items made of clay, both fired an unfired, are innumerable.

In the beginning, pottery was made witl hand, as sun-dried bricks and containers. It wa perhaps, pure accident, which produced th knowledge that clay hardens on firing an becomes more long-lasting. And so shapes an forms, from the minuscule to the gigantic, fron the simple to the highly ornate, from realistic t abstract, began to emerge.

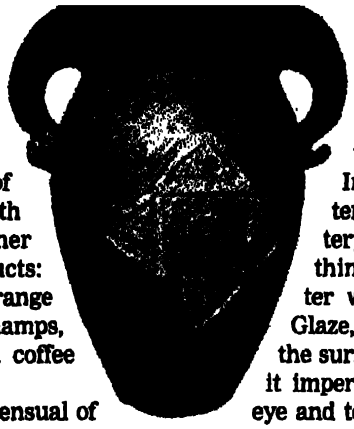
Potters made vessels for every conceivabl household use, from the simplest clay lamps cooking pots and food containers, to storag bins, eight feet high. They even sculpte images to be used in religious ceremonie ranging from tiny figures made from pinche of clay to magnificent horses and elephant over 18 feet tall.

Today's potters have given an entirel new meaning to the age-old craft Traditionally, pottery items, mainl cups, pots and pans, were thrown awa after use, or kept for storing grains. Bu thanks to the creative and innovativ bent of today's potters, this 10,000-year old craft has got its due place in the cen tre-stage of home decor.

And so from being relegated to an isolated corner of the garden or to an inconspicuous spot, pottery, and more specifically pots, have found a place a centre-pieces of the house.

As Anita Lal, the woman behind Good Earth, a boutique for top-of the-line ceramics and home accessories says, "Finally the look of pottery has made it an object, not just to be stacked

somewhere, but displayed prominently inside homes."



Lal, who learnt studio pottery under Gurcharan Singh, has been moulding clay for over 20 years now. And after years of experimenting and working with rural potters, she has put her indelible stamp on her products: oversized pots, planters and a range of accessories such as table lamps, candle-stands, vases, trays and coffee mugs.

Pottery, in fact, is the most sensual of all art forms, she points out. Flower vases, bowls and cups used for decorating, serving and drinking, allow us to touch and to feel these objects.

According to Lal, there are three basic elements in pottery — shape, proportion and surface decoration. The form or shape of the piece has to have rhythm, the proportions have to be realistic, and the surface decoration, with coloured slits made of clay and oxide, has to gel with the overall look of the pot.

Lal has worked in all these areas and the result is there to see. The attractive pots, planters and accessories are printed or glazed in bright hues to create different moods for the garden, terrace and interiors.

Lal believes that colour forms a potent tool that a designer can employ to create a mood or set a tone for a design. And the colours she prefers for her products are vivid tones of the earth, sea and the sky.

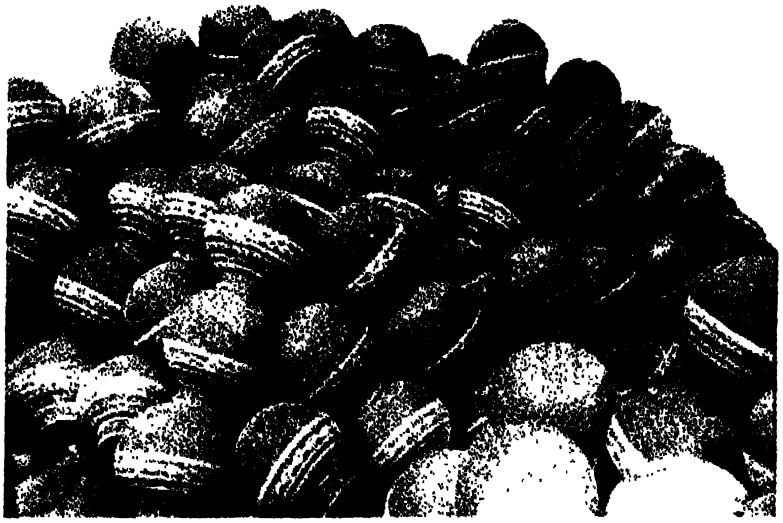
Manjul Gupta of Prakriti, a boutique for plants, planters and pots, says that design-wise a major and rather difficult innovation has been in the size of the pots. From small and tiny pots to pots that stand three to four feet tall. 'Firing such huge pots and ensuring that they are sturdy and non-porous is a difficult task but not one that cannot be overcome," Gupta says. Her Prakriti collection consists of pots and planters and stools — all moulded from terra-cotta but which look like they have been shaped from wood.

Gupta has used water-proof colours to decorate her pots with traditional or unusual designs, in shades that range from the sober beige and natural terra-cotta to flashy golds and reds. "That is because people want these pots to match their curtains and sofas. Otherwise frankly, I feel that natural colours look the best," says Gupta.

Far from the demands of saleability, in studio pottery, it is the individual look of the piece that is the main concern of the moulder. Lekha Gupta, a studio potter, working in Delhi's Garhi studios, says what is important is that you work towards the aesthetically beautiful and not just saleable pots.

A studio potter is constantly experimenting to improve on texture, colour and glaze. Interestingly, though glazed pottery forms an integral part of pottery and design today, it is something that the traditional Indian potter was not initially at home with. Glaze, a thin layer of glass that covers the surface of the pottery piece to make it impervious and more pleasing to the eye and touch, is something pioneered by the Egyptians. With the coarse sand of the Nile, some borax, and copper oxide, they were the first to make a turquoise colour glaze.

It was the great Pathan builder Sher Shah Suri who introduced the craft of glazed tiles into Bengal. The Muslim potters also brought in the use of glazed pottery such as *martbans*, jars for pickles and jams, *surahis* and *hukka*



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

EARTH, SEA AND SKY

Though pots look best in natural colours, bright colours can set a tone or create a mood for the varied designs

stands and bowls as seen in Peshawar, Lahore, Delhi, Ajmer and Khurja. In the south too, this influence was reflected in the use of the turquoise colour which has high transparency, and the golden brown of a very rich texture.

As most of the pots are made in red clay, it was usual to cover them with a mixture of quartz, clay, glass with gum and gluten. In Khurja and Jaipur, potters use a mixture of quartz, sand, glass, and soda bicarb, or *sajji* (a kind of mud) and a little bit of *multani mitti* (fuller's earth). This ferments, and is then kneaded and beaten into shape in moulds.

So from simple earthen pots traditionally used for drinking tea or storing grain to designer pots, the potter's wheel has come a long way in churning out shapes and forms. And these innovations have forced us to look at moulded earth with more reverence than ever before. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 25-year-old woman. I have eruptions on my nose which are small but prominent. They are not really pimples but are always there and have a rough texture. How do I get rid of them?

PAYEL MITRA, CALCUTTA

It is possible that the eruptions that you are talking about are enlarged blackheads. What you need to do is to make a mild scrub at home with the following ingredients—*chokker*, gramflour, rice powder and rose water. Scrub these very gently on the skin for about five minutes and then wash off. It is important that you should always keep your skin clean. Wipe the skin several times a day with rose water to which you have added a tsp of camphor powder. This should be kept in a fridge at all times. The skin exfoliation must be done daily for about two weeks before you can see the results.

I am having an acute dandruff problem. I tried using various anti-dandruff shampoos but to no avail. Please suggest a herbal pack to clear my hair and make it healthy.

RANJANA PRASAD, DURGAPUR

I am often amazed at how people associate what their skin and hair will look like from what they apply on it externally. Do you think you are leading a healthy lifestyle? Do you drink 10 to 12 glasses of water daily? Include lots of raw vegetables and fruits in your diet, avoid heavy, fried food, sweets and aerated drinks. Do you exercise regularly and keep a clean stomach? Do you sleep properly at a decent hour and avoid stressful situations? Well, these are all the things that could lead to dandruff and if you think that just by using a shampoo, there is going to be a miracle, you are highly mistaken. Do you have a regular hair care programme? Do you oil your hair and take the trouble to steam it? Are you using *henna*? All these things put together, determine what your hair is going to look like. So take the effort to look after your hair — naturally!

I am a 45-year-old woman. I am getting grey hairs now. I want to use a dye or hair colourant because at my age it is not possible to regain the natural colour. Or, is it possible? Please advise.

SONALI CHATTERJEE, BURNPUR

You worry about regaining the natural colour and think of colouring your hair chemically...why? You can *henna* your hair with a good quality *henna* powder. After *henna*ing, never shampoo the *henna* out if you want your colour to become stronger. I would suggest that you only rinse out the hair; dry it and then apply a *bhringraj* oil as the herb *bhringraj* has a

The root cause of split ends is under nourished hair. Instead of crying over damage done, I would suggest that you oil, *henna* and condition your hair with mild herbs like *shikakai, reetha* and *amla* powder regularly. Not only will you nourish your hair naturally but also prevent split ends



darkening effect on the hair.

Greying with age is a natural process and I would advise you to make a decision as to whether you want to grey naturally or colour your hair but that too, naturally. Chemical dyes and colourants have strong contents of ammonia which are extremely harmful to the hair and can cause hair loss as well as irreparable damage. So the choice is yours.

I am a 34-year-old man suffering from acute hair loss. Baldness does not run in my family and I am at a loss as to how to prevent it. Please help.

JAYANTA SAHA, CALCUTTA

Perhaps, you have suffered an illness or are using the wrong shampoo. It is also possible that you are taking an insufficient or imbalanced diet—add raw vegetables, fruits and dairy products in your diet. Go for a medical check-up to see if there is any internal weakness. Oil your hair with castor and almond oil mixed in equal proportions, follow this with turban therapy. You could start to *henna* your hair as this is known to condition hair as well as promote better hair growth.

Also, too much worry or stress will lead to hair loss. So I would suggest that you avoid worrying, that is, if you are leading a stressful life. What's the point as it will only make you lose more hair!

I am 17 years old and had a minor accident a few months ago which has left an ugly whitish scar on my left cheek. Please tell me how to get rid of it.

MAHASWETA BARUA, ASSAM

I do wish you had written earlier, when your scar had started healing. I would suggest that you massage the area with pure almond and coconut oil twice a day for at least two months. Apply a *lep* of grated raw potato and cream. Natural therapy requires regularity and dedication. I recommend them only for those who are serious about their skin and are treating it the natural way.

I am a 29-year-old working woman. I am a sales officer in my company and my job requires me to stay outdoors most of the time. Consequently, I am suffering from dryness of all sorts—skin, lips and feet. Can you suggest a beauty care routine for me?

DAMAYANTI LAHA, CALCUTTA

Today's woman is conscious about the way she looks and is also ready to dedicate time and effort to improve her skin. Since you have a dry skin, I would recommend that you go in for an oil massage once a week with sesame oil and sandalwood oil. This will nourish the skin and combat dryness. Also, when you take a bath, add a few drops of sandalwood and almond oil in your bucket, so that your body feels nourished. Drink lots of fluids in the form of juices and eat fresh fruits. Try to keep a small bottle of moisturiser handy in your bag and use it when the skin feels too stretched or dry. Wash your face with cold rose water when you are at home. This will help tremendously.

I am a 27-year-old woman having an extremely sensitive skin. If I wash my face with a face wash (I don't use soaps as they irritate my skin), it feels very dry. But if I apply a moisturiser, rashes and pimples appear. Please tell me how I should take care of my skin.

JAYANTHI MENON, BALASORE

I wish you had woken up to the fact a little earlier. Beauty care should ideally begin from your teens as a younger skin responds faster to natural packs. Anyway, start by making your own face wash at home with milk, *chokker* and lemon juice with one teaspoon breadcrumbs. Apply this all over the face and gently scrub off. Wash face with ice cold rose water and wipe clean with cold water. This should contain rashes and you will have a squeaky clean skin. A good and balanced diet is also a must for proper skin care.

I am a 31-year old woman. I have no major skin problems but my hands are very dry. I use a moisturiser, though not regularly, and occasionally go for manicures. How can I have soft and smooth hands? Can you suggest any nourishing packs?

KAVITA SHARMA, CALCUTTA

I receive letters relating to problems of the skin, hair, face, complexion etc. But strangely, the most widely exposed area of the body, namely the arms, are usually ignored. I have seen women wearing the most expensive diamonds on their fingers and dainty bracelets on their wrists and yet failing to look after their hands properly. Use a good nourishing cream twice a day. Also, you can take two tablespoons of fresh cream mixed with two teaspoons of sugar and a juice of half a lemon. Massage this paste all over the hands until the sugar granules have totally melted. Wash hands in cold water and your hands will look great and feel soft as petals. ■

FOR SOFT, SMOOTH PALMS:

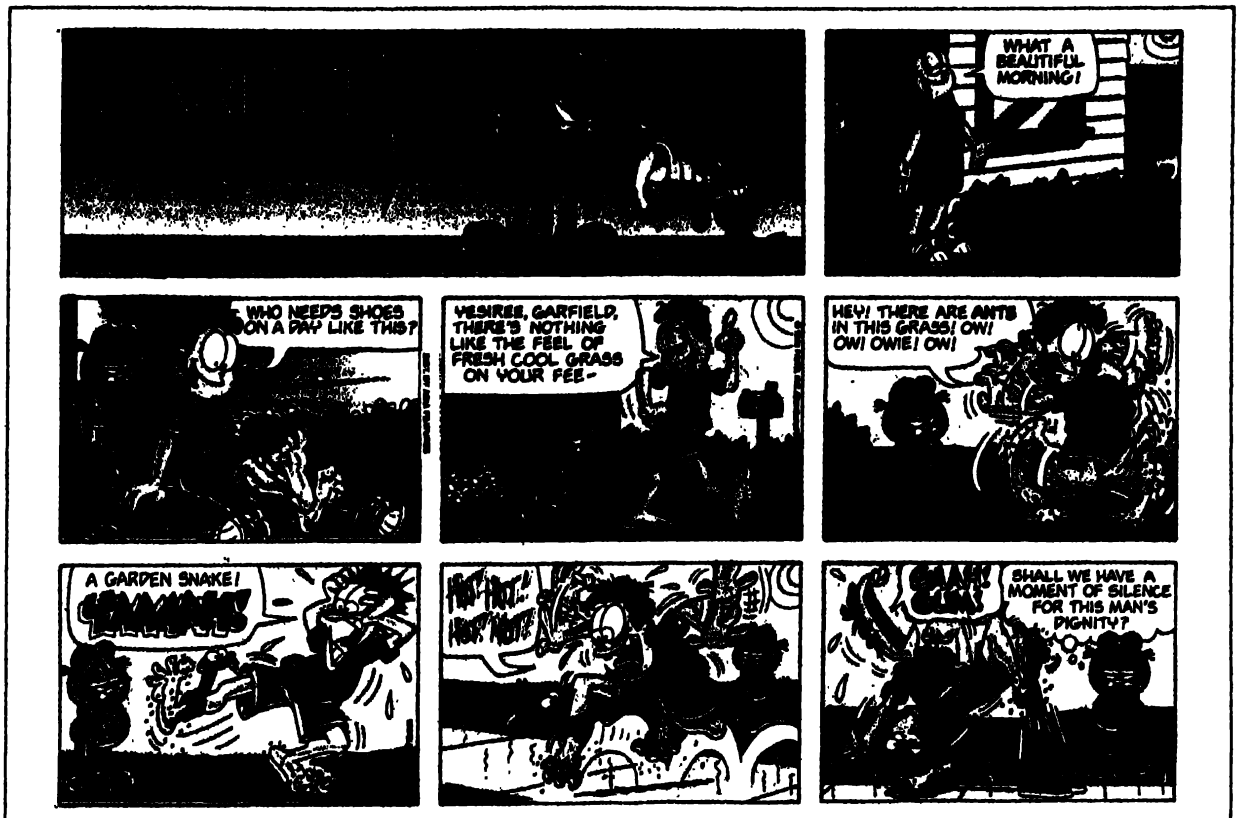
Moisturise your hands twice a day with a good nourishing cream. Also, give yourself a manicure at home in hot, soapy water



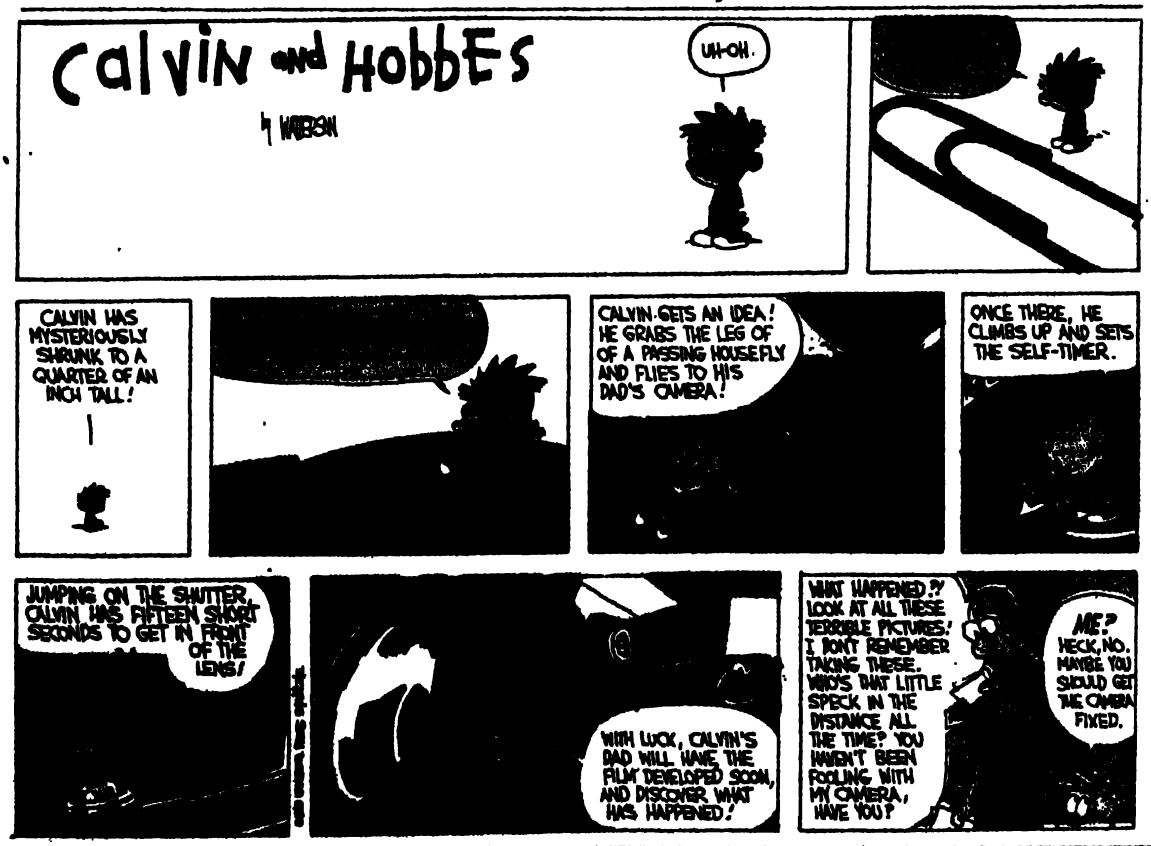
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1345	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
■ DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W 612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	0950	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
■ IMPHAL					
CD 255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0645	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W-201	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
■ PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD 255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-4/6	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 6

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1100	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 8
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	18-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	9-45	2312
3095	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3096
3009	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	19-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep Wed, Thurs. & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2393	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon, Tues, Fri. & Sat Arr: Mon., Thurs, Fri. & Sun.	18-15	2394
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues, Thurs., Fri & Sat. Arr Mon, Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun; Arr Tues. & Sat	13-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2319	8-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2320
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep. Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues, Wed & Sat; Arr.: Tues, Fri. & Sat	05-00	3046
3049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	3050
3041	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	3042
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	8-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
2309	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	2310
3097	14-00	Amritsar Express	16-00	3098
3011	21-30	Kathgodam Express	11-05	3012
3047	14-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3048
3053	14-35	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	9-30	3054
3317	8-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3055	17-15	Coalfield Express	10-00	3056
3057	14-00	Asansol Express	5-45	3058
3061	14-00	Danapur Express	6-00	3062
3071	14-00	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3315	8-30	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3316
3017	7-05	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1189	14-00	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-00	1190
3081	16-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-00	3082
3083	14-00	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	4-30	3084
1187	14-00	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-00	1188

Sealdah

Time	Dn
5-45	2302
7-30	2304
7-30	2306
5-30	2308
5-30	2310
5-30	2312
5-30	2314
5-30	2316
5-30	2318
5-30	2320
5-30

THE Best

With sundry varieties of toothpastes flooding the market, oral care is easier than ever before, says **Sudipta Basu**

FOAMING AT THE



KNOW YOUR PASTE

A good toothpaste should contain flouride which is necessary for dental care but too much of it can affect the bones

Toothpastes can do more than just clean your teeth. They can buoy you to such heights that you are sometimes tempted to plunge into the deep seas in search of a rare pearl (to match your own pearly whites). Or, you could follow in your star sportsman's footsteps and use a tube of red gel to leave a personal imprint on your playmate's T-shirt.

But fun and games aside, more people in urban India have become aware of oral care in recent times — or so claim the dentists. Says Dr S.G. Damle, dean at the Nair Dental College, Mumbai, and convenor of the Indian Dental Association, "In the last six to seven years a keen awareness in dental care has reached over 55 per cent, thanks to exposure through mass media."

However, he also points out that dental health will remain a matter of grave concern because of prevalent Indian habits like chewing *pan, pan masalas* and tobacco. India has also recorded the highest number of oral cancer cases in the world, and between 38 and 40 per cent of cancer patients in India are those afflicted with oral cancer.

"Also, the popularity of refined carbohydrates which are present in chocolates, ice creams and other confectionery products seem to have almost pushed out fibrous food from our regular diet. And when the balance is tipped against natural food, the first to be hit are the teeth and gums," says Dr Sharat Shetty, a prosthodontist.

The rise in the number of cases in tooth decay in the US and UK is a case in point here, says Dr Damle. This occurs due to the consumption of sweet food leading to the production of acids which weaken the enamel of the teeth.

If oral care products of various colours have enthusiastic takers among the consumers, on the flip side they have also spurred a brand war of sorts. Last year, an ad campaign by HLL for their brand Pepsodent which stated that the toothpaste offered 102 per cent protection from germs, more than "even the highest-selling brand in the country" drew rival Colgate's ire. Colgate moved the courts, following which the advertisement was withdrawn and Pepsodent had to be content with a line that simply said the

NOYONIKA CHATTERJEE

Model

I am fond of Dental Care, which is, unfortunately, not available in India. The USP with this brand is the presence of baking soda which is supposed to make your teeth whiter. So I have been using Colgate lately



KRISHNA MEHTA

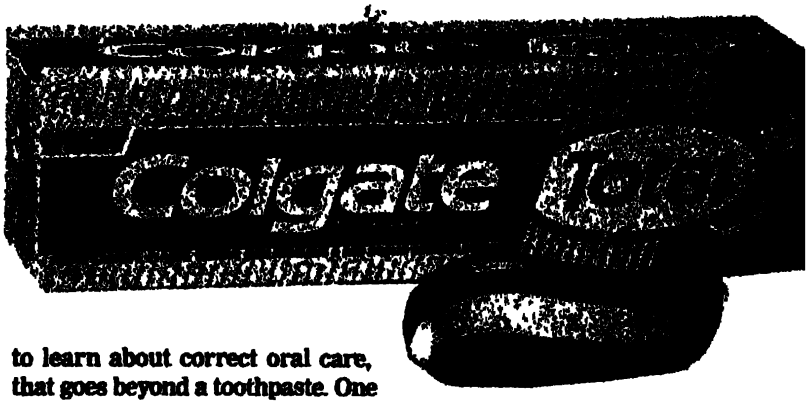
Designer

I change my brand of toothpaste very often for I dislike getting used to any one brand, I feel it becomes less effective then. My favourite brand of toothpaste is Sensoform

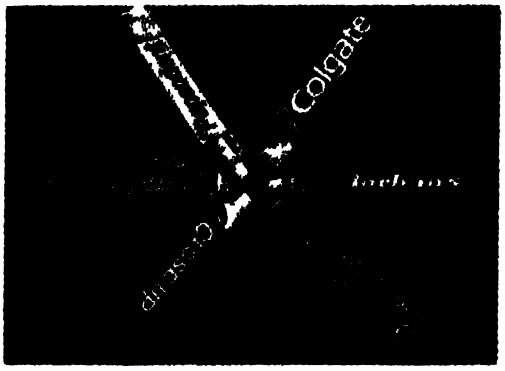
toothpaste offers 24-hour protection from germs.

While over the years Colgate has been ruling the dental care industry in India, between Close Up and Pepsodent, HLL has edged in to create a 34 per cent share for itself in the market. "Till about the early '80s the market was dominated by white toothpaste, until Close Up, a toothpaste in the form of a red gel, came in to offer a departure in colour," says a spokesperson for HLL.

Soon after the mother brand,arrived Close Up Renew with macro granules. In recent



MOUTH



PABITRA DAS

times, Pepsodent has added three varieties in Pepsodent Germicheck, 2-in-1 and Germ Protection. "When Close Up was launched in the late '70s, its positioning was that of a toothpaste for social confidence, and through the different brands of Pepsodent we have established a complete health platform," he adds.

Colgate on the other hand, has come a long way from a white dental cream, itself. Apart from the dental cream, there is Colgate Gel and Calciguard. Other brands that nestle on the shelves are Forhans, Vicco Vajradanti and Babool toothpastes.

"Pick up any toothpaste in the market that has flouride and it will suffice for your dental care," says Dr Damle. "The important thing is to learn about correct oral care, that goes beyond a toothpaste. One can do that by completely stopping that mandatory *pan* after dinner. For this is directly responsible for mucosal lesions which lead to cancer."

Then again, frequent use of *datun* and *dant manjan* leads to abrasions on tooth enamel. "Beyond a toothpaste, one must learn the correct manner of using a tooth brush, and also, it is important to see a dentist regularly," adds Damle.

Common dental ailments in the country are cavities, bleeding gums, bad breath, oozing gums and mobility of the teeth. The formation of plaque and tartar deposits on the teeth leads to bleeding and inflammation of the gums. Negligence in this regard often leads to oozing, that is formation of pus and piorreah.

Routine dental care should begin from childhood, and one should not wait for the milk teeth to fall before starting dental care. The nursing bottle syndrome occurs as a result of milk accumulating on the front teeth of the infant as it has to be fed several times in the night

"Although flouride is necessary for the teeth, excess of the same affects the bones Then, another thing that one must guard against is the use of abrasive materials, which are present in tooth powders," says Dr Damle.

No danger of that, as toothpastes in various hues and colours flood the market to cater to the tastes of the yuppie Indian. Red, white, green, or striped: take your pick, because when it comes to toothpaste, you're spoilt for choice these days. ■



PABITRA DAS

DENTAL CARE
Apart from brushing one's teeth with a good tooth paste, one should have a balanced diet and avoid *pan* or *pan masalas*



SUSHMA REDDY

Model

I use Colgate Fresh Stripe. However, I used to be a Vicco Vajradanti user, and I have no idea why they don't bring it in the house anymore. I like using a gel toothpaste



MY PERSONAL *Style*

Subhalakshmi Khan likes her house to glow with the warmth of love and sunlight

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

I like Indian things but not to the extent of wanting to go totally ethnic. That is because I want to see the best of everything in the world. But then, it is easy to keep collecting things and then letting them remain just that — things.

Since I travel a lot in India and abroad because of (Amjad Ali) Khan *sahib*'s performances, I have often gone to the nooks and corners of whichever city we are in to pick up stuff that is typical of that place. After a while, I realised that there was no point picking things up and then dumping them in some corner of the house.

I believe that it is not just the object, but also the way one treats it and keeps it that gives meaning to it. So I have tried to take care about the way I have placed things in my house.

To me, a house is something that has to glow not only with the objects that adorn it but also by the warmth that permeates its every nook and corner. And in my house, this warmth comes from the love that my sons, my husband and I share.

I am a morning born and that, too, in the East. That is why I am very active in the mornings and by the time the sun sets, I feel listless and dull. And perhaps because of that, I have this penchant for plenty of sunlight in my house — in the drawing room, the bathrooms, the kitchen, the bedrooms, just everywhere.

I also love flowers and plants. But because the house is not built on a big plot there is not much garden space available. I try to make up for it by having flowers in my drawing room.

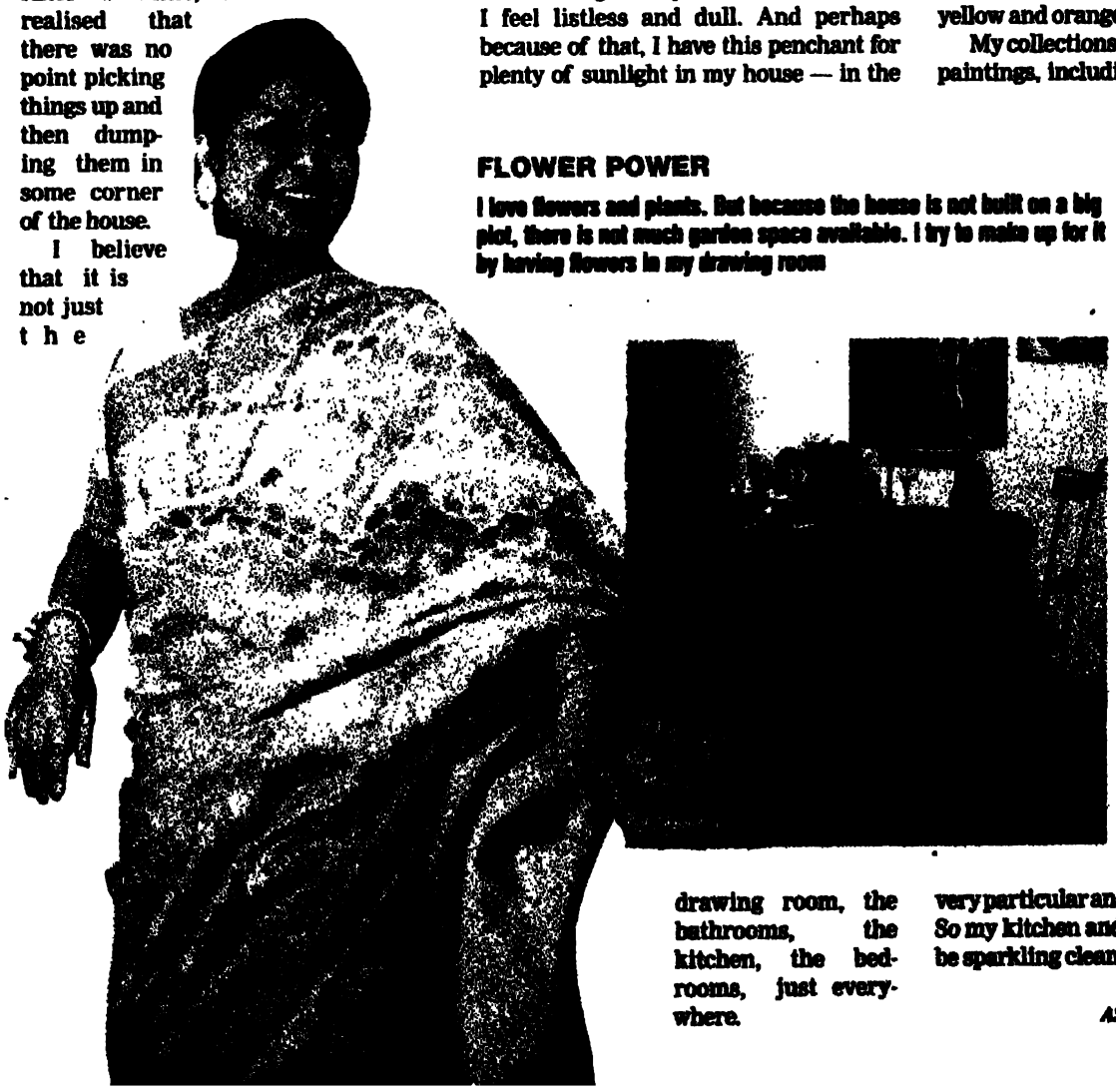
As for colours, it is sober colours I prefer. But in my decor, it is the combination of bright and sober colours that come off. For instance, there is a lot of white in the house, because it gives a sense of space and there are colours like green, maroon and saffron. There is a lot of vibrancy which the Indian colours — green, golden yellow and orange — have lent.

My collections include some cherished paintings, including one gifted by a well-known artist, who had made a portrait of my husband. Then there are miniatures — two Ragamalas and some Tanjore paintings, too.

In carpets, too, I have gone in for a mix. I have a Bhukhara carpet and some hand-knotted ones that are both sober and elegant. I don't have too many of them because I believe in the saying: *'Kaleen utnaa hi bichchao jitne pe chal sakte ho'* (spread only as much as you can walk on!)

Normally people like to do up their drawing rooms and pay little attention to the bathrooms and kitchen. But I am very particular and finicky about them all. So my kitchen and bathroom, too, have to be sparkling clean.

AS TOLD TO GEETA SHARMA



FLOWER POWER

I love flowers and plants. But because the house is not built on a big plot, there is not much garden space available. I try to make up for it by having flowers in my drawing room



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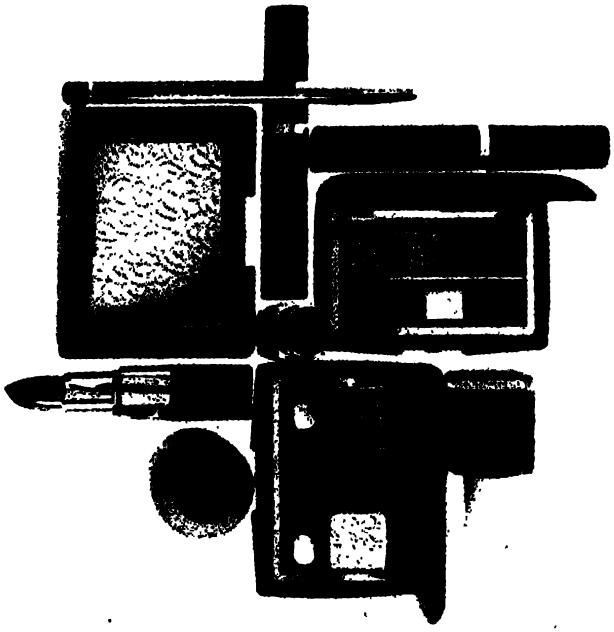
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SEPTEMBER 1998

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Space Age
By Suketu Mehta 16

ESSAY

False Witness
By Kiran Nagarkar 26

TRAVEL

At Donna Georgina's
By William Dalrymple 44

FILM SCRIPT

Bombay Boys
By Kaizad Gustad 58



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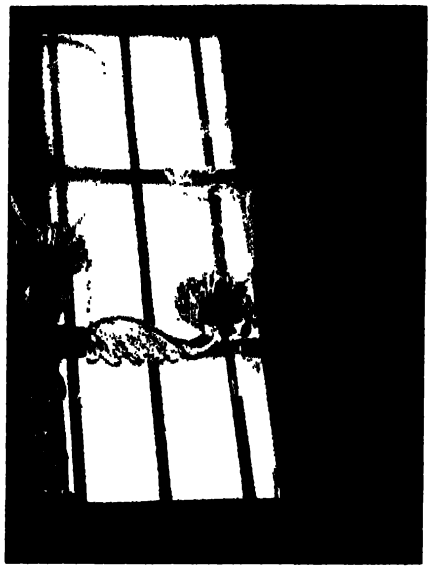


PHOTO FEATURE

Infant joy infant sorrow

By Achinto

Text: Sunanda K. Datta-Ray 38

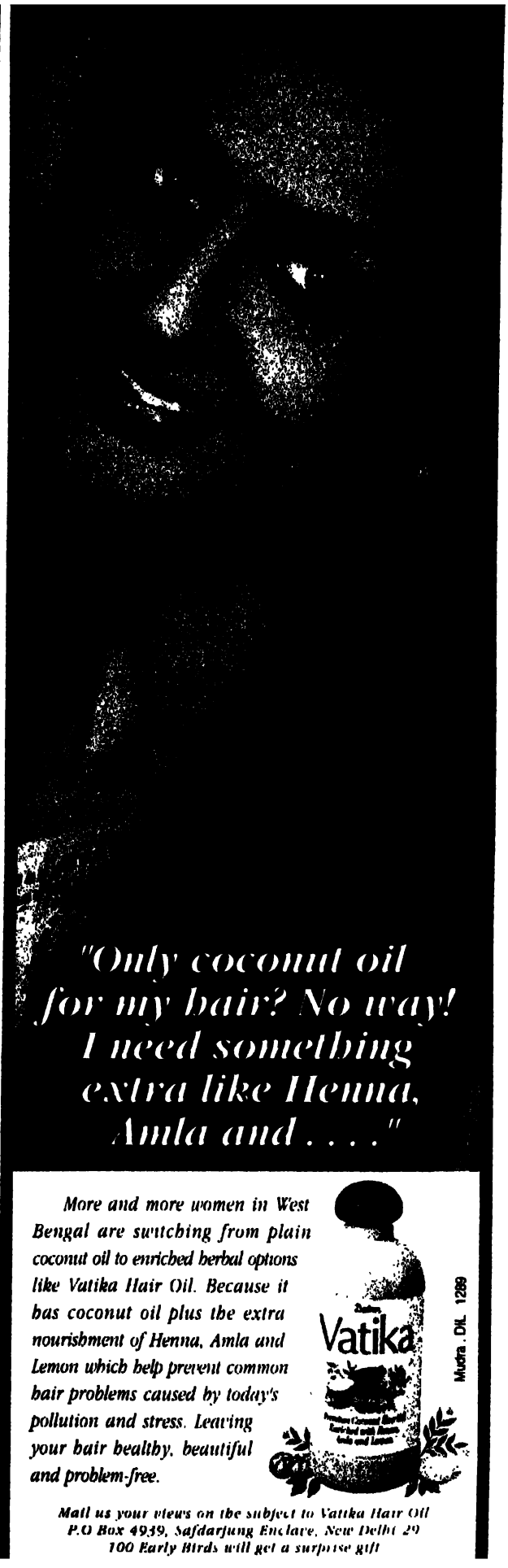
PHOTOGRAPHS

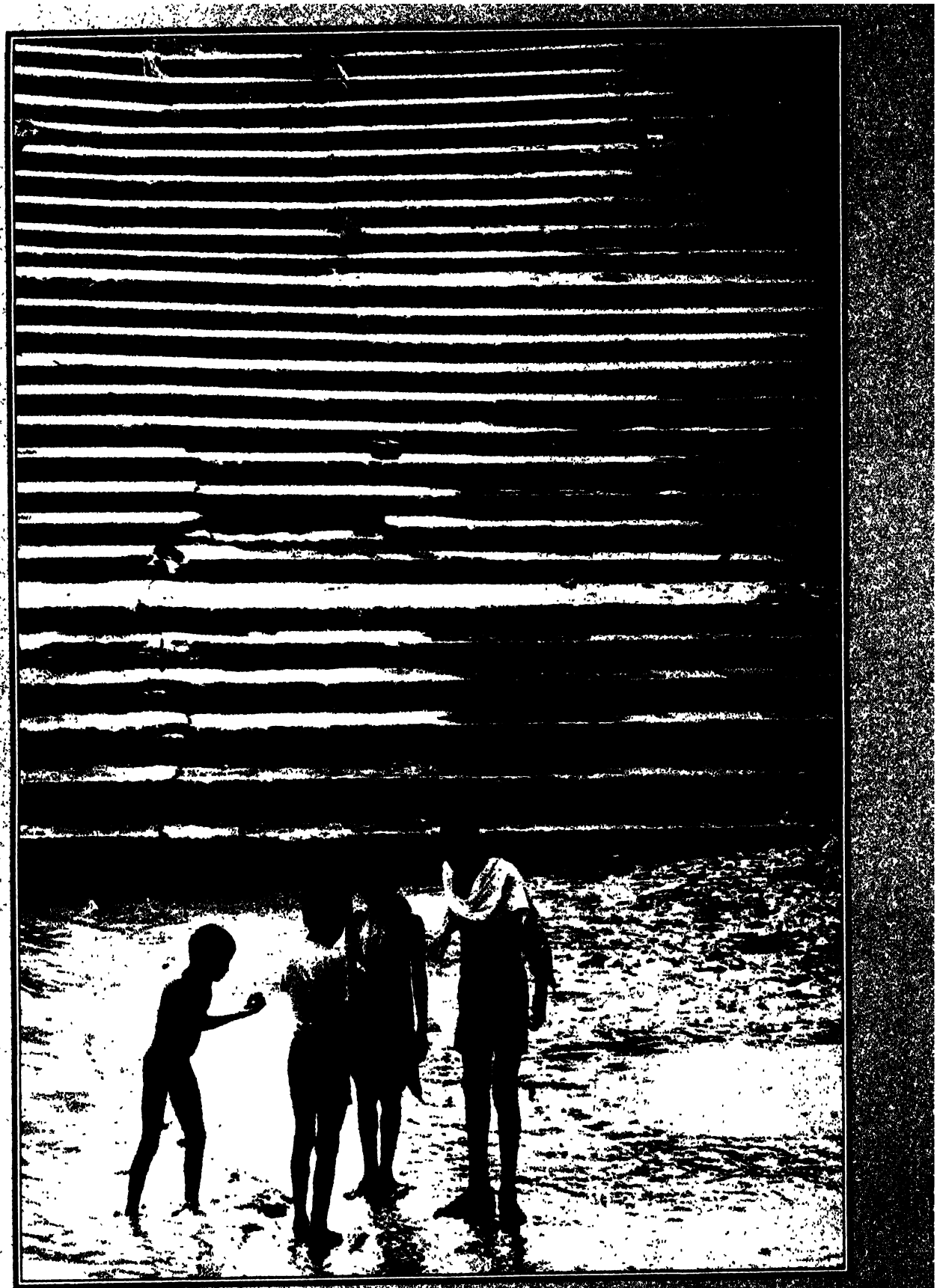
By Raghu Rai, Pablo Bartholomew, Paresh Maity, Aditya Basak, Subhendu Chaki, Leslie D'Gama

COVER

Photograph by Adrian Steven
Model: Durga Jasraj
Make-up by Bharat Godambe

Printed and published for Ananda Bazar Patrika by Bijit Kumar Basu at 6 & 9 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Calcutta 700 001
Editor: Aveek Sarkar





E JOURNEY

"Between us and heaven or hell there is only

Khalil Gibran

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNE-MARIE CHAN

Spoky from the ferris wheel, I suppose, set back from the gate against a stand of old eucalyptus trees a hundred feet up.

THE OTHER NIGHT I TOOK RITIKA TO THE Dinosaur Fair and realised it was the first time we'd been out together since, well, since the fall that threw us together. For months I'd been telling myself I must spend more time with her, which is odd when you consider that we live under the same roof, but then she has her school and homework (which I supervise) and I have the office till half past five.

The fair had been in town for some weeks on the Ramlila ground just around the corner from us. I'd ridden past it a couple of times without supposing that I'd ever go. A spiky spoky twinkling apparition at the corner of the eye. Spoky from the ferris wheel, I suppose, set back from the gate against a stand of old eucalyptus trees a hundred feet up, but spiky from the look of the gate itself. This was a giant cloth-and-bamboo arch, notched like a stegosaurus' back and daubed with paint. It was so well done you didn't notice until you entered that that was all there was to the dinosaur — the arched spine. Where

FAIR *and* LOVELY

short story by i. allan sealy



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the head and tail might have been the stalls began on either side. What you did notice was the apeman. This was a colossal seated creature of papier mache that leaned against the stegosaur as against a sofaback, grinning at all comers a grin so fierce that I'm not sure Ritika would have approached him without me. He had his arms extended sideways, palms pushing out, as if straining at the pillars of heaven, or the bars of a cage. You entered the fair through the gap between his shaggy legs.

What decided me was the imminent prospect of the monsoon. A fairground in summer is a dusty place, but a fairground in the monsoon is a mudbath. Now slush is a thing I cannot bear, so if we had to go, I knew we shouldn't put it off a single day. I slipped a hundred rupee note into my shirt pocket, leaving my wallet safely behind, and we went.

I'm not a poor man, but I do need to watch where the money goes. By my father's standards (he was a shop assistant at the cloth merchant Lalwani and Sons) I've come up in the world, which is why he sent me to college. We have our own flat in a respectable area. Second floor, it's true, so we have water problems, and a steep outside stair with no landing, but what can you expect from government constructions sold off cheaply?

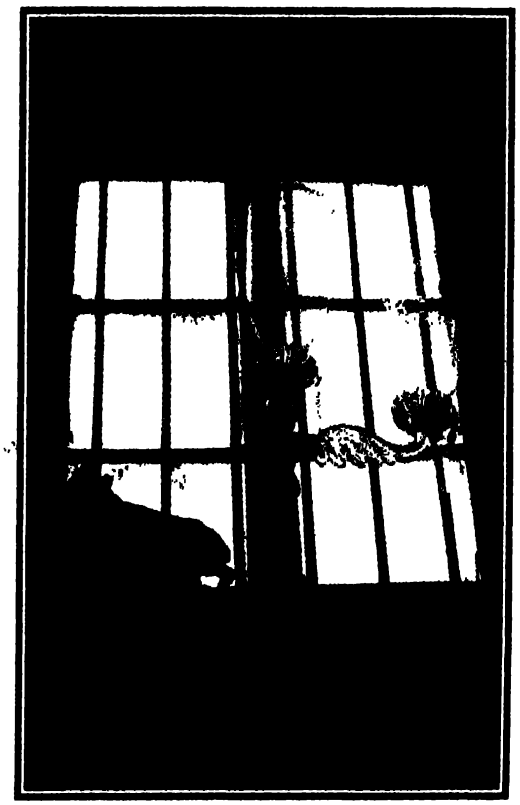
I work in the proofing room at the Survey Office where I've sat at the same desk for twenty years. It's not sweaty work as it is in the next building where the maps are printed and where you could say the collars are blue. Dark blue. With us there's no noise of machinery, except when the double doors swing open, no stink of hot oil and grease. No. A quiet calm place where the light from the high windows is pale blue and the desks, twelve in a row along the windows, have a pleasing clutter about them. The smell of ink, yes, but that's a smell I like and even crave when I take a week off.

I enjoy my work, though I have come to see it in a different light. Finding mistakes in things is a special, and specialised, pleasure. But working with maps is its own reward. Just spreading out the sheet on the desk, the kiss of chart paper on your fingertips, is a thrill that can still catch me unawares on dull afternoons when the air is sticky and I seem to have become a misshapen unfired clay pot. The feel of a map! And then the colours, those lovely pale shades I worshipped even as a boy. As if each tint, of red or blue or green, had been left to bleach awhile in a bath of white light till it came up the ghost of itself, belonging in a kind of celestial realm where gods and nymphs moved just out of human reach. And holding them in, that fine fingerprint tracery of contour lines, softening the harsh cartographic grid with curves so sensuous you realise why the earth is seen as a woman. A pale wash of green her forest robe, sky blue the lakes she bathes in, white the snows where she is received into heaven.

Or so I used to think.

The look of a thing is important to me. So often on a crowded bus I have refused to take a vacated seat because it was the wrong colour. Colour, my own included, always mattered to me, a fair man. Fair to whiteness, light-eyed, and pale-lashed. And married to a dark woman. The girl has her skin, Ritika. But that's her fate, as mine was getting a dark woman at a good price. Life is a game of chance. So Ritika has my features, and a pleasing disposition, and I almost said but — my wife's skin. I was trained to pick up flaws.

Flaws the layman misses. Breaks in an isobar, beautiful word. A blocked estuary, a ruptured lagoon, a hairline fracture in the Upper Ganges Canal. As well as the howlers, of course: a ford across a highway, glaciation in the Sunderbans, a mantle of forest green laid over the Arabian sea! Back to the printers! Those sweaty hacks with oilrags in their back pockets, and hands black with compounded inks. Once I watched one pick a jasmine with his inky fingers and it seemed an act of sacrilege.



CANDLE IN THE WIND

"I would not open windows into men's souls" —T.S. Eliot

PHOTOGRAPH **ADITYA BASAK**

I do the rejecting. I don't have to submit like my father, patiently rolling up bolt after bolt of rejected cloth. Poplin, dasooti, georgette, silk: how many thousands of metres he must have rolled out and rolled up again! No wonder he thrashed me all the way to the DAV college. And suppose I'd stuck with the second degree, who knows what chair I'd be sitting in today? I might be rejecting whole editions.

If you can ever suppose. Sometimes I think we're lords of the grid, and sometimes I think we're its slaves.

Look at my start. I was twelve when I picked the wife I wanted. She was twelve too (I suppose) and fair as this hand. On the trapeze — or at least preparing to launch herself on the trapeze — of the Grand Oriental Circus. To this day I see her little frown as she lines up on the ramp with the other girls. With her painted mouth and her white satin bodice and her creamy bare legs, forever preparing to launch herself into a future that might include me.

At sixteen I married again, in my head. At a fashion show. Yes, in this town, though what they hoped to sell here I can't imagine. Models from Bombay, touring the country, and they stopped here. Maybe Delhi cancelled one night, maybe the convoy broke down. In towns like this no one goes to see the clothes. The models were all pale, mostly a kind of Parsi vanilla, with some wafer-biscuit Punjabis, and one piece of South Indian ivory. They came and went, but then this hilly one walked on, like the acrobat grown up, and I went numb. An orchid, I kept thinking, and orchid from Sikkim, though I'd never seen an orchid or Sikkim. For such a woman I would slave all day, I would buy a bullworker and develop my chest, I would steal a scooter and take her sitting cross-legged on the pillion to Napoli for tutti frutti. Our marriage would be the envy of my friends, our children would be magazine children. Soft drink children, insurance policy children, washing powder children.

And see what I got . A good dowry, true, a fair dowry, my brother joked, but just look. So that even after marriage, whenever I saw a woman with the acrobat's face, I was reminded of my pledge. And for years, even after Ritika was born, whenever I saw a fair woman I felt she was mine by right, by natural law. There, my eyes said, and my wife heard them say, is my true partner. I wanted her to hear. And soon I let them speak louder. That is a woman. What are you?

And there the misery started.

If you could at least cook!

So you can't cook. At least keep the kitchen clean!

Dust? No! Drawing a finger across a windowpane, to leave an X that crossed out a whole day.

Why not wash them properly the first time? Dropping a fresh pair of trousers into the soiled heap.

Desisting only when she was on the point of tears. And then, in those moments, I could bring myself to want her.

It wasn't just one way by any means. She had her barbs that could stick in flesh. But to the main charge, the one charge, she had no answer. What could she say? She tried lotions, turmeric, bleach. Turning green, yellow, grey, but remaining dark.

Nor were we always quarrelling. There were slack intervals, truces, like those flat green areas under the crossed swords on a map. Times when we were too worn out to fight. Or worse, too indifferent to. And then we could find ourselves locked in a regretful embrace. Hell is a passionless coupling.



SAY CHEESE

"Here's looking at you kid." — Humphrey Bogart in Casablanca

PHOTOGRAPH **PARESH MAITY**

So Ritika arrived. A girl for a start, so instead of the drum my mother beat on an upturned griddle. And what a sight! A wizened monkey with her mother's skin, black to redness, on the limp nursing home



sheets. I've seen blots on maps that were lovelier. And there at least you could cry: Back to the printers!

But the weeks smoothed out the wrinkles and the months took away the red, and she grew up sharp featured. Our features, my mother reminded me, your smile. If only, my mother said, she would get leucoderma. The galloping kind where all the patches join up in a year or two. It wouldn't hurt her now, and by the time she's marriageable she would be a catch. Look at that Saxena girl — she could be German. German was a special compliment in our house. My father had a theory about us Sharmas. He said Sharma was a version of German. We were the Aryan link. He would not have countenanced this marriage, my mother's doing. The Aryans, my school History of India said, were tall fair and handsome. The Dravids were short dark and ugly.

I'm a strict father too: let the mother coddle. There will be no circuses for Ritika, no tempting trapeze. Even marriage can wait. Two degrees at least, from JNU or Bombay. Some day she'll thank me in a letter with foreign stamps. From Sweden, maybe, or the Canberra School of Commerce. Look at that Lal girl, our neighbour's daughter, gone to Chicago. So I crack the whip at homework time. And she has music, dance, games, drawing. A good girl, always sketching. I must spend more time with her, show her the value of thrift, the beauty of maps.

And yet sometimes I wonder. Look at what can happen to your life. When you're sitting at your desk as usual. Suddenly everything can change, in one day, in one minute. In broad daylight.

But first let me explain. Remember I'm in proofing. I correct maps, survey maps, contour maps. Now, with maps there are certain givens. For example: contour lines cannot cross over. That is a simple law. After all, a contour line joins all points of the same altitude. As with isobars or isotherms, the adjacent values must be either higher or lower — they can't overlap. So while they might approach one another closely (as in a steep incline) or even touch to indicate the perpendicular (as in a cliff) they cannot cross over. When contour lines cross over the world is turned upside down. Day is night, fish swim in the air, horses ride men. Gods mate with demons. Anything is permitted.

One afternoon I saw the lines cross over.

I had for some time been experiencing a curious pain between the eyes. Simple eye strain is a common enough affliction among proofreaders, but this was accompanied by a strange almost pleasurable sensation. As if something, some odd but propitious birth, were preparing. That day, as I proofed, the map lines began to swim and slide. It was like watching a magnetic field come alive. And where at one time the least distortion was enough to make me whip out my correcting pen, now I watched mesmerised. My proofing hand, so far from itching to correct, began to stroke the sheet as I grew numb with anticipation of ever more flagrant mistakes. I watched a long-standing state boundary slip from its mountain redout and to my distinct satisfaction — slice the capital in two. Under my very eyes an aerodrome got up and walked. The fixed black dots of a dozen villages grew twitching tadpole tails —and I cheered.

At the back of my mind I knew that this was wrong. I was after all a trained animal. Trained to detect and eliminate confusion, not to revel in it. And possibly it was the conflict between my training and this new pleasure (rather than simple eye strain) that brought me down. Whatever it was, that day the battle intensified to such a degree that I collapsed. I fell face down onto the map I was proofing (if that is the word). Sikkim, I think, A5 of the restricted 78 series. Our supervisor, Mr Chaddha (he proofs us) came running. Married to a South Indian, by the way. He took it for a heart attack, but it was more like a brain attack, a kind of stroke. Or a brain wave, because although I've never seen the sea, I remember the sensation of a black wave crested with white light coming at me. It swamped me where I sat and it was terrifying. And exquisite.

I awoke to darkness.

Bandages around my eyes. Home, the familiar sheets with my wife's animal smell. And her presence in the room, confirmed presently by her voice. A voice I suddenly

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saw in a new light. It was smooth and rich like chocolate. But also it carried a new note of assurance. This should have disturbed me, but in my excitable state I found it alluring. The doctor came. If I wanted to save my eyes, he said, I must endure the bandages.

All through that first dark week I had to submit to my wife's ministrations. The gentleness which was her redeeming quality (my mother put it down to laziness) had gone. To put it bluntly, she was rough. As rough as her voice was smooth. Not titillatingly rough, not provocatively rough, just rough. Vengefully rough, paying-me-back rough. And curiously, I liked it. Can't you even keep your nightshirt dry? Wrenching it off still buttoned so the top button caught on my nose.

Will you want diapers next?

Such feet!

And then the traps. The stool left in the way so I went sprawling onto the bathroom floor. The kitchen door shut so I walked into it. A tumbler of hot water balanced on the edge of the bedside table. And Ritika, who might have helped me, suddenly not there, sent away to play.

I walked the house in my bandages in constant apprehension. And desire. I wanted to fall, to fall with her, on her. I wanted her and now I did not despise myself for it. But she was careful not to be there. Though sometimes I thought I heard the faintest chuckle at my elbow. Till I took myself back to bed — and after an interval heard her feet pad softly from the room.

War games! I thought, lying there in the dark. And I began to see our flat for the first time with a cartographer's eye. The eye I ordinarily left at work — and had brought home in ruins. Two can play this game, I thought, and shutting my eyes tightly under the bandages, drew up room by room a map to serve my own ends. One of the restricted series, the classified border maps not released to civilians. Let the border war commence!

For a start, as I began to track her movements over the grid I discovered that she had a daily routine. It was something that had never struck me, leaving as I had done every day for work and assuming that she slid back into a world of chaos even as I entered on my orderly round. Now I found she left the flat at regular intervals, at fixed times. And at home too her movements had a predictability, such a room at such a time. Perhaps, I thought with a shudder, some of my orderliness had rubbed off onto the Dravid, perhaps she had begun to see the world with a mapmaker's clear eye. If so — and I was careful not to grin, for I never knew when she might be watching — she was at a disadvantage in this battle, because she was learning to follow the rules just when I was pleased to break them. Anything was allowed, for me.



CARTOON MAYA KAMATH

And so I plotted her fall, fixing that moment when she would go downstairs to call Ritika back from play. The rolling pin I considered and dismissed. It was too obvious, too big, and in any case would look suspicious when they found her at the bottom of the steep stair. Better a random scatter of coloured pencils, Ritika's, on the top step. Who would blame a bandaged, blinded husband?

At the fair Ritika and I went straight to the dinosaur tent. A disappointing start: twenty rupees for a half-scale acrylic tyrannosaurus Rex mooing like a stranded cow behind some preposterous palm trees. Even Ritika looked sceptical. The headless stegosaur at the gate was better value. So we went to the food stalls there for a snack. Kachoris and chaat off leaf plates, the plates strewn on the grass by satisfied customers. Then saffron-flavoured kulfis in a mess of falooda. From there we did a round of the stalls, with their pottery dogs, carved wooden lampstands, trick tennis balls, and kitchen tools that shredded carrots in twenty ways. A handloom stall with nobody in it. A bored sardarji at a try-your-luck stall with prizes attached to strings, the main draw a mixie. Ritika's eyes ablaze at the colours all around her.

We came full circle to the rides. A roundabout motorcycle ride, which had Ritika hanging on with determined enjoyment because I was watching, a drab pony ride we both turned away from, a dragon looping loops that looked too sickening for either of us. And finally, as the rain began, the ferris wheel.

I might have turned back but for the woman selling tickets. It was the

be a world player



Heath Streak strikes in a single breasted jacket and grey trousers with a striped shirt and tie.

Nayan Mongia is charm personified in a Chinese collared Nehru jacket and matching trousers.

Steve Waugh prefers to play it cool with a light ice blue combination of blazer, trouser and inner shirt.

Hrishikesh Kanitkar looks elegant combining traditionality and modernity in an off white safari suit with a double buttoned collar.

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acrobat. I'm sure of it: the acrobat, grown up, and out. I bought the tickets without a tremor. Curiosity the only sensation: had I changed as drastically? Surely not, even if my calves had begun to sag. She was a doughy mass with dents where time had dug its fingers in. How succulent by comparison the mother in the queue ahead of us, whose wheatish scarecrow husband and lookalike son were not at all sure they wanted to be there I was not so sure about the ferris wheel myself but when I sensed male hesitation I strode past them with new vigour, brushing the mother as we went by. You can do that with a child in tow. It's nothing, I assured Ritika, who was staring in awe at the top of the wheel

And up we went into the black sky. Where already the lightning was darting like a snake's tongue. Up to the level of the tallest eucalyptus, their white branches now bending in the wind. And the mother in the next gondola, now above us, now below, conscious of me since that brush, exchanging looks that grew more bold with every revolution. The raindrops, still fat and individual, had begun to sting and Ritika must have been alarmed, but I could no longer comfort her. I had eyes only for the black vase shape of the mother in the next gondola. Even when, with a crack like a tree falling, the storm broke.

It broke swiftly, with malign force, and almost immediately the power failed. The wheel ground to a halt and there we hung high above the fairground, drenched and stuck. The scarecrow's son began to wail, joined one by one by all the children on the wheel. By all the children in the world, it seemed, and yet I heard them through a veil that hid only myself and the dark mother. My grip on Ritika's hand tightened automatically, but it was the mother's hand I felt. The operator shouted reassurances from below, but there were other operators shouting too above the general melee. It was twenty minutes before the generator stuttered into action, twenty minutes or centuries of bliss as I watched the lightning freeze the raindrops that chased one another down that glistening nightdark neck. My arm was around Ritika, a brave child trained to stop her tears, but my lips formed hollow words of comfort.

One by one we were lowered to the ground. The scarecrow was quick to demand his money back, so I did too. Her feet on firm ground, Ritika allowed herself a few sobs I bought her some candy floss with the refund at a nearby stall, and as we stood there the mother came up and bought some for her bawling son. And there began the strangest chase as we tramped the fairground, now leading, now following, the scarecrow led blindly by his wife whose smouldering eyes kept returning to mine as if bewitched. My sandals were deep in slush: I felt it suck pleasurably between my toes. Her wet sari was a Mollywood fantasy, the hem filthy, her feet tattooed with mud. The foodstalls were closing but we returned there to eat, the ground a mash of trampled kachoris. More toys, more tricks at deserted stalls, another round of damp popcorn. Till finally the scarecrow dragged them away The gaze between us snapping with the force of a cable.

I felt abandoned, unfinished. Ritika was the one who wanted to leave. I had ten rupees left, a single note that called out to be spent, but the stalls were closed all around us. And then I saw the sardarji, still bored and motionless behind his lucky-draw strings.

Ten rupees, he said, and that decided me. At the centre of the display stood the mixie on a little pedestal with a string leading up from it to the ring where it joined a hundred others. I knew we would win it. There were shampoos and biscuit packets dangling from other strings but I knew the mixie was ours. I happen to like cooking. I handed the money over.

Pull any string, I told Ritika.

The sardarji's eye continued glazed.

Ritika hesitated, then picked a string from the ponytail and pulled. A tube of something rose up and jiggled at the other end. Not the mixie. The sardarji detached it and handed it over. Complexion cream, Fair and Lovely.

We don't need that, do we? Ritika's eyes said. I've brought her up practical. But for the first time I saw she would be beautiful too

No, I said, and turned to the sardarji. Can we exchange it?

You can have anything from this row, he said. Mirrors, brushes, plastic mugs Worth five rupees.

We need a mug Ritika said. For her mother's baths (which I supervise).

Pick any colour, I said.

Her hand skimmed over the pastel colours, pinks and blues and greens from some heavenly map, and settled on a deep dark red. I clapped. The very colour I would have chosen.

We walked home in a light rain, our clothes muddied, our sandals squelching. How fortunate, I thought, to have such a sensible girl. And how unfortunate that she should be growing up without the ministrations of her dark and lovely mother.



Author of three novels – The Trotternama, Hero and The Everest Hotel – and a travel book, From Yukon to Yucatan, **I. Allan Sealy** *established himself as one of the most inventive lyrical voices of Indo-Anglian fiction The Everest Hotel has been shortlisted for the Booker*



DOWN THE AGES

"Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save" — Will Rogers

PHOTOGRAPH **SOMNATH GHOSH**

The goatherd gathered his flock, and drove them back towards his village, running.

SPACE-AGE

short story by suketu mehta

It began in Kutch. A goatherd with his flock was out in the desert far from his village. His goats started bleating a long time before it came. Then he felt it; felt the cold whiteness. He looked up. One fell on his nose, melted. Not knowing why, he smiled. His goats were calm now that it had arrived. But the goatherd looked with wide eyes upward. Now it was coming down in great chunks.

The desert was more silent than ever. The goatherd gathered his flock, and drove them back towards his village, running.

No-one had seen snow fall in the desert. People got up on trees to look. The camel-herders stopped and looked up. The jeep-

drivers pulled off the road and stared. Nobody moved. Nobody spoke. All across the desert, the sky fell in clumps. The white snow came down steadily on the brown sand for three days and nights.

The people of Kutch, on the morning it happened, filled the temples. They came not out of fear, but to marvel at the miracle. Then they went back out into the streets, the fields, and played.

However, the authorities in Delhi did not share the Kutchis' sense of wonder. They were agitated. The freak storm would unbalance the weather patterns and hence the harvest. The agricultural yield of the kharif crop would fall far short of that originally forecast. Precious foreign exchange would be squandered buying food from outside. They decided to use the upcoming space flight to launch a weather satellite that would help in forecasting such calamities.

But the sudden snowfall had come to the attention of a certain section of the country's citizenry, a segment that had not forgotten its traditions, its origins. They saw this as a sign that the deities Agni, Indra, and Surya were angry about the country's vaunted space programme. Rockets, satellites, missiles, and other objects were shooting up into the sky at a record pace, and, said these observers, they had disturbed the weather gods, cluttered up their terrain. These worthies wrote to the Prime Minister, communicating their fears.

The Prime Minister was a devout Tamil. He agreed with the letter-writers that there was something strange here. He consulted his astrologer. The astrologer went away with the Prime Minister's question for a week. Then he came back and told the Prime Minister, "You must purify the spacecraft."

"How so?" asked the Prime Minister.

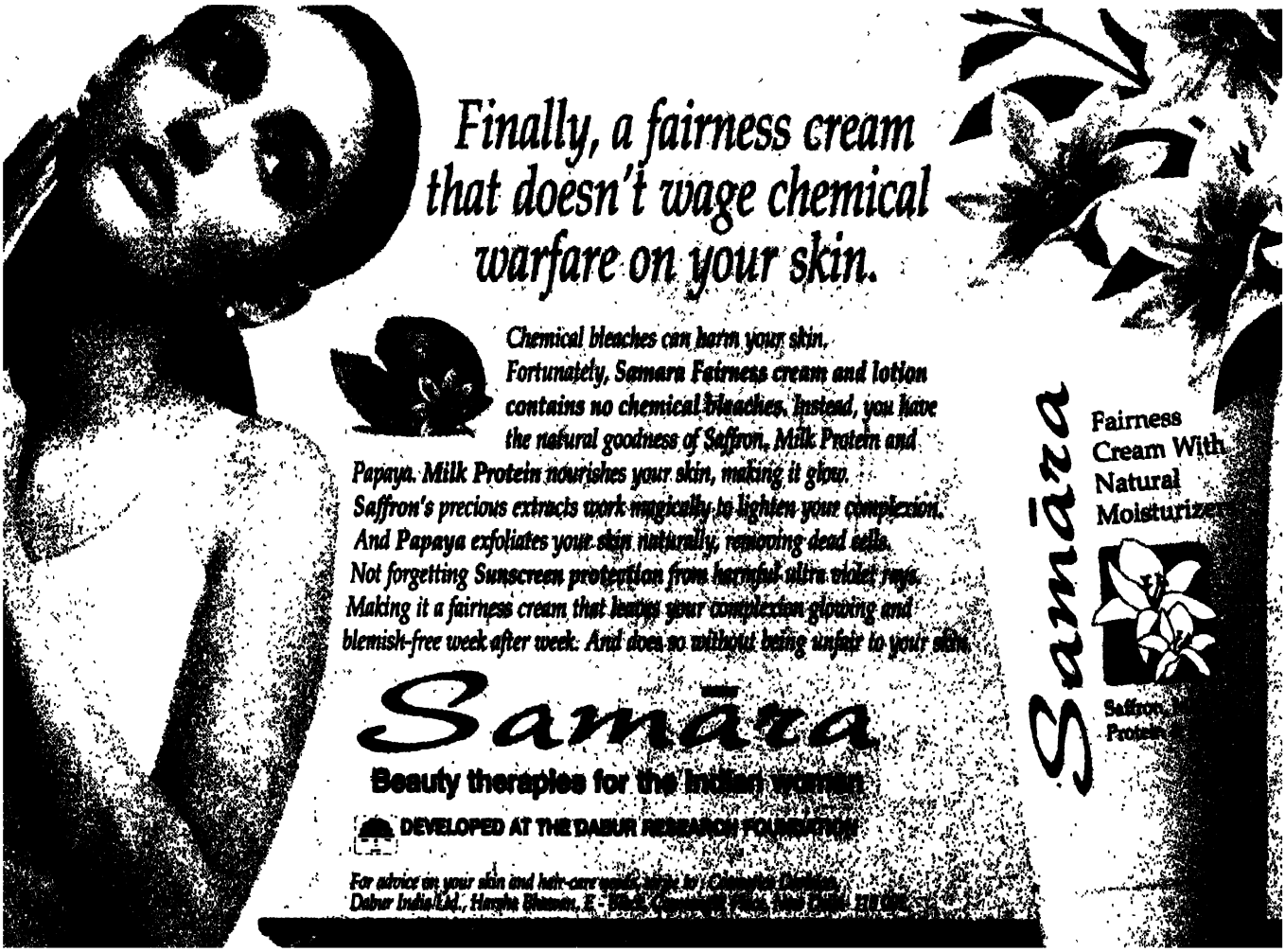
"By performing the appropriate rites on the ship before it leaves. You must get a Pandit*ji* to bless the craft, cleanse it, apply the sacred marks on it."

"But the storm came from the heavens, not from the craft."

"Well, then, you must purify the heavens," the astrologer responded.

"Hmm," said the Prime Minister.

All that night, the Prime Minister could not sleep well. He was a man who took very seriously his duties to the nation, and he thought, how would Rama have handled this situation, how would Ashoka? How was he to purify the heavens? Could he have a big sacrifice performed in Delhi, invite a score of pandits... But if one has to purify a space, one must go to that space... The Prime Minister sat up in bed.



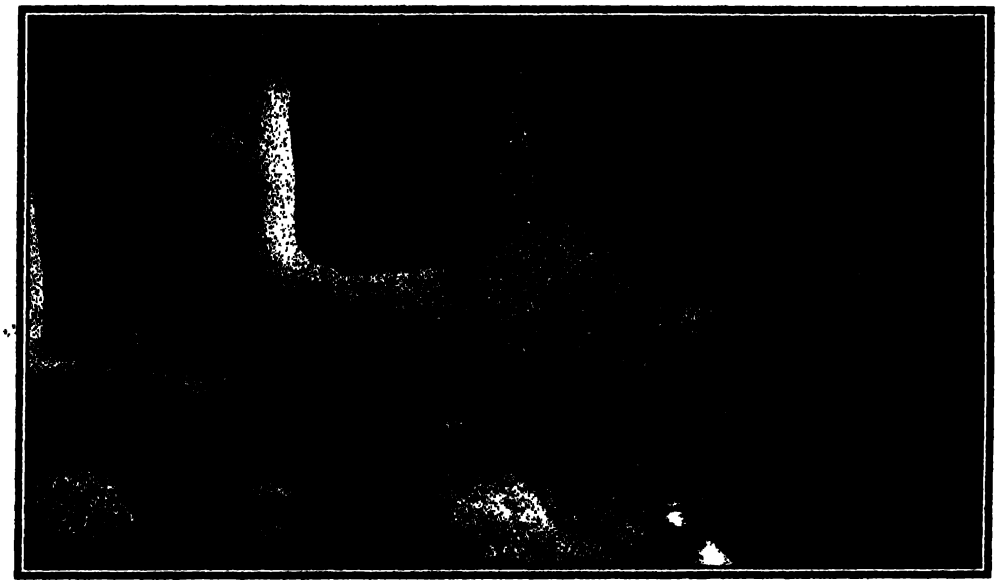
The Prime Minister's decision to send up a pandit into space set off a national debate between rationalists and traditionalists. "We will be the laughing-stock of the world," predicted a letter to the editor. "We don't even have money to feed our starving millions and we are engaged in foolhardy endeavors such as this." Others complained about the bias inherent in the choice of a Hindu Pandit.

"Why not mullahs, why not priests, why not witch-doctors? Ours is supposed to be a secular country." Many asked about which century the country was living in, "the twentieth or the fifteenth? Do we really believe that some chanting fool in the skies will bring us a better harvest? We should get rid of all these old superstitions and invest more money in basic research into the laws of the universe. Let us build, instead, a national super-collider, such as the more advanced countries have."

But, said the traditionalists, the very fact that the country was so poor was proof that the Pandit was needed aboard the spacecraft. "Since Independence all our activities have been cursed by secularism," opined the Shankaracharya of Srinagar on the popular television talk show, *NewsTalk*. "Our country has not progressed like others, that is because we have removed God and religion from every sphere of our existence. And now is it the deity's fault that he is angry? He has shown us a glimpse of his anger, his power, by the snowstorm. Should we needlessly tempt him further? He will cause a ten-year drought, he will make the earth boil. All your TV-radio will be destroyed. We must recite the sacred verses in space, which has not been purified heretofore. We must perform a sacrifice in the heavens."

Finally a compromise was reached: a Pandit would go up with the spaceship and perform a sacrifice, but the taxpayer would not be billed a single paisa. The costs of his transportation would be borne by devout rich people, principally the Lala family. The Lalas were very wealthy and very orthodox. When they travelled overseas, they always carried a lump of clay from their native village, and, refusing the deluxe but animal fat-laden soaps in hotels ranging from the Ritz in Paris to the Raffles in Singapore, they washed their hands with this clay and water. The patriarch of the Lalas, Sheth Lala, was renowned for building a series of ultra-modern temples throughout the land, including the air-conditioned, marble-floored, golden-domed Lala Temple in Delhi. The Lalas had built their fortune in the opium trade with China before independence, and had worked steadily on adding to it through a series of enterprises spanning every field of business endeavour, from automobiles to sewing-needles. Lately, there had been some trouble in the younger generation of Lalas, and their jealously-guarded family reputation had taken some hits.

One of the younger Lalas, Naresh Lala, sent to Cambridge for higher studies, had fallen in love with a Frenchwoman. His family, of course, had disapproved mightily of this match, especially as Naresh had been betrothed since the age of two to a daughter of the Bagadias, another wealthy business family from the same village as the Lalas. The Sheth sent detectives out to kidnap his grandson and bring him back to Bombay. Naresh and his beloved fled to Indonesia, to a deluxe beach-side hotel in Bali. There, with the detectives closing in on him, and realising the futility of ever evading the worldwide reach of his family, Naresh tied the great love of his life to the bed, doused her and himself with gasoline, and struck a match. Every newspaper, every magazine in the country featured these events



LOUDER THAN WORDS

"Walls have tongues, and hedges ears" — Jonathan Swift

PHOTOGRAPH PARESH MAITY



BODY BEAUTIFUL

"The undressed is vulgar — the nude is pure." — Robert G. Ingersoll

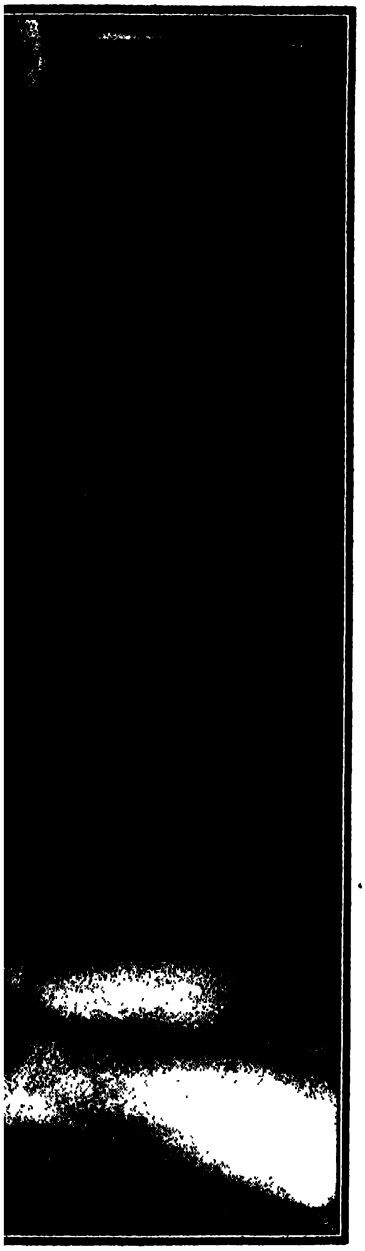
PHOTOGRAPH RAGHU RAI

prominently, and the nation wept for the doomed lovers; Sheth Lala was transformed overnight from the wise, paternal businessman of vision to the arch-enemy of true love. Due to a boycott by the country's lovers, the immensely profitable Lala prophylactic business was wiped out in a matter of weeks.

So the Lalas desperately needed some good publicity. And the sending up of the Pandit was the perfect vehicle — the public relations value of the project would dovetail nicely with the Sheth's genuinely felt religious fervour. The Lala banks were instructed to release all necessary funds for the project to the government, provided the mission carried out a special task for the Sheth, the nature of which was to be revealed to the world only as it was being undertaken.

Next came the matter of selecting the actual Pandit who would go up. The *agraharas* of the land were thoroughly combed; an expatriate software genius now working for Hewlett-Packard in California was brought back to the homeland with appeals to his patriotism. Under his direction, an extensive database of Pandits was set up in Delhi, listing over twenty thousand Pandits, their castes, their specialities, achievements, and distinctions. The project, of course, attracted a flood of applicants. Their claims fell into six broad categories.

The first involved feats of asceticism like standing on one leg for ten years, or special diets of nothing but



honey and bananas. There were *sanyasis* who had mutilated their bodies in ingenious ways; *yogis* who walked on live coals and slept on beds of ice; and *swamis* who could insert a piece of string into their nostrils and extract it from their mouth. All of them extolled their physical suitability for the rigours of outer space: "What is the dreadful cold of dark space to one such as me who has bathed naked in the fresh snow of the Gangotri glacier every morning?," etc.

The second was exceptional ability to predict the future based on astrology and horoscopes, a score of Nostradamuses who claimed to have foretold everything from the rise of Hitler to the marriage of Amitabh Bachchan. Some in this category drew attention to the fact that they had extensive and detailed knowledge of the stars, constellations, and other heavenly phenomena, and if the pilot of the spaceship got lost, they would be invaluable in guiding him safely home.

Then there were the scholars, who had completed advanced study of the Vedas in German universities. Many of them had degrees in other fields, too, especially in the sciences; they had at some point realised the limitations of studying the structure of the universe without paying attention to the intelligence that controlled it.

Others had demonstrated enormous popular appeal based on filling up Madison Square Garden or Wembley Stadium with paying customers for lectures on the epics. These had the backing of substantial Non-Resident Indian funding, which was used to lobby the authorities. These super-godmen directed their well-heeled followers to press their case with the highest powers in Delhi. Telegrams and faxes poured in from all across America and Western Europe. Election funds of all the leading political parties were flooded with cash. The godmen, who had seen their audiences grow progressively bigger to the point where football stadiums were not large enough to contain them, were enthralled with the vision of broadcasting from a perch which overlooked not one auditorium, not one city, but the whole of the world.

The fifth category of claimants proclaimed themselves incarnations of Shiva, Vishnu, or both, and warned that *They* would be grievously offended and extract appropriate vengeance on mankind if they were not selected.

The sixth class of prospective applicants were the most modest about themselves; their letters and forms contained sketchy biographical information about themselves, such as "born in the North," or, "Profession: Teacher, sometimes." Their claims to being considered were similarly understated: "Sir, I know the Brahmanas and once I was present at a Rajasuya-sacrifice, so perhaps I can be of some use in your puja." The Prime Minister, in whom was vested the power to make the ultimate choice, was most impressed by these, apparently genuine, candidates for the spaceflight. But finally, the actual pandit chosen came from none of these categories.

"For the true *yogi* does not seek fame, or wealth, or even disciples," thought the Prime Minister.

"He is sought out." Accordingly, he directed his able aide-de-camp, Mr Menzies, to go to the high Himalayas and seek out the one pandit who would not only know the technical details of the rituals to be performed in outer space, but also have a deep understanding of the nature of the task, of the cosmos itself. The Prime Minister wanted a spiritual heavyweight, an unknown who would not be in it for the gold.

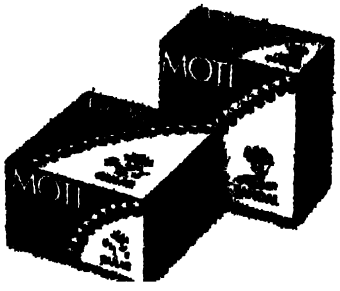
For thirty days Mr Menzies travelled among the *ashrams, agraharas,* retreats, and forest-groves of the Himalayas, looking for his man. He walked along the sources of the Ganga, helicoptered over the snowy wastes of Ladakh, peered into caves near Gulmarg, slept in the *dharamshalas* of Hardwar.

And everyone he met, he asked this: "Who is the top A-1 best pandit you have ever met in your life?"

All the holy men he met gave him different answers; many named



Feel the purity. And the spirit of puja. With Moti.



their own gurus, others the leaders of their particular orders, some even drew themselves up before Mr Menzies and said, "It is I, of course, sir." Mr Menzies investigated all these pandits and, although, he found several impressive candidates, there seemed to be none who was not immediately overtaken by excessive desire when Mr Menzies revealed to him the nature of the task he was being sought for. And Mr Menzies, who read his *Gita* regularly, had the idea that "he who performs the task set for him without interest in its fruit is the true *yogi*."

On the thirtieth day, Mr Menzies went to the post office in Rishikesh to send a despairing telegram to the Prime Minister: "YOGI NOT FOUND STOP PANDITS ARE ALL CORRUPTED STOP RETURNING TO DELHI MENZIES." There he noticed with gratitude that the usual lines at the post-office were nonexistent here. People bought stamps, sent letters, and picked up parcels with a minimum of delay. When Mr Menzies went up to the counter to send his telegram, he inquired of the clerk, "Such a good post-office this is. How do you keep such efficiency and punctuality?"

The clerk smiled and said, "It is all due to our postmaster, sir. Since he has come everyone is doing his work well." And the clerk pointed to a table in the back, at which a man with caste-marks on his forehead was poring over some ledgers.

He whispered something to the clerk, and was duly led to the postmaster's table. The postmaster looked up and saluted Mr Menzies with folded palms. "Are you a brahmin?" asked Mr Menzies.

The postmaster nodded.

Mr Menzies said that he was on a mission from the Prime Minister, and was about to explain further when the postmaster held up his hand, smiled, and said that he wished very much to talk to Mr Menzies but he was on duty, and he must work. But perhaps afterwards, if Mr Menzies would care to have a cup of tea with him?

Mr Menzies was suddenly very interested. He waited.

At five o'clock, the postmaster drew back his chair and invited Mr Menzies to sit with him. The postmaster explained that he was a pandit whose family was expert in the *Rigveda* and *Yajurveda*, but people had no need of sacrifices nowadays, the tradition had degenerated to a kind of all-purpose puja which the pandit refused to participate in. So, to support himself and his family, he became postmaster in this town.



CARTOON MARIO MIRANDA

Mr Menzies folded up his telegram and put it back in his pocket. The plan was to send the pandit on a spacewalk, so he could properly perform the sacrifice in the void. For this the pandit was trained in a special centrifuge that would simulate weightlessness.

Before he entered the device, the government doctors offered the pandit a variety of potions and pills to protect him against motion sickness and the stress of enduring forces equal to several times the earth's gravity. The pandit waved all the doctors away. He requested just five minutes' time for himself before he entered the simulator. Sitting in the lotus posture, he meditated for two minutes, then pressed on specific points on his temples, the soles of his feet, and his fingertips. After these *yogic* exercises, the pandit, to the amazement of the doctors, was able to endure the entire two-hour simulated spaceflight and its weightlessness without so much as a burp.

On the morning of the spaceflight, the Prime Minister, as representative of the nation, was prepared by the pandit as the sacrifier, one who offers the sacrifice. "To communicate with the gods, you have to become godlike," explained the pandit. Near the craft, a special hut was built for the Prime Minister. His head was shaved and his nails cut. Then he was bathed by the pandit, and dressed in a new linen garment. Anointed with various ointments and unguents, he was dressed in the skin of a black antelope. "You have become a foetus," said the pandit. The Prime Minister's head was veiled, and he was made to clench his fists, "as does the embryo." Then he was directed to walk around the hut, as the foetus moves in the womb.

Unclenching his fists, unveiling himself, reborn as a god, the Prime Minister stepped out of the hut. The pandit, as his representative, blasted off into the sky.

There was some tension between the astronauts and the pandit. None of the astronauts were devout. But then Captain Sharma had a proposal for his daughter and some relatives on the boy's side needed her horoscope. He and his wife had

neglected to take one out when his daughter was born, so Captain Sharma turned to the pandit. He obliged, and came up with a very favourable forecast for the Captain's daughter. She would have a long life and three children, and the prospective boy would make money in business. Captain Sharma still didn't believe in astrology but he thanked the pandit for doing him this favour.

On board the spacecraft, all was quiet. The two PhDs went about doing their experiments. One concentrated on growing chillies, cardamom, cloves, turmeric, cumin, and other spices from seed — the effects of weightlessness on wheat, potatoes, and other basic foods had been extensively documented by the Americans and the Russians, but Indians recognised that when their folk were living in space colonies, they would need some *masala* in their diet. The other scientist was studying the behaviour of a certain type of ferrous alloy when melted and set loose in a perfect vacuum. This was a somewhat arcane field of study, but the owner of the country's leading ferrous alloy producer was the nephew of the Minister for Space Development. When the press first learnt about this, a journalist asked the minister indignantly, "Sir, why are you using your influence to help your relatives?" The minister was taken aback. "Then whom should I use my influence to help?" he shot back, pointing his finger at the reporter, "Your relatives?"

The pandit busied himself making extensive calculations, unwrapping a roll of charts and texts in Sanskrit, looking out the windows at the brilliantly visible stars. When the craft had reached a particular point in relation to the Earth and the Sun, the pandit gestured to Captain Sharma, and took up his position in front of a microphone. From his seat, the Pandit could look out the window; could look out and see the Sun just beginning to peep up over the curve of the blue-green Earth. He held up his folded palms to the Sun and began to recite, *Om.*

Tat savitr varenyam
bhrgo devasya dhimahi
dhiyo yo nah pracodayat.

As the pandit recited, the microphone took the sound out of his mouth and transmitted it to two enormous speakers on either side of the craft, which boomed the verse out into the void. It had been pointed out by the rationalists on Earth that this was, according to the laws of physics, a pointless exercise, since sound cannot travel across a void. But, the mystics had responded, the Primal Intelligence does not need our physics to listen to our praise; we need just to recite our verses, and It will hear them, and be appeased. So,



as the spacecraft circled the Earth, its speakers pulsated with the sound of the *Gayatri Mantra*, which the Pandit recited in Sanskrit and English at the Captain's request:

Om.

We meditate upon the glorious splendour

Of the vivifier divine

May he himself illuminate our minds.

The Sun was coming up very fast, much faster than it normally would on Earth, so the pandit switched to verses from the *Rigveda*, then the three-fold praise, then the chariot verses, and the praise to the fire. The pandit recited in a continuous singsong, rocking his body back and forth slightly as he did so, and the speakers boomed into the void.

The pandit started preparing the offerings that had to be made to the Deity — ghee, fruits, cloth, money, and something enclosed in a small bronze urn that Captain Sharma suspected might be some sort of flesh; he had heard that in this type of Vedic sacrifice, the ancients used to sacrifice not just goats and chickens but on occasion beef, and, yes, in the *Brahmanas*, there is spelt out a ritual for the sacrificing of, yes, a human being. The pandit did not say what it was, because Captain Sharma did not ask.

"Tell me, pandit*ji*," asked the Captain. "Really, why are we here?"

"Because the gods must get their share," replied the pandit.

It took the pandit some time to get into his spacesuit. Underneath his spacesuit, the pandit had his *dhoti*, and wore nothing on the upper part of his body except the sacred thread. In his hand was a wooden sword. He climbed into the escape tube. After a little while, Captain Sharma saw him slowly emerging from the tube. He was anchored to the craft by a long hose. The pandit had stretched out his arms and legs, and was drifting slowly outward into space, framed by millions of stars. When he was sufficiently far, he marked out with his wooden sword a circle in space where the ceremony would take place. Then, from a tube, he sprinkled water around the circle.

Within the circle the pandit placed the portable altar, which had been specially constructed by the finest minds at the Bangalore Scientific Institute, who went to the temple every morning and put on the sandalwood caste-marks on their forehead before they went into their labs and asked themselves why the sun was on fire. The altar was a contraption made out of the latest polymers as well as the most ancient fire-sticks and bricks, and contained within its centre a jet which, when the pandit flicked on a switch at the side of the altar, shot into a vigorous, steady flame in the cold darkness of space. The Pandit invoked Agni:

I extol Agni, the household priest, the divine minister of the sacrifice, the chief priest, the bestower of blessings

May that Agni, who is to be extolled by ancient and modern seers, conduct the gods here.

As he poured out the ghee on the fire, which formed globules and floated away, the pandit chanted,

Your poured semen becomes beings of manifold forms, each fulfilling his own function

With ghee are covered Heaven and Earth, glorious in ghee, mingled with ghee, glowing in ghee.

Then the pandit poured the honey, chanting,

May Heaven and Earth, honey-dropping, honey-dispensing, with honeyed courses, shower down honey for us, bringing unto the gods sacrifice and wealth, and for us great glory, reward, and heroic strength.

The Prime Minister got the message from the Captain that the sacrifice was complete. He untied his antelope skin, and stepped into a pool of clear water. "O Agni, I have made my vow, I have made good my vow, I become a man again. I descend once more from the world of the gods into the world of men," said the Prime Minister. Then the Prime Minister emerged and put on clean garments, a business suit.

One last task the pandit had to perform before he went back into the shelter of the craft, the task Sheth Lala had requested as the price of his patronage.

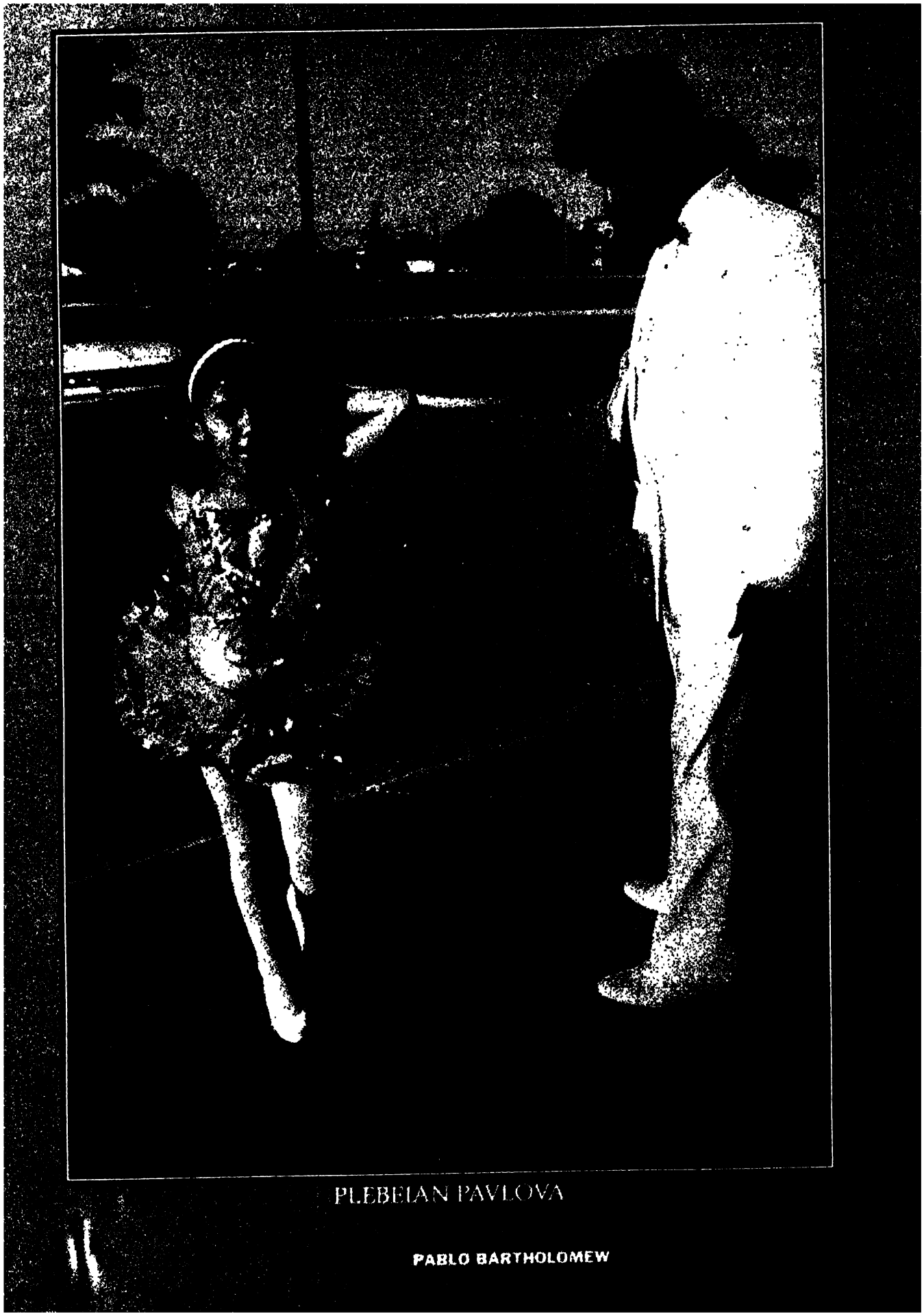
He opened the pouch he was carrying and let loose, first, the ghee, then, the fruits, then, the cloth, then, the coins, then, he opened the lid of the bronze urn and something solid flaked, crumbled, and drifted away.

On that November dawn, as the sun rose, Sheth Lala looked up at the sky; the Prime Minister looked up at the sky; Captain Sharma's daughter and future son-in-law held hands and looked up at the sky; the Shankaracharya, leading a prayer meeting of tens of thousands on the banks of the Ganga at Banaras, looked up; the programmer from Hewlett-Packard turned from his screen to look up; the technocrats in Bangalore looked up from their experiments; the goatherd in Kutch, also, looked up at the sky. From inside the craft, Captain Sharma looked out; the scientists stopped their work and looked out.

They were all looking for the same thing. Up, very far above them, the pandit swam in the sky, tethered by a long thin line to the craft bearing the Indian flag, and opened Sheth Lala's secret package. The ashes of the doomed lovers swirled out, and floated across the sky.



SUKETU MEHTA *is the winner of the Whiting Writers Award and the O'Henry award for Short Fiction in 1997. Currently he has been commissioned to write a novel based on Bombay.*



PLEBEIAN PAVLOVA

PABLO BARTHOLOMEW

Hindu Colony was one of the seminal influences in my life and the way I view the world. It was mainstream, Maharashtrian middle-class Hindu.

A FALSE WITNESS

memoirs of kiran nagarkar

Perhaps the most unreliable witness to any life is the one who has lived it.

R I WROTE *RAVAN AND EDDIE* PEOPLE asked me how I knew chawl-life so inti-. Did I do research on chawls or.... they hes-e, then get it out: did I spend long years as esident to be so familiar with them? I ll anybody asking me when I wrote had royal blood; if one of my ancestors or if the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay ly residence till yesterday? How imagine that I would have had th chawls? Don't they know that u Colony, Dadar, the heartland on of culture and virtue in this

Hindu C ne of the seminal influences in my life a I view the world. Hindu Colony was n Maharashtrian, middle-class Hindu. W rthana Samajists (as the

offshoot of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Brahmo movement was called in Maharashtra) and thus marginal Hindus. Heavily influenced by the Protestant faith and western culture, the Brahmos were monotheists. Idol worship and rituals were taboo. We dressed up on Sunday afternoons, sang bowdlerised Tukaram, Muktabai, Dnyaneshwar and the songs of other *bhakti* saints and listened to a sermon by one of the members of the Samaj. (By the time I started attending the Samaj, its numbers were already dwindling). It is not too difficult to poke fun at the westernised notions of the Samaj and its quiet, well-behaved, occasionally superior and smug ways but the Samaj in its hey-day was a heroic revolt against the brahmanical stranglehold over religion and culture and a radical and courageous attempt to change the most shameful of Hindu customs. The credit for the abolition of *sati* is as much Raja Ram Mohan Roy's as it is Lord Bentinck's. The Samaj was bitterly opposed to the caste system, child marriage, especially the marriage of elderly men to young girls and the tonsuring and torture of widows. It actively promoted intercaste marriage and widow-remarriage.

My grandfather was ostracised and persecuted with good reason. He gave up the brahmin thread and the *Gayatri mantra*. He became an untouchable when he ate meat and crossed the seas twice to attend the World Religious Conferences in America along with Swami Vivekananda. As if that was not bad enough, this apostate brahmin married a woman from outside the Hindu fold. Perhaps it was for his unmentionable sins that he died early leaving behind a brood of seven children and a wife. As the eldest son, my father had to leave school before he finished matriculation and start looking after his family. He should have gone back into the orthodox Hindu fold, at least later on when he and his wife got a two-room place in Hindu Colony, but he persisted in his Anglicised ways. To the end he remained a misfit and I fear this was one of his legacies to my older brother and me. We could never get rid of the feeling that we were out of place wherever we were.

The structure of memories is molecular. There is no telling what will trigger a memory but when it comes back you get the whole enchilada, sight, sound or whatever other sensory inputs went into it. There's no separating the elements or blocking them off. What the mind decides to retain, emphasise, underplay or erase, not to mention invent, is highly idiosyncratic. Often the most obvious or boldest feature of a situation, sight or event is filtered out, but whatever is archived, is preserved in its entirety. When you retrieve a memory, it comes back in mint condition: the stale flowers with their funereal smell, the Beatles on the zebra crossing on the cover of Abbey Road, the abrupt thud of a car hitting a body. Since all things human must occur in space, it is the location of an event that is the most common feature of memories.

Hindu Colony, like most other localities is as much an idea and state of mind as it is a geographic space with architectural artefacts. We design and build homes, schools, offices, shops, hospitals, administrative blocks, roads, roundabouts, vistas, sewage systems and palaces in our own image. It is the tension and the interaction between us and our internal and external habitat, be it a chawl, flat, bungalow, palace, colony



LADIES WHO LUNCH

"Women never dine alone. When they dine alone they don't dine"—Henry Jame

PHOTOGRAPH PABLO BARTHOLOMEW

or ghetto, which in turn shapes the contours and architecture of our minds.

Let me first locate Hindu Colony for you on the time-space axis. You go back fifty years and get off at Dadar T.T., T.T. for Tram Terminus. Walk a little towards Tilak Bridge and turn right on Sir Bhalchandra Road. I am not quite sure what services Bhalchandra rendered our white rulers for which he was knighted, but it's a straight and narrow road emblematic of the spirit of Hindu Colony. On the left, stretching all the way to the railway tracks are the five arms of Sir Bhalchandra, *pahili galli, doosri galli,* third lane, fourth lane where Smita Arolkar and her family lived and fifth lane. On his right, Sir Bhalchandra is armless. In the fifth is an unrecognised national treasure: Mr Chaphekar and his classes. Chaphekar wears a dhoti, shirt, dark black jacket and two-and-a-half-inch thick glasses. He used to run a restaurant in London. Now he teaches dull, dazed and indifferent students algebra, geometry, arithmetic, trignometry ('don't choke on that word as if it was beef, let me spell it for you, trigono-me-try') and English. He never uses physical chastisement but has a turn of phrase and expression that is memorable. When I calculated that seven sixes make forty-three, he shook his head in despair and said, '*Aho kaya dhadhadith khota boltha ho thumi?*' How dare you tell such blatant lies? Think, I realise that that's asking the impossible from the likes of you, and see if you can tell the truth.' After the fifth lane, you come to a crossroad where stands King George High School, now named after his Hindu avatar, Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.



Keep going and you are at the junction of Ruia College. The College is still there but two institutions which are far more visible and prominent in my memory-scape no longer exist. One is the Mhaskar shop. This is where my father took my brother and me to buy cotton underpants and *buniyaans* or *ganjifrocks*. (*Ganji-frock*, whoever coined that strange hybrid word?) It was a minimalist shop done up in brown teak. The shelves reached to the ceiling along three walls and there were also shelves under the counter. It was dark inside and the air was the colour of the wood polish and had been still for the last two thousand years. The shop was sparsely stocked and was lit with three twenty-five watt bulbs. Behind the counters sat four timeless men. It was not that they were old or young, they were merely beyond the pale of time. Two were bald, one had a thin moustache, and the last was wall-eyed. What they had in common though was that they were all Chitpavan brahmins, they all looked like emaciated mummies and were almost as inaccessible.

'He wears size 22 *ganjis*,' my father told one of the salesmen and to be on the safe side, added, 'I think it's 22.' The man did not get up or respond. My father spoke again, 'Could we see size 22 *ganjis*?'

The man gave my a father a pained look. 'Make up your mind, it's either 22 or it's not.'

'I'm not sure. It's some time since we bought the last *ganjis*, and he seems to have grown a bit.'

My father had a temper, the kind that Shiva exhibits when he destroys the universe and all creation. And yet here he was, pleading with the man. 'I'm really sorry to trouble you like this.'

The man gave me a dirty look and got up from his stool. I realised then that it was all my fault. How could I have had the cheek to grow? Why did I not go half naked to school? I had humiliated my father and far worse, I was putting the salesman to untold trouble. I cringed, I squirmed, I thought of Sita. If only the floor of the Mhaskar shop would open up and swallow me.

The man stretched out his hand to the second-last shelf from the top and brought down a cardboard box with 'size 22' rubber-stamped on the side and kept it on the counter. He opened the box. There were six immaculate white *ganjis*, pressed and folded one on top of the other, fit to be worn by the god-child Jesus himself or if not him, the boy-saint Dominic Savio who looked heavenwards from the wall of my classroom trying to ignore my shenanigans during the P.T. lesson which the midget-sized teacher, Mr Shinde, often held indoors, since we went berserk on the field. The man across the counter picked up the first

vest and held it distastefully against my chest.

'What did I tell you, his size is not twenty-two?' He folded the cotton singlet and laid it gently into its cardboard crib, shut the lid, put it back on the second-last shelf from where it came and returned to his stool.

My father was suitably chastened but to my horror and eternal guilt he still persisted. 'Shall we try size 24?'

The man looked blank.

I couldn't take it any longer. 'No, no. I think we better leave.'

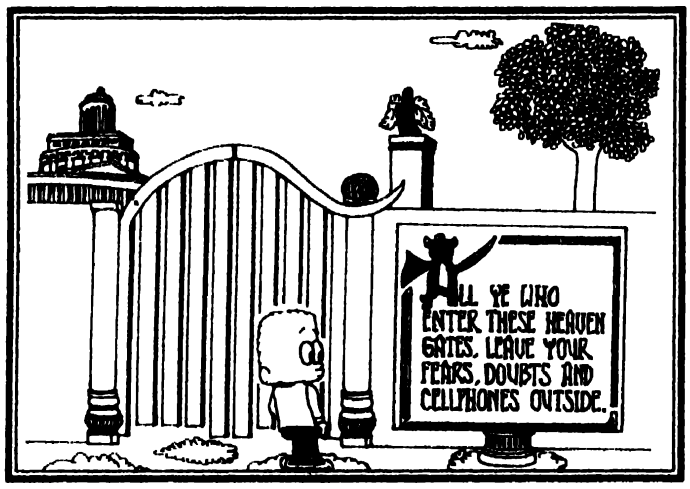
But my shameless father would not give up. '24'? he said again.

'Try the counter across. I've only got up to size 22.'

I dared not look up as my father undertook the crossing and started the quest for size 24. But luck was on my side. When the new salesman finally took notice of us, he did not bestir himself or check whether 24 was there or not. There was neither triumph nor regret in his face. He had tasted life, found that it was sour and had come to terms with it. 'Out of stock,' he said.

A little further down Sir Bhalchandra Road, on the right, is my friend Ramchandra's house. His mother's sitting there in the balcony, her elbow resting on the low wall with her chin cupped in her right palm. She wears gold-rimmed glasses. She is short and enormously round like those weighted dolls that keel over on either side till the head touches the ground but always rock back and find their balance. She is a dense, black, strong woman but I would advise you not to look at her for more than a nano-second. She's submerged behind that low wall most of the time but if you are unlucky you may see a little more of her. She does not wear anything on top except size infinity bras. She has titanic breasts. I've never looked straight at them and yet they've taken me down, down, down to the bottom of the ocean with them, never, ever to resurface.

Seven minutes from Ramchandra's, you come to Napoo Gardens and to the home of one of my closest friends. But that is



CARTOON RAJNEESH

Matunga and way beyond Hindu Colony.

The river Brahmaputra runs next to Hindu Colony and separates it from Parsi Colony. Brahmaputra, as you know is not a *nadi* but a *nad*, the only male river we have in our country and also one of the widest. Most of the time it is a slow, silent river. It moves so majestically and mysteriously, you are almost persuaded to think it is stationary. In the middle of the river, called for some obscure reason Vincent Road, are tram tracks. Every fifteen or twenty minutes, tram cars come clunking along. The driver presses a metal pedal with his foot and you hear a sound like a bell calling you back to school after the lunch recess. It's a good idea to get out of the way when you hear that urgent tolling since the track may be shallow but the tram can cut you in two. On either side of the tracks leisurely cars and buses ply. If you are lucky, of an evening you may see a pink 7-mile long winged Chevrolet Impala with Raj Kapoor slumped in the back.

Unlike me, my elder brother was born in a chawl next to the fire-station at Naigaon. He was much taken with fire engines. I remember when we were older, my father bought him a 6" x12" scale model of one. It was a spanking red and the chrome ladder could shoot up four feet. My brother should have become a fireman. He did not. What seems to have left a lasting impression on him though is the place where he and my parents lived. My brother was not a sickly child but he was thin and weak and the doctor advised my parents to give him a raw egg every morning. It was a simple remedy but it posed almost insurmountable problems for my family. Ram Sadan was a Brahmin chawl and eating eggs there was as good as eating pork in a 'pak' Muslim *muhalla*.

My father was an unorthodox man and he resolved the problem in an unorthodox fashion. My mother would peer out in the morning and check if anybody else was around in the common balcony or even more importantly, waiting his or her turn outside the common toilets. If it was all-clear, my brother would be packed off with an egg in a tea-cup to the toilet. My brother hated raw eggs but he was an obedient child. He broke the egg, poured it into the cup and took between seven to twenty minutes to down the yolk and white. Half the

time he brought it up and the yolk went down the toilet hole. The drill was set. Make sure all the bits and pieces of the egg shell were in the pan and not outside. Whatever happens, flush the toilet and wait to see that all traces of the egg have disappeared. Lastly, do not, come what may, do not ever mention the business of the egg. Because do you know what will happen if you do? They'll throw us out.

My brother, as I told you, was an obedient child. He held his silence. He was four and a half years old.

My brother is older now. Joy or pain; loss, grief, shock or exhilaration, the birth of a son, the death of our father, my brother goes to the toilet, closes the door, swallows a raw egg and flushes the toilet. Whatever turbulence and tremors there may be, his face is shut.

In 1942, after the bomb explosion in the harbour, a quarter of Bombay's population abandoned the city thinking that World War II had come to their doorstep. Apartments and flats were going abegging and my family moved to Hindu Colony.

Brahma Niwas, Vishnu Niwas and Mahesh Niwas, all three buildings had two wings one behind the other and were carbon copies of each other. Each was separated from the next by a five foot wall which curved at the top. The wall was called *kot* in Marathi and all of us children walked on the ridge, some even ran on it, like tightrope artists.

Home was the ground floor flat in the rear wing of Vishnu Niwas. Each wing of the three buildings had six flats; two on each floor and each flat had two rooms with its own toilet and bathroom. The front room was a drawing room-cum-bedroom-cum-study-cum anything else you wanted it to be, while the kitchen doubled as the dining room. In front of our house were two full-grown jackfruit trees. For twenty years they did not bear any fruit. Then out of the blue, monster yellow-green jackfruit hung from their branches. Right next to the jackfruit trees but on the other side of the compound wall was an *amla* tree. It was sallow, gnarled and tough and in season, small *amlas* stuck to the trunk and branches like light green, buttons. They were more sharp and sour than any tamarind. Just one was enough to concuss your brains.

There was heavy social traffic and commerce between Vishnu Niwas and Brahma Niwas but for some curious reason, none with Mahesh Niwas. Both children and grownups played seven tiles, cricket, *gillidandu*, *abadhubi*. The transition from village to city was still incomplete for many of the tenants. In summer the Sukhtankar children turned up for the games with kerchieves tied around their heads, reeking of onions. Their grandmother packed sliced onions in their hair to prevent sunstroke. Mrs Kudalkar and Mrs Ranade wore nine-yard sarees at home and covered their breasts, long and heavy like elephant trunks, with nothing but the *pallus* of their sarees.



CARTOON MARIO MIRANDA

Hindu Colony is where the demons and ghouls from my past dwell, a past that was as much a location in space as it was in a culture, class and in the middle-class Maharashtrian version of Hinduism. It is a past that I confront from time to time but am unable to put to rest.

Hindu Colony is a place and a mindset. It is an architectural grid and it is the map of my mind. It is a smouldering underworld full of the vapours of repressed sex and sexual aberrations; inexhaustible prurience and violence, severe maladjustment and stifling hypocrisy, corrosive prudery and middle-class gentility.

But the middle-class has been too pat and easy a target far too long. The bourgeois and petit bourgeois do not hold a monopoly on high-mindedness or hypocrisy. The poor and the rich are just as open to them. It's just that I happened to live in a middle-class milieu.

The Arolkars in the fourth lane were my father's childhood friends, or rather Mrs Arolkar was. She and my father had been to school together. Now after twenty years she had discovered that we were almost neighbours, and came to visit us with her youngest daughter, Smita, who was studying in the first grade along with me. We must have got along, for Smita would drop by once in a while, sometimes with another

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friend.

One Sunday when I was playing with my closest friends, the Shintre children, their father asked me where my peacock feather was. I didn't understand his question and grinned stupidly. "And the *gopis*," he asked "where are they?" I stood there unsure of what was going on or the implications of the words while Shintre senior and the Shintre children sniggered amiably.

"This is amazing. How come Shri Krishna doesn't know where his *gopis* are?"

"I'm not Shri Krishna," I shouted more in frustration than in anger, "I'm Kiran."

"No point pretending. We know you are Shri Krishna and Smita and her companions are your *gopis*."

Soon my friends in the colony were humming doggerel verses about me.

Cock of the walk,
Talk of the block;
Cockadoodle do,
Kiran, the chicks want you.

That's a bad translation and the Marathi original was much more pungent but my five and six-year old friends sang the words as if they understood them.

It was not long before I stopped talking to Smita. My parents would ask me to go to her house and play. I refused. If I saw her coming towards me on the road, I crossed over to the other pavement. When she came to see me, I was stubbornly taciturn and frosty. I avoided her in school. When we were cast in a play with only two characters, I clammed up immediately after rehearsals were over. I was embarrassed, awkward and deeply resentful because I liked her and because she was open and friendly despite my rebuffing her repeatedly.

When I was nine I was sent to Pune for a couple of years. And when I got back to Mumbai I was not only two years behind Smita but also in another school. But Hindu Colony had been a good teacher and I had learnt my lessons well. I had become warped. I could dissemble with ease. I was not just a natural hypocrite, I could even lie to myself.

I would pray that I would run into Smita on Sir Bhalchandra Road or anywhere that I happened to be and of course, if that ever happened I would feign indifference or be awkward to the point of muteness. Sometimes she came over to the house or I went over to hers. On one occasion she asked if we had only two rooms. I said, "No, we have two more rooms" and pointed somewhere in the direction of the bathroom. Of course she didn't believe



CARTOON **MAYA KAMATH**

me but she let it pass. Perhaps she realised that I was ashamed that we had only two rooms in comparison with her two-bedroom home. And she understood that since I had a quintessentially middle-class soul, though monetarily we didn't even qualify for that class either, all I ever yearned for and dreamed about was just one extra room.

It was early afternoon. School had closed for the summer holidays. We were having lunch when we heard the first window pane being smashed, then another and another. A man was screaming somewhere behind our building in Punewadi. In language alien to Hindu Colony, he was invoking everybody's mothers and sisters in abusive terms. My brother and I stopped eating and gathered around my mother. "Let me go out and see what's happening," my mother said as she washed her hands. "No," I put my foot down, "if you go, I'll come with you." My mother must have realised that it was useless to argue with her younger son. She went to the window and we followed her. We could see his back now. He was unsteady on his feet and his words were slurred. "Who told the police? Bastards, I'll make you pay for it. I'll make it impossible for you to live here."

Brahma Niwas, Mahesh Niwas, Punewadi and in our own building people were frantically closing windows. That was a mistake. Closed windows were a far easier target than open ones. Glass was breaking all around us. Sometimes a stone would hit one of the steel bars in a window and rebound. Sometimes it went in and you heard a scream.

He bent down to pick up a stone. Hindu Colony was always a quiet place but as his head moved jerkily and he looked around, there was the silence of death. He seemed to be doing everything slowly, very slowly. His hand went all the way back behind his back. The stone shot out of his hand. Its trajectory was oblique. It sped upwards, went higher and higher and made contact with the huge glass sheets that covered the balcony of the Karmarkar home on the third floor of the building behind ours. It hung in the air almost suspended and then the whole glass



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sheet came down with an eerie thin whistle. My mother pulled us away and we lay flat on the floor.

The previous morning, a team of four plain-clothes policemen from the prohibition squad had come to the building. They walked straight to the gutters behind my home and forced open the iron lids. Armies of demobilised cockroaches with dark, polished mahogany backs and swivelling antenna scattered for cover. One of the policemen lowered himself on to the shelf four feet inside the first gutter and hefted up a twenty gallon kerosene can. It was heavy and the other policemen had to give him a hand. There were two other cans and these too were brought up. The cans were open and batches of new cockroaches struggled over the rims of the cans and dropped down on the ground. Some fell on their backs and threw silent tantrums. While they thrashed and flailed their legs and arms, the others skittered over the policemen's feet.

The plainclothes men tilted the cans. Dark bubbling liquid with the occasional rotting date, dried apricot, prune and raisin flooded the ground and seeped into it. It was as if some colossus had been sea-sick and vomited all over our place. The stench of the fermenting liquor was overpowering. I passed out. When I came to, the men had moved to the next gutter and emptied the three cans which had been stacked there.

Prohibition had been in force in Maharashtra almost since Independence. Everybody, even children like me knew that for a price country liquor was available everywhere. Every now and then we would see some servant at the back of the compound taking money from a customer and pouring him a glass of liquor or wine from a bottle. But none of us including our parents knew where the stills were and where it was brewed.

The plain clothesmen stood on the cans, stomped on them, and left. For twenty-four hours the flies drank and gorged themselves on the sudden putrid feast. They reeled and wobbled, flew drunkenly and dropped to the ground in a stupor.

He was standing in front of our window staring at us. His eyes were red and there was dry vomit on his shirt-front. There was a stone in his hand. He aimed it at my mother. "Pandu". I blurted out. It was the servant who worked in the Sirur house on the second floor. He looked at me with such hatred that I was sure he was going to force apart the steel bars of the window and throttle me. The stone fell from his hand. He walked away stepping into the dates and prunes. A dark cloud rose and then slowly a thousand flies settled down again.

The next day the landlord's man came around and placed the lids back on the gutters. That last is an image which is symbolic of the ruling concern of Hindu Colony. The overriding compulsion was appearance, don't rock the boat, get the roaches in and put the lid back.

Sex was not taboo in Hindu Colony. It did not exist. Do you remember the work of the great French cartoonist Sine? In one of his cartoons, a priest is giving a lecture on anatomy. As his cane pointer moves, he identifies the parts of the body: eyes, nose, mouth, chest, stomach, nothing, thighs, knees. Even when our puberty was raging out of control, Hindu Colony treated us as eunuchs, robots and humanoids. We were sexless, harmless and innocent. Or it was easier for them to think that.

As for us boys (it's not possible to know what the girls were thinking about since decent boys and girls had no converse with each other), the only thing on our minds was sex, girls, pin-ups, and the abysmally printed *Kok-shastra* books sealed and covered in yellow cellophane with out-of-focus photographs of sexual congress sold on the pavement of Tilak Bridge which anyway were beyond our means since none of us got any pocket money.

Paradise and the houris lay on the far bank of the Brahmaputra, in Parsi Colony. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, you laugh, you scoff, but even though I was not present, my friends from the colony got a glimpse of unutterably wondrous and celestial beings. My friends were on Vincent Road, they had just gone past the Parsi Gymkhana when through the French windows on the ground floor of a building, they saw... Let me switch to Marathi, to the very words of my friend, Rajan : *"Key sangu tula Kiran, aai shapath Kiran, cochavar basoon to Parsi manus, hya madheel ek akshar khota nahi, Kiran, ek akshar."* What was that Parsi man doing for God's sake? Why was Rajan repeatedly reassuring me that he was telling the truth? Whatever it was that the Parsi man was doing, I was willing to believe it, more than willing to believe it. *'Arre, Kiran,'* he finally came to the point, *'to Parsi manus tya sundar baila dabat hota.'*

Why had fate played this dirty trick on me? Why had I not been permitted to witness the glorious sight of the Parsi man squeezing that beauteous woman?

There are two kinds of people in the world, those who are God's chosen and those who are not. I knew then that God had closed his eyes when I was born.



Kiran Nagarkar *is a novelist, playwright and critic who writes in both Marathi and English. His first novel Saat Sakkam Trechalis in Marathi, was translated into English as Seven sixes are Forty-three. His second novel, Ravan and Eddie, was in English and set in a Mumbai chawl. His most recent book is Cuckold*



"I married a girl, not a housewife."

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A photo feature on the children of Calcutta
by **Achinto**. Text by **Sunanda K. Datta-Ray**

infant JOY *infant* SORROW

There are no orphans in India, wrote Jawaharlal Nehru because the young are the children of Mother India.

Perhaps. But he can be a hard and ignorant mother, oblivious of that Wordsworthian truth: "The Child is Father of the Man".

Of course no one is as unforgiving as an Indian mother on India. Until 1842 children as young as four lived in Britain's coal mines for 10 hours a day. A Dayak mother bore eight children in 12 years and sent them to prowl market towns in Sarawak's Baram district. Fat, well-fed babies hung like rare dolls in shop windows. Earlier eyewitnesses spoke of girls raped in full view screaming "Mommy". Meanwhile, a hunt for the untamed Indonesian mob worked its evil will on them. No American mother dares hold her smothering feather duster to her own babies, apparently for the most innocent motive.

Young, defenceless and betrayed. Is that a child's ordained destiny? Where then is the freedom of God, and what price the exhortation: "Suffer the little children



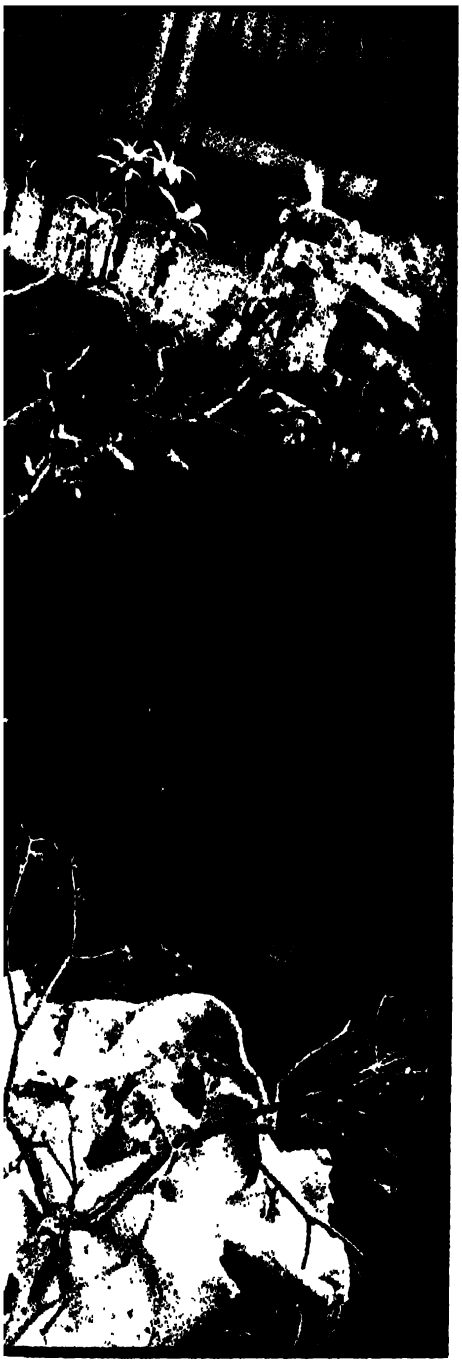
The Telegraph Autumn Collection 1996



to come unto me, and forbid them not"?

Wu Yu-lin, a distinguished Singaporean educationist, cannot exorcise the memory of mothers holding up babies for sale along the road from Shanghai when she left China in 1937. Jack Preger was thrown out of Bangladesh for questioning the fate of boys and girls whose impoverished parents gladly handed them over to a Dutch adoption agency that promised education and opportunity.

India is spared the worst. True, some of those who do not succumb to insanitary natal conditions, infant disease and malnutrition might be kidnapped, crippled or castrated by shadowy gangs. Girls are lured into brothels, boys abused by smugglers, thieves and drug traffickers. But this dark underside of city life is the inexorable con-









"Girls are lured into brothels, boys abused by smugglers, thieves and drug traffickers"

"Today's street-smart urchin was yesterday's rustic innocent. The miracle is that he can still laugh"





comitant of demand and supply the world over. The current ferment against paedophilism will not stamp out the preference; it will only make indulgence more expensive.

India's worst sin is neglect. Nor is the rural child less vulnerable. Town and country overlap, and those who talk of "the real India" forget that it lives cheek-by-jowl with what they might call artificial India: the bustees, chawls and jhuggis that service and sustain urban luxury draw their human resource from the melancholy millions in the countryside. Today's street-smart urchin was yesterday's rustic innocent. The miracle is that he can still laugh.

If the Apu Trilogy celebrates escape at one level, *Salaam Bombay* does so at another. The village is a grim person, the city beckons with glittering opportunity.

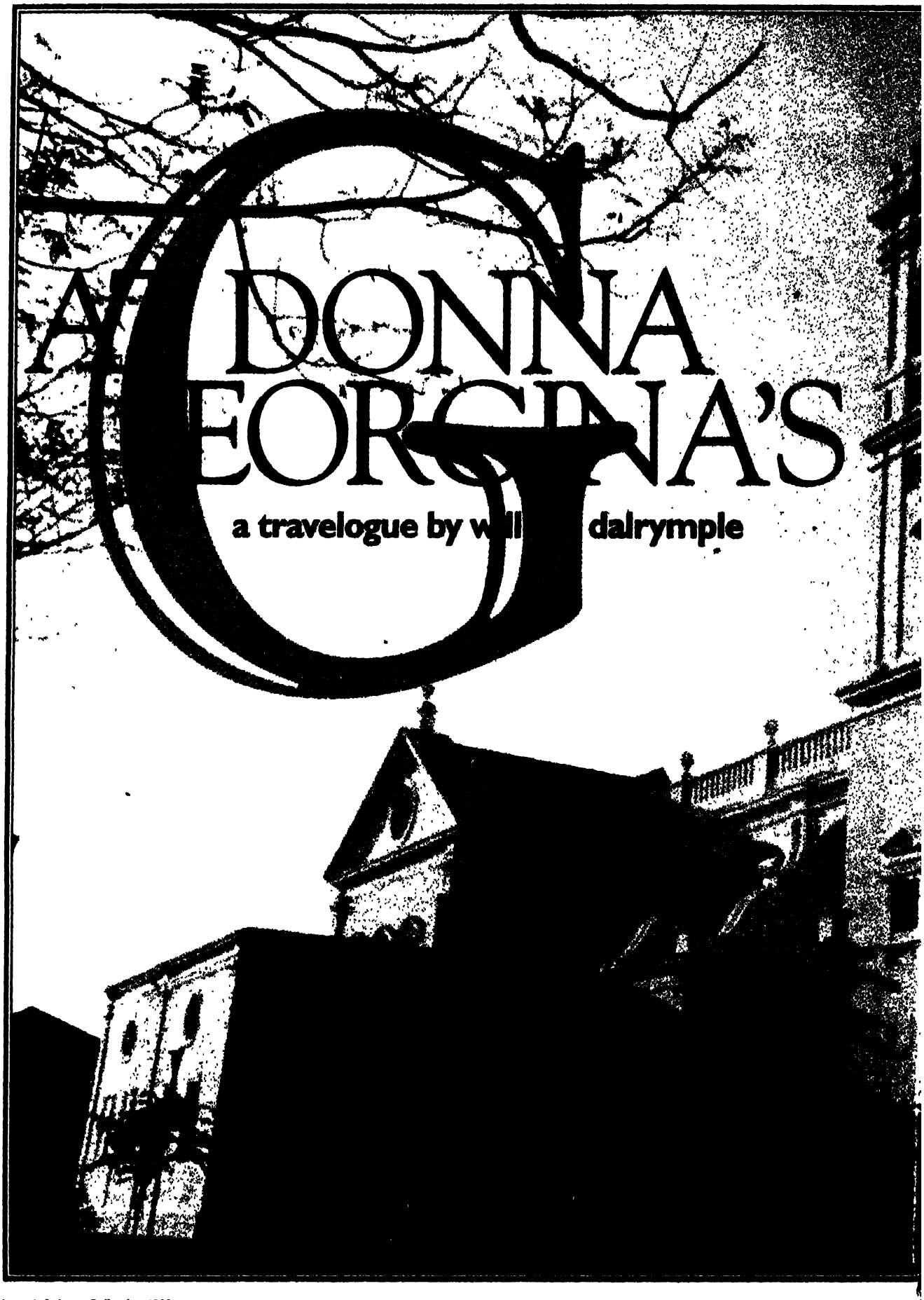
Only the privileged can redeem that promise. Of the rest, those who survive Bharat Mata's indifference vow to bring up their own offspring in more caring societies. America and Canada, Singapore and Australia are the richer because so few Indians are guaranteed secure housing and maternity clinics, good schools and colleges, space, leisure and recreation, healthy competition and a productive economic environment.

This is the price of neglect. India's future is shadowed because India's young are denied hope at home, because they have to seek a fortune beyond the ocean.

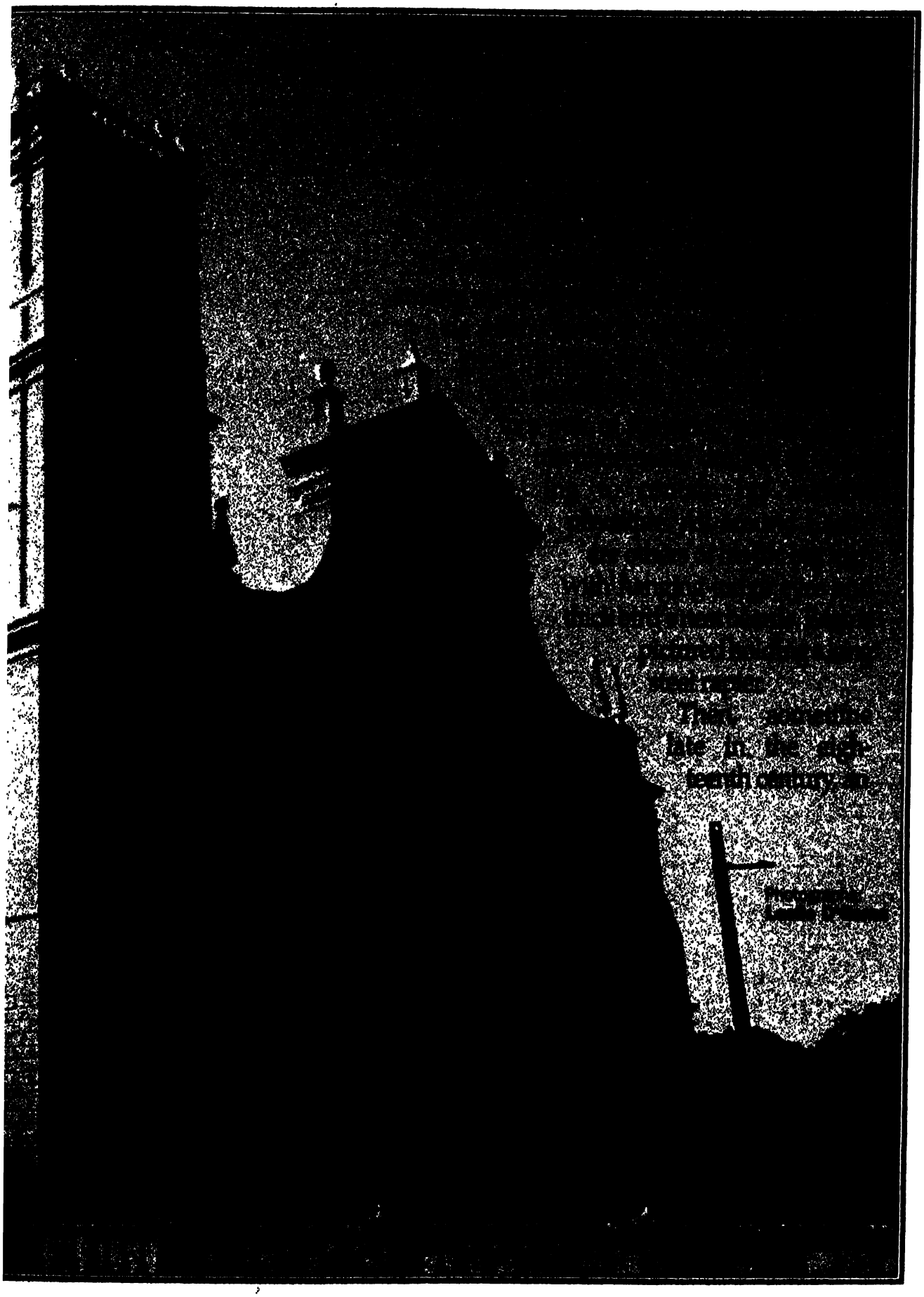
Achinto *is a Calcutta-based photographer whose works are published and exhibited both in India and abroad. The present set of photographs is drawn from his project — child in the city*







he Telegraph Aut mn Collection 1998



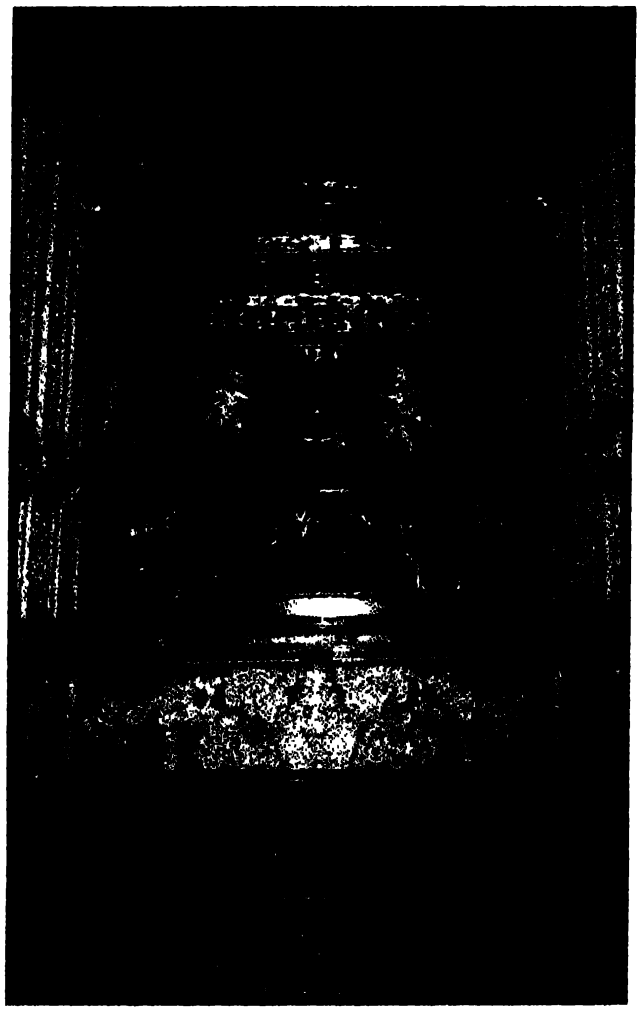
air of ambiguity suddenly sets in. Fernando Martins Mascarenhas was the Governor of Goa only a few decades after Castro had returned to Portugal, but he could have been from another millennium. Mascarenhas is a powdered dandy in silk stockings, a fluffy lace ruff brushes his chin. He is pictured leaning on a stick, his lips pursed and his tunic half-unbuttoned; it is as if he is depicted on his way out of a brothel. In contemporary North India, a couple of generations in the withering heat of the Gangetic plains turned the Great Moguls from hardy Turkic warlords into pale princes in petticoats. In the same way, by the end of the eighteenth century, the fanatical Portuguese *conquistadors* had somehow been transformed into effeminate fops in bows and laces.

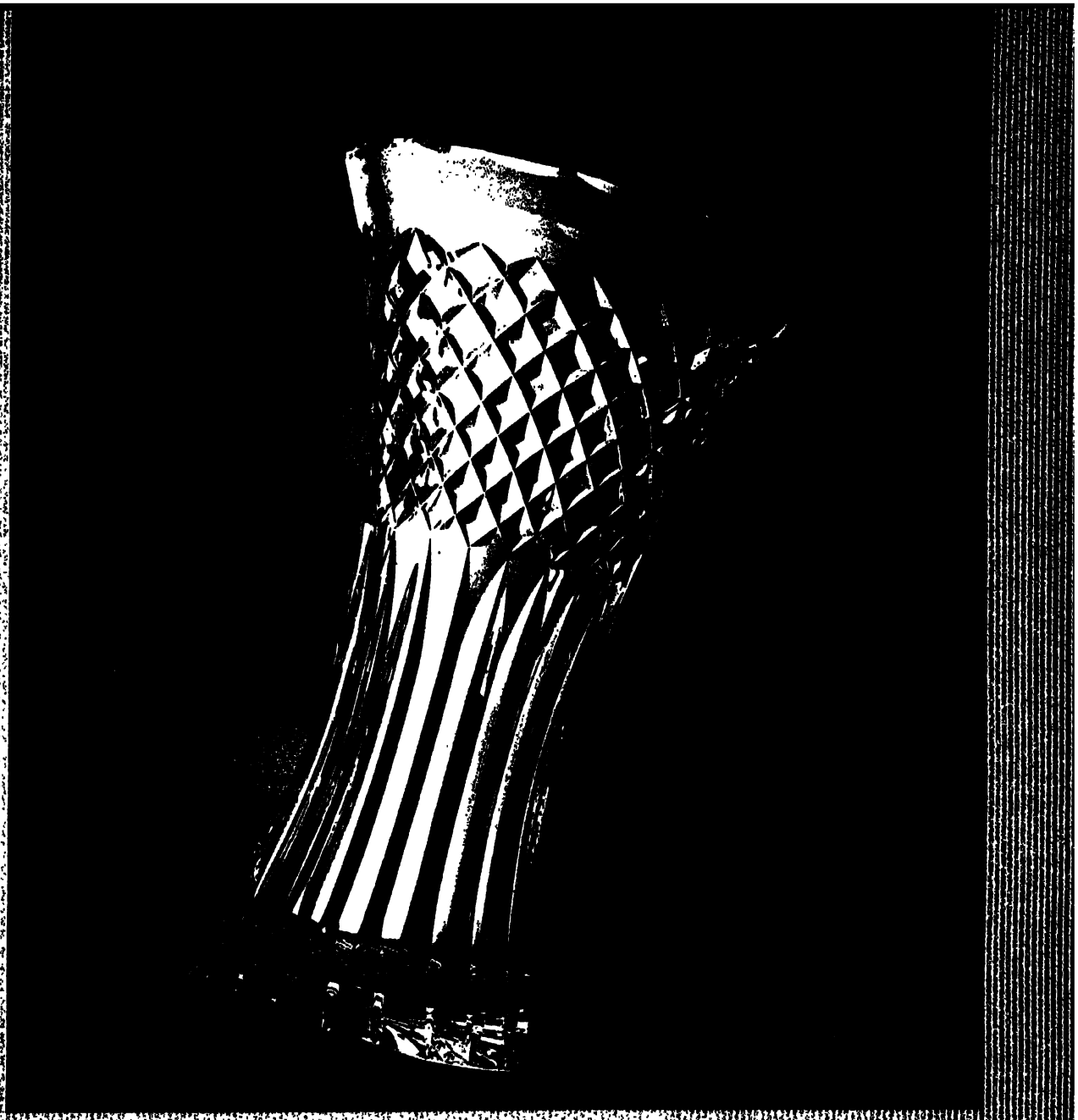
The Portuguese had first visited Goa in the last days of the Middle Ages. In 1498 Vasco da Gama discovered the sea route to the Indies, and he immediately began planning ways of wresting control of the Indian Ocean from the Muslims, and so diverting the spice trade to Portugal. By August 1507 Afonso de Albuquerque, "the Caesar of the East," had built a fortress on the island of Socotra to block the mouth of the Red Sea and cut off Arab traders from India, and in March 1510, Albuquerque arrived off the coast of Goa. With him came a fleet of 23 caravels, galleons and war barks. Albuquerque massacred the Muslim defenders of the local fort then carved out for himself a small crescent-shaped enclave clinging onto the Western seaboard of the Deccan. From this fortified enclave, the Portuguese planned to control the Maritime routes of the East.

The *conquistador* chose his kingdom well. Goa is an area of great natural abundance and the state is envied throughout India for its rich red soils and fertile paddy fields, its excellent mangoes and cool sea breezes. From its harbours, Albuquerque's fleet brutally enforced the Portuguese monopoly of the spice trade.

In its earliest incarnation, Old Goa was a grim fortress city, the headquarters of a string of fifty heavily armed artillery bastions stretching the length of the Indian littoral. But by 1600, the same transition that had transformed the *conquistadors* into dandies turned Old Goa from fortified barracks into a vast metropolis of 75,000 people, the swaggering capital of the Portuguese Empire in the East. It was larger than contemporary Madrid and virtually as populous as Lisbon whose civic privileges it shared. The mangrove swamps were cleared and in their place rose the walls and towers of Viceregal palaces, elegant townhouses, austere monasteries and elaborate baroque cathedrals.

With easy wealth had come a softening of the hard edges. The fops and dandies had no interest in war and concentrated instead on their *seraglios*. Old Goa became more famous for its whores than for its canons or cathedrals. According to the records of the Goan Royal Hospital, by the first quarter of the seventeenth century at least 500 Portuguese a year were dying from syphilis and "the effects of profligacy". Although the ecclesiastical authorities issued edicts condemning the sexual 'laxity' of the married women who 'drugged their husbands the better to enjoy their lovers,' this did not stop the clerics themselves keeping whole harems of black slave girls for their pleasure. In the 1590's the first Dutch galleons began defying the Portuguese monopoly; by 1638 Goa was being blockaded by Dutch warships. Sixty years later 1700, according to a Scottish sea cap-





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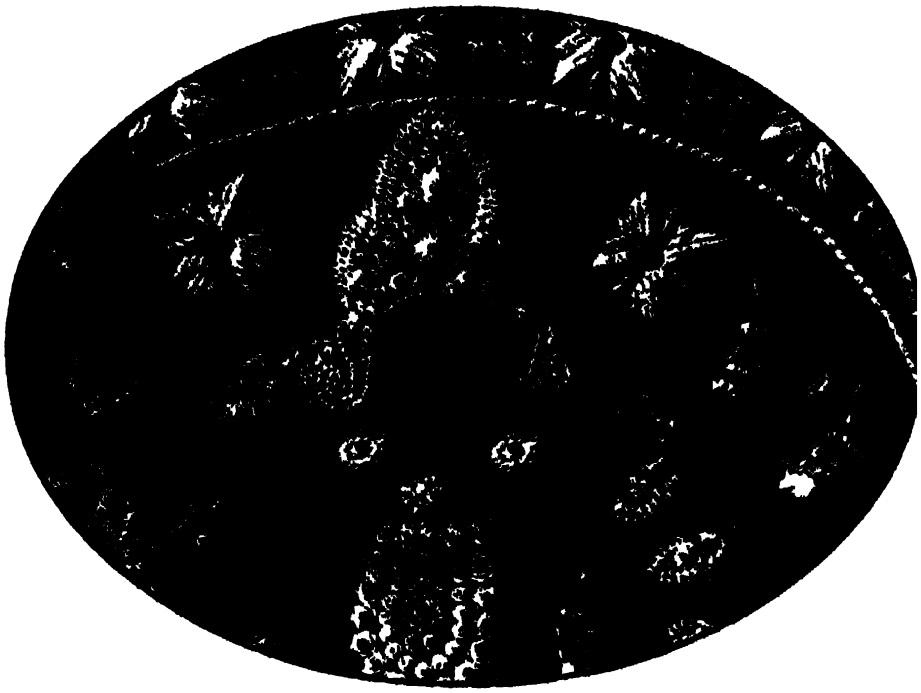
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tain, it was a "place of small Trade and most of its Riches ly in the Hands of indolent Country Gentlemen, who loiter away their days in Ease, Luxury and Pride."

So it was to remain. The jungle crept back, leaving only a litter of superb baroque churches — none of which would look out of place on the streets of Lisbon, Madrid or Rome — half strangled by the mangrove swamps.

The most magnificent of the surviving buildings is Bom Jesus, the church which now acts as the enormous vaulted mausoleum of Goa's great saint, the sixteenth century Jesuit missionary St. Francis Xavier. To modern tastes, Xavier seems to have been a brute — when he visited Goa he was so shocked by the lingering pagan practices performed by the colony's converted Hindus that he successfully petitioned for the import of the Inquisition — but this does not stop Goans of all faiths revering his memory four hundred years later. Indeed a decade ago when the miraculously undecayed body of St. Francis was last put on public display on the altar of Bom Jesus, one Hindu lady was so overcome with devotional fervour that she bit off the little toe of the saint's left foot and smuggled her relic out of the church in her mouth. She was only apprehended when removing the mummifed toe from her mouth at the queue for the ferry.

Ironically, the healing powers of St. Francis are today particularly sought after by the very "pagan" Hindus Xavier sought to convert or persecute. Outside Bom Jesus stand the usual lines of postcard and trinket sellers. But among the Catholics selling effigies of the Virgin and pictures of the Pope, are a group of Hindus who squat on the pavement and sell wax models of legs, arms, heads and ribs. I asked them what the models were for:

"To put on the tomb of St. Francis," replied one of the vendors. "If you have a broken leg you put one of these wax legs on the Mr. Xavier's tomb. If you have headache then you put one wax head, and so on."

Ironically, the healing powers of St. Francis are today particularly sought after by the very "pagan" Hindus Xavier sought to convert.

"How does that help?" I asked.

"This model will remind the saint to cure your problem," replied the fetish salesman. "Then pain will be finished double quick, no problem."

Today the best view of the old metropolis can be had from the Chapel of Our Lady of the Mount. To get there you must climb a kilometre long flight of steps, once a *passeggiata* for the Goan gentry, now a deserted

forest path frequented only by babbler birds, peacocks and monkeys.

Scarlet flamboya trees corkscrew out of the cobbles. Bushes block the magnificent gateways into now collapsed convents and overgrown aristocratic palaces. The architrave of a perfect Renaissance arch has rotted to the texture of old peach stone. Roots spiral over corniches; tubers



grip the armorial shields of long-forgotten grand Goan families. As you near the chapel, its facade now half-submerged under a web of vines and creepers, there is no sound but for the eerie creek of old timber and the rustle of palms.

The panorama from the chapel's front steps is astonishing The odd spire, a vault, a cupula, a broken pediment can be seen poking out of the forest canopy. You look down past the domes and spires of the churches and monasteries and see the evening light pick out the wandering course of the Mandovi River beyond.

The river is empty now: the docks are deserted; the galleons long sunk. Of one of the greatest cities of the Renaissance world, almost nothing now remains.

"But of course despite everything they hung on," said Donna Georgina, leaning back on her wickerwork divan. "Despite the loss of the trading Empire they ruled us for another three hundred years. They were in Goa for a full two and a half centuries before you British conquered a single inch of Indian soil; and they were still here in 1960, more than a decade after you all went home again."

"Until Nehru threw them out at the liberation of Goa in 1961."

"Liberation?" said Donna Georgina, her face clouding over as quickly as a Goan sky at the height of the monsoon. "Did you say *liberation*? Botheration more like!"

I had clearly said the wrong thing, and Donna Georgina Figueiredo was now sitting bolt upright on her divan, rigid with indignation. We were talking in her eighteenth century ancestral mansion, not from the outside the largest of the Indo-Portuguese colonial *estancias* that still dot Goa, but from the inside certainly one of the most perfectly preserved. I had driven to Donna Georgina's village, Lutolim, along a lagoon edged in coconut groves, breadfruit trees and flowering hibiscus. The village revolved around the large white baroque church. In front of it stood a small piazza; to one side was the school, on the other side, the taverna, *The Good Shepherd Bar*. In it, appropriately enough, you could see the village priest sitting at a table in a white cassock, reading the daily paper. Scattered around the vicinity were the grand houses of the village, and at the grandest of them all was the Estancia Donna Georgina.

Inside, a servant had showed me to a divan. On one side, next to an eighteenth century Indo-Portuguese tallboy, stood a superb tall Satsuma vase. From the walls hung dark ancestral portraits. Other treasures — Macau porcelain, superb statuary, mannerist devotional images — were dotted carelessly around the wooden galleries. On entering the room, Donna Georgina had clapped her hands. Within seconds another barefoot servant came running down the passage from the kitchen:

"Francis. Bring Mr. Dalrymple a glass of chilled mango juice. I will have a cup of tea."

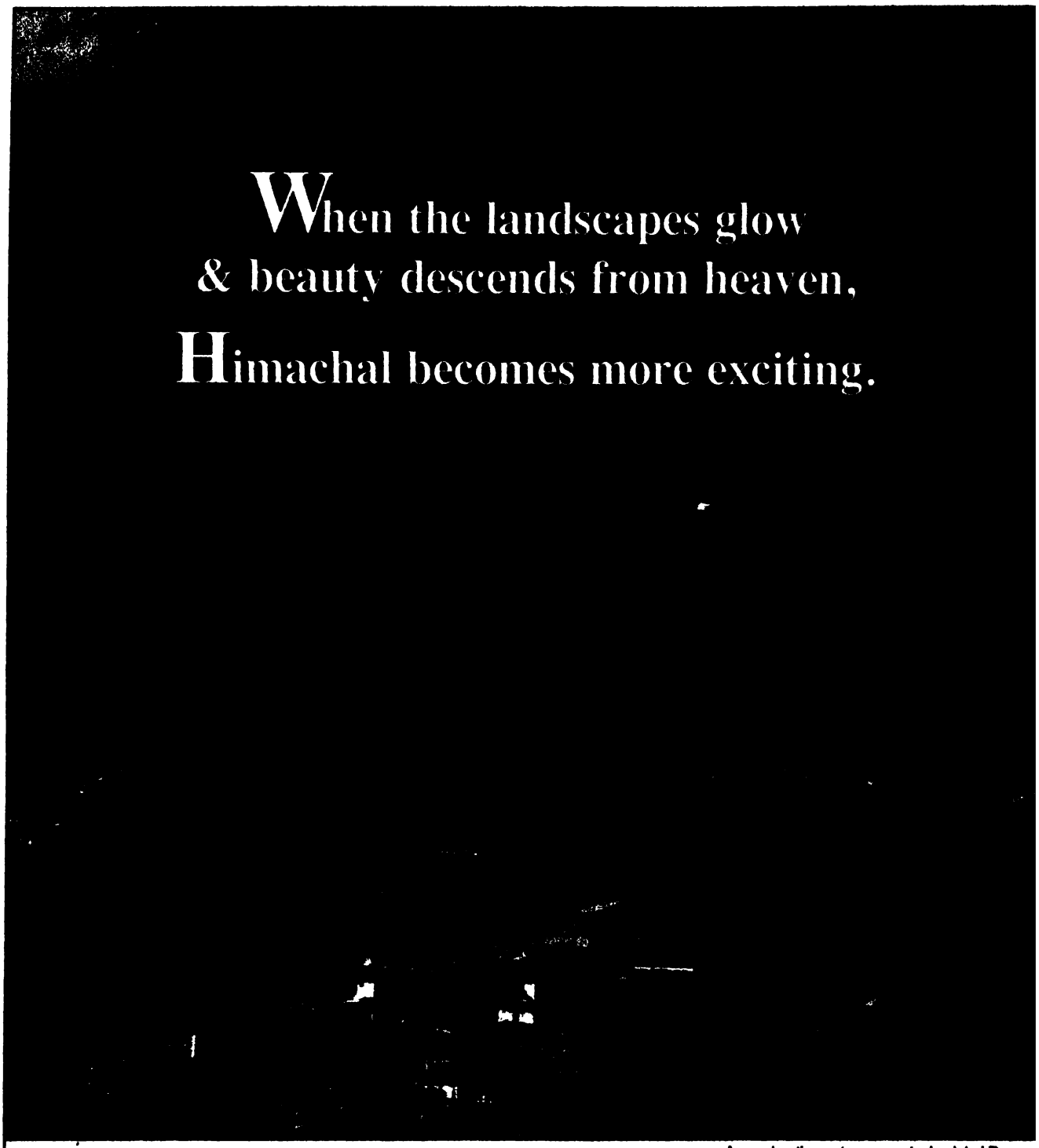
The servant padded off down the bare wooden floorboards. It was then that I had made my gaffe about the liberation. Donna Georgina clasped her hands and raised her voice.

"Now understand *thees*, young

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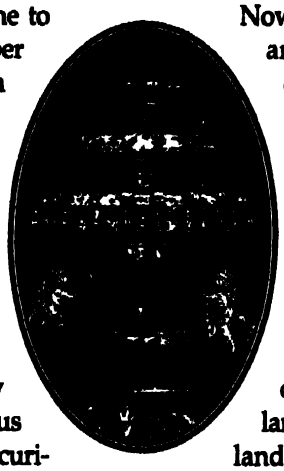
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CONCEPT

man," she said in an accent heavy with Southern European vowels. "When the Indians came to Goa in 1961 it was 100 per cent an invasion. From what were they supposed to be liberating us? Not the Portuguese because the Portuguese never oppressed us. Let me tell you exactly what it was the Indians were freeing us from. They were kindly liberating us from peace and from security."



Donna Georgina had fearsome beady black eyes and her hair was arranged in a tight quiff. She wore a flowery Portuguese blouse bought in Lisbon, offset by a severe black skirt. She nodded her head vigorously:

"We were ruled from Portugal for exactly 451 years and 23 days!" she said. "The result of this is that we are completely different from Indians — *completely* different! We Goans have a different mentality, a different language, a different culture. Although we are now under Indian occupation, I feel awkward when I cross the border into India... everything changes: the food, the landscape, the buildings the people the way of life..."

Donna Georgina stared over my shoulder towards the open window: "In the Portuguese days we never had to lock our houses at night. Now we can never be sure we are safe even during the day. And you know who we fear most? The Indian politicians. Absolutely unscrupulous people. They have cut our forests, ransacked our properties. They have made life impossible for everyone-particularly all us landowners. They offer *our* land to the people in their election promises: never give anything that belongs to them -- oh no, not even a pin — but they never think twice about offering people what belongs to others. Oh yes. That's very easy for them."

What Donna Georgina said reflected stories I had heard repeated all over Goa. The sheer length of time that the Portuguese had hung on in their little Indian colony -- some four hundred and fifty years of intermingling and intermarriage -- had forged uniquely close bonds between the colonisers and colonised. As a result most Goans still considered their state a place apart: a cultured Mediterranean island, quite distinct from the rest of India. As they quickly let you know, they ate bread not chapattis; drank in tavernas not tea shops; many of them were Roman Catholic not Hindu; and their musicians played guitars and sang fados. None of them, they assured you, could stand the sound of sitars or *shenai*.

Moreover, like Donna Georgina, most educated Goans still talked about "those Indians" and "crossing the border to India", while happily describing their last visit to their cousins in the Algarve as if they had been revisiting some much-loved childhood home. Absorption into a wider India, they would admit, had certainly brought prosperity to the previously stagnant colony, but at a price. Public life has become corrupted, and the distinct identity of Goa was being forcibly and deliberately eroded.

Portuguese, for example, was no longer taught in the Goan schools; Portuguese place names were everywhere being Sanskritised; the superb colonial buildings in Panjim were being deliberately pulled down to make way for anonymous Indian concrete; the Mansion of the Count of Menem, the last of the great Panjim aristocratic town houses, was destroyed only in 1986 to make way for a six storey block of flats.

There were, it was true, still some last remaining corners left: the haphazard, narrow cobbled lanes of

7.00 AM
A two-mile jog, a 10-minute workout,
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Fontainhas, for example, the oldest quarters of Panjim. Fontainhas still looks like a small chunk of Portugal washed up on the shores of the Indian Ocean. Here old spinsters in flowery dresses sit on their verandas reading the evening papers, chatting to each other in Portuguese. Wandering through them of an evening you come across scenes impossible to imagine anywhere else in India: violinists practice Vila Lobos in front of open windows; caged birds sit chirping on ornate *art nouveau* balconies looking out over small red-tiled *piazzas*. As you watch, old men in pressed linen trousers and Homburg hats spill out of the tavernas: with walking sticks in their hands, they make their way unsteadily across the cobbles, past the lines of battered 1940's Volkswagen Beatles slowly rusting themselves into oblivion. A Mediterranean *douceur* hangs palpably, almost visibly, over its streets.

But such corners, insisted Donna Georgina, were becoming harder and harder to find. For twenty minutes my hostess listed the now familiar litany of complaints:

"We could not fight the Indians in 1961," she said. "They were too many. Goa was a small place and could not defend itself. Even today we are only one million people. What can we do against 900 million Indians? But their seizure of Goa was an act of force. The majority here were opposed to the Indian invasion. That was why they had to come with their army, their air force and their navy. That day we all cried bitterly. It was the end of the good old days."

Donna Georgina brought out a small handkerchief and dabbed her eyes.

"In fact, since 1961 we've had two invasions. First it was the Indians. They plundered Goa: cut down our forests and took away our woods. Their politicians created havoc. Then after that it was the turn of the hippies. Disgusting. That's what those people were. *Dees-gusting*. All that nudism. And sexual acts: on the beach, on the roads – even in Panjim. *Panjim*! Imagine: kissing in *public* and I don't know what else. Disgusting."

The previous afternoon I had seen what remained of Goa's once vibrant hippie community. Here instead of the rusting Volkswagens of Fontainhas, a line of Enfield Bullet motorbikes were parked beneath the palm trees. The weekly hippie flea market was packing up as I arrived: the German Holy Man was returning his stock of Hindu charms to his bag while under the next palm tree a Mexican bootlegger was putting his remaining cans of imported lager back into his knapsack. On the dunes by the shore, a bonfire was roaring, and what appeared to be a topless six-a-side female football team — an odd sight anywhere in the world, but an astonishing one in India — were kicking a ball around. To one side another group of bangled backpackers were cheering them on while passing a 10 inch joint from hand to hand:

"Shoot!"

"Intergalactic!"

"Cos-mic!"

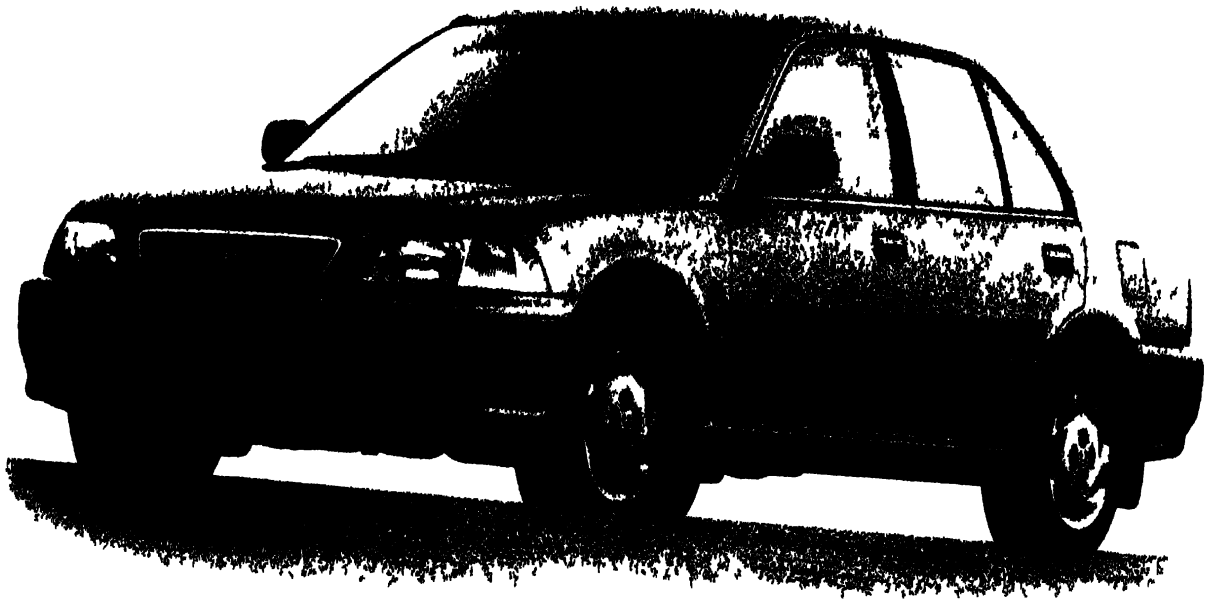
In the Sixties, Anjuna Beach had been the goal of every self-respecting hippie in Asia. From Hampstead and Berlin, from the barricades of Paris to the opium dens of San Francisco, streams of tie-dyed teenagers crossed Asia to reach this shore and make love on the breakers. Whole nomad communities formed around the beaches: Anjuna, Chapora, Colva and Calangute, previously backwaters barely known even to the sophisticates in Panjim, became mantras on the lips of fashion-conscious acid-heads across Europe and the US.

But in time, as the Sixties turned into the long hangover of the Seventies, most of the hippies either died of overdoses or went home. The young who come today are mostly students, generally a pretty affluent

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middle-class bunch who in due course will no doubt go home, cut off their pigtails and become merchant bankers and commodity brokers. Only very few of the genuine die-hard flower children of '67 still remain. Some have become very rich — it doesn't take much imagination to work out what trade their fortunes have come from but most of these Stayer's On are good natured old freaks who grow their own, flap around in flared denim, hold forth on dragon lines, the Gaia theory and world harmony, and make ends meet by selling chocolate hash brownies, aromatherapy oils and Indian waistcoats to the backpackers. This fossilised relic of Haight Ashbury is pretty tame stuff, but you would never guess this talking to Donna Georgina:

"Of course its because of drugs that their behaviour is like it is," hissed my hostess. "Disgusting people. Drugs and sexual acts and I don't know what else. I don't know which is worse: those hippies or our modern Indian politicians. The Portuguese wouldn't have allowed either."

Donna Georgina sipped her tea defiantly: "Mr Salazar would have known what to do with those hippies. He wouldn't have let them behave the way they did."

The old lady took me around the house. She showed me the great ballroom where they held the last ball in 1936 and the sunken cloister where she grew all the essential ingredients for her kitchen — chillies and asparagus, coconut and lemon grass, tea rose, papaya and balsam.

All the ancient families of Goa have St. Anne as their patron saint

"Despite the hippies and the politicians you seem at least to have maintained your house," I said looking around at the succession of perfectly preserved colonial Portuguese rooms surrounding us.

"Thanks to hard work," said Donna Georgina. "Hard *labour* I might call it. I'm currently fighting twenty-five law suits in an effort to keep the family property intact. That's right: *twenty-five* of them. Then there are the monkeys: big monkeys who jump on the roof and try to tear it apart. And as for preparing for the Monsoon rains: its worse than a wedding. The amount of work: checking the drains, making sure nothing leaks... But let me tell you this: it is my duty so to do. It is my duty to my ancestors, to myself *and* to society."

We ended up in front of the ancient *oratoria:* a cupboard-like object which opened up like a tabernacle to reveal ranks of devotional images, crucifixes, icons and flickering candles. There every day, twice a day, the household met up to say a decade of the rosary. On the wall beside it, Donna Georgina had hung a pen and ink drawing of the Holy Family.

"I drew it myself," she explained, seeing where I was looking. "The baby is Jesus and the lamb that he is feeding symbolises Humanity. The old lady is St. Anne, Jesus's grandmama. All the ancient families of Goa have St. Anne as their patron saint."

Donna Georgina paused, leaving the last phrase hanging in the air:

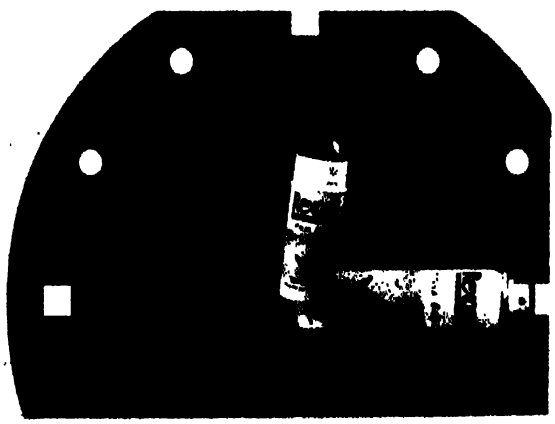
"It's entirely through St. Anne's intercession and God's protection that this house is standing and that I am still alive. People always ask me: 'Living alone you must have someone to look after you. Who is it?' To which I reply: 'God Almighty, Jesus Christ and St. Anne.'

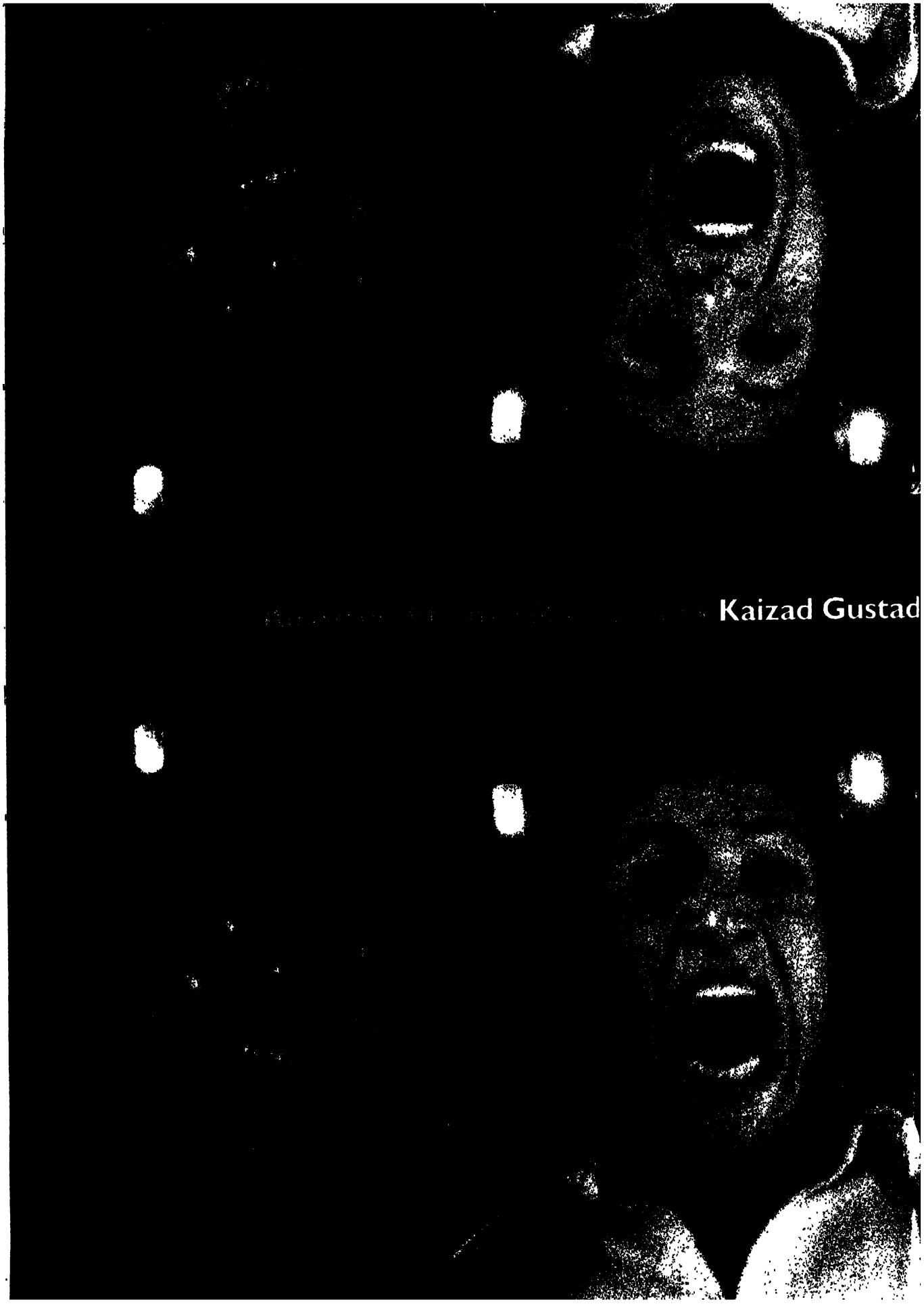
"And young man. Let me tell you this. Between them they are doing a very good job."



William Dalrymple *is a travel writer, best known for his book on Delhi,* City of Djinns. *He shot into fame at the young age of 22 with* In Xanadu, *his first book.. He also presented a six-part television series on India for Channel Four last year.*

12.15 PM
Long-lost friend is in town and wants to meet up for lunch.
Rexona Deodorant. Still working.




Kaizad Gustad

BOMBAY BOYS

INT. BOMBAY AIRPORT. DAY

[Roll opening credits. Quick montage.]
The stench of piss at Bombay International. A small immigration hall. Serpentine queues. An American passport is thumped onto an immigration table. A burly officer with a typical Indian clerk's moustache opens it.

Officer: American, huh?
Feroze: For the tenth time ... yes! Is that what the passport says? OPEN IT!

[UP] See here? Right up front. On the cover. United States of America.

No reply. The immigration officer opens the passport. A photo of an 11-year-old boy, looking extremely innocent. The immigration officer looks up. We see our expatriate hero #1, KRISHNA SAHNI. An ABCD — American Born Confused *Desi*. In his mid-twenties, he has short cropped hair, a thick Yankee accent, complete with an unsavable New York attitude slung casually around his very Indian looks.



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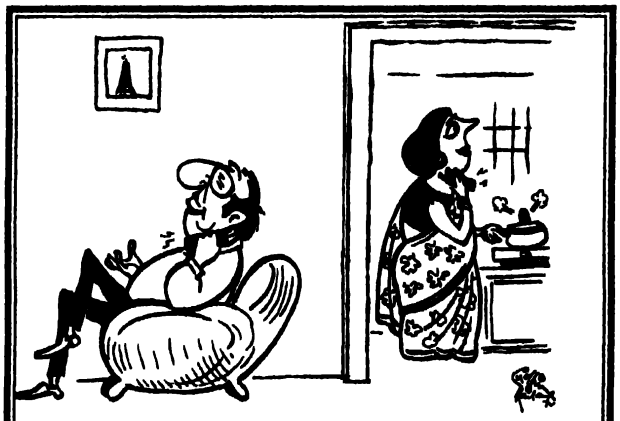
BOMBAY BOYS

Officer: American, huh? (KRISHNA IS EXASPERATED) So... whyfore you are coming here then?
Krishna: Whyfore?
Why....for....so....that after a 16-hour flight I could come here and make small talk with you. Are you going to stamp my passport or not?

CUT TO:
Another passport. Australian. Expat #2: Ricardo Fernandes. Very Goan, with a thick Aussie accent. Mid-twenties — well-built, innocent, boyish-looking.

Officer: Australian?
Ricardo: That's right maite.
Officer: Place of birth?
Ricardo: It's in the form. Goa.
Officer: Why you leave Goa for Australia, men?
Ricardo: My family immigrated when I was 14.

CUT TO:
Another passport. UK. Another photograph of an 18-



What's for dinner tonight, darling?

CARTOON SUDHIR TAILANG

year-old boy in what appears to be semi-drag. The officer looks up. Expat hero #3. XERXES MISTRY. About 24, long straight hair, fair, attractive and very androgynous. He has a violin case slung across his shoulders.

Officer: Uhm... Mr... (LOOKS AT HIM)
Miss....?



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BOMBAY BOYS

Xerxes chews gum as he awaits his fate

Xerxes: Mistry. And its Mr. Not Miss. At least it was, the last time I looked. (LAUGHS)
Officer: Looked where?
Xerxes: Never mind.
Officer: Been to India before?
Xerxes: No. But I was conceived here. Or so my folks tell me.
Officer: You English?
Xerxes: Don't hold it against me. Nobody's perfect.

CUT TO:
Krishna is standing impatiently before the immigration officer.

Officer: Whyfore you are coming here first time?
Krishna: I'm coming here whyfore to become an actor.
Officer: Hindi films?
Krishna: No. Yugoslavian.

CUT TO:
Ricardo is still before another immigration officer.

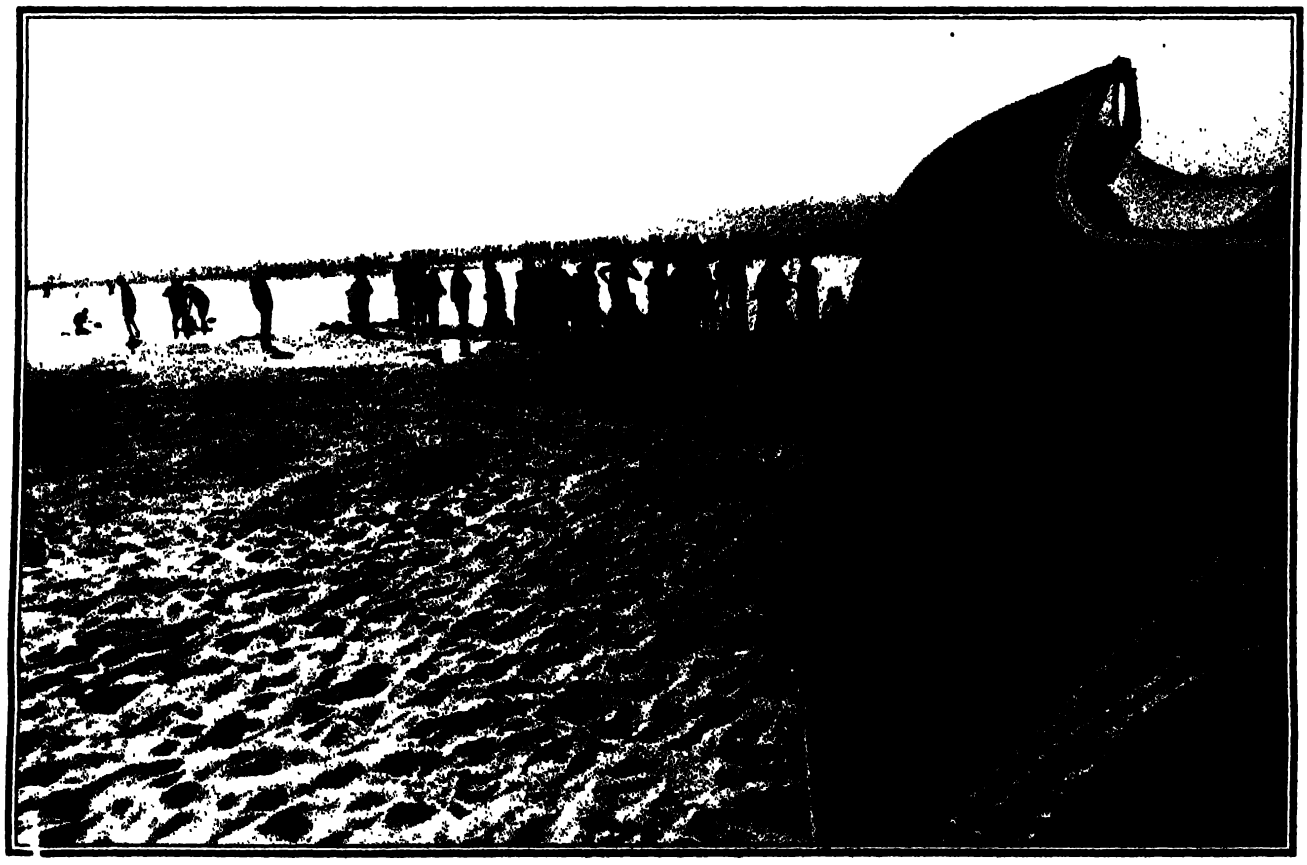
Officer: Whyfore?
Ricardo: Whyfore what?
Officer: Whyfore you are coming here now?
Ricardo: To search for my brother.
Officer: Where is he?
Ricardo: Somewhere in Bombay, I'm told.
Officer: Somewhere in Bombay?
Ricardo: Yes.
Officer: Do you know how many people there are in Bombay?
Ricardo: No.
Officer: 15 million. After that we stopped counting.

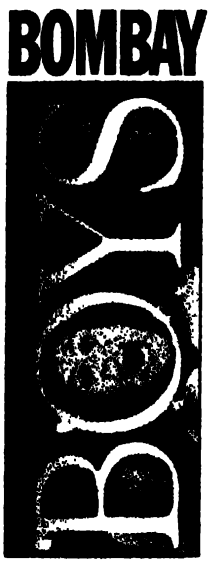
The officer looks at Ricardo with a very amused smile. Ricardo shrugs.

SOUNDS OF MUSIC

"Poetry is the impish attempt to paint the colour of the wind."
— Bodenheim Maxwell

PHOTOGRAPH SUBHENDU CHAKI





All three stamps are made in quick progression. The three expats take their possessions and passports and move on

CUT TO:
Xerxes chews gum nonchalantly as he awaits his fate.

Officer: And whyfore you are here like this for first time?



CARTOON SUDHIR DAR

Xerxes: To make music...and to...well... and to sort of... find myself.... know what I mean?
Officer: Why? Are you lost?
Xerxes: Aren't we all?
Officer: Guess what?
Xerxes: What?
Officer: I've found you!! (cracks up laughing) You're at the Bombay International Airport.
Xerxes is not amused. He stares at the Officer.

CUT TO:
Krishna is already sweating.

Officer: Sing a song, dance around a tree for me, OK?

CU: The rubber stamp. Six months.
CUT TO:
Ricardo, hands behind his back, stands obediently.

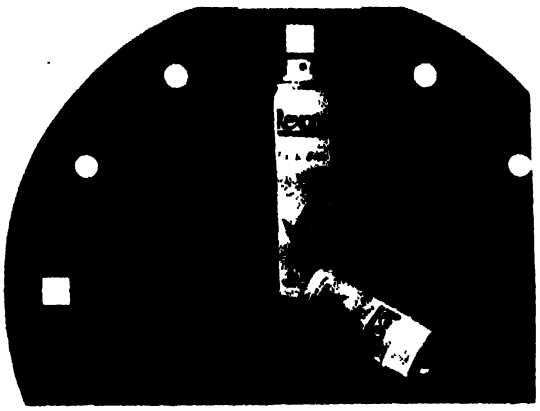
Officer: How much time do you think you need to find your brother?
Ricardo: Oh, I don't know maite.
One month, perhaps?

The Officer looks at him with contempt. He stamps the passport. Six months.

CUT TO:
Xerxes is fiddling away with his baggage. Nervous.

Officer: And....how long it will take for you to find yourself?
Xerxes: Oh, I don't know... A year, maybe?

4.00 PM
Phew, what a day! And boss wants to meet now!
Rexona Deodorant. Still working.



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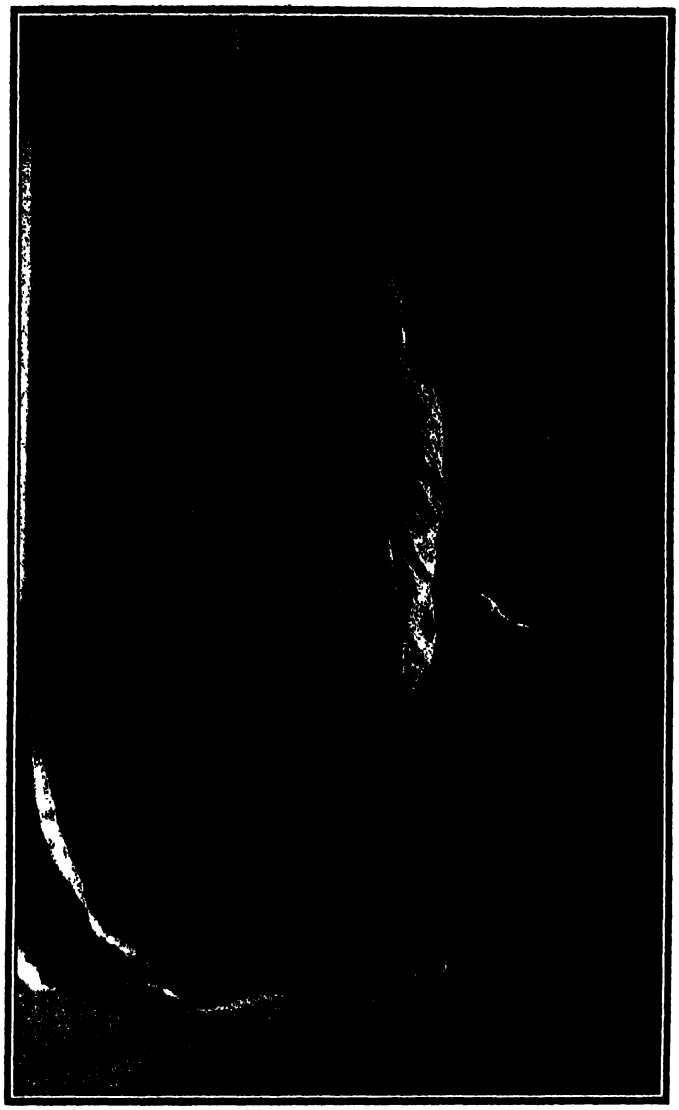
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FRONTWORDS

A gold-toothed man, covered in gold chains and rings, manages to squeeze through the crowd

BOMBAY BOYS



DREAM MERCHANTS

Obsessed by a fairytale, we spend our lives searching for a magic door and a lost kingdom of peace — Eugene o'Neill

PHOTOGRAPH **SOMNATH GHOSH**

Officer: I think you can find yourself and a lot of other people also in that time no?

CU: Stamp on passport. Six months.

All three stamps are made together in quick progression. The three expats take their possessions and passports and move on.
They reach the entrance. As soon as they emerge, a thousand people descend on them. A great white shock of a heat wave blasts them. The three freeze surrounded by a throng of people, pushing and shoving, all shouting TAXI! The glare of the heat is stupefying.

A gold-toothed man, covered in gold-chains and rings, manages to squeeze through the crowd. He beams broadly and extends an oily hand to them.

Taxi Driver: Welcome to Bombay! They freeze completely. The heat is blinding. Xerxes rocks on his feet a few seconds, and then slumps back and collapses.

[End Opening Credits]
CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE AIRPORT. BOMBAY STREETS. DAY.

Ricardo, Xerxes and Krishna manage to get outside the airport separately, escorted by their taxi drivers and several street urchins. They enter three pre-paid taxis. The three taxis take off. Shortly thereafter, all three taxis get stuck at a red light. The drivers exchange conspiratorial glances at each other and they nod. They start talking in Hindi.

Taxi driver 1: Where are you going?
Taxi driver 2 and 3: Colaba.

Driver 1 smiles wickedly at the other two drivers. The other two nod. Suddenly, Taxi 2 and 3 have engine trouble at the red light. The cars won't start. Honking everywhere. The drivers get out and bundle Krishna and Xerxes in together with Ricardo, muttering apologies and engine trouble. The expats are



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Shalimar Chemical Works Limited, Calcutta-700 027.

too confused to argue. The three of them are dumped into the back seat of the taxi, their luggage piled on top of them. The driver takes off towards Colaba.

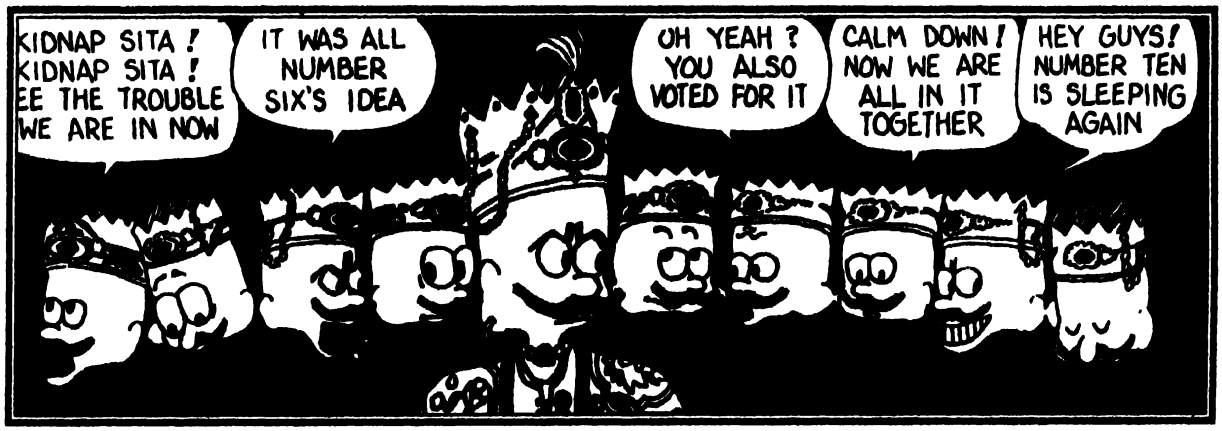
Xerxes: What the hell happened?
Ricardo: The other two drivers went back for a new fare. They'll split the profits with this guy.
Krishna: How?
Ricardo: Because it's a pre-paid taxi. You going to Colaba? (the other two nod) Same here. So this guy will drop off all three of us, and the other two have gone back to get new rides. (smiles — they stare at him) Welcome to Bombay, as he said! What better introduction?

Ricardo: G'Day. Ricardo Fernandes. No. I don't speak Hindi. A bit of Goan. Konkani that is. I could just about make out what they're saying. How about you?
Krishna: First time here. No Hindi. A bit of Punjabi. And you?
Xerxes: Xerxes Mistry. Only English. First timer to India. We're going to be ripped off every day. Basically, we're fucked.

The three laugh. The taxi speeds off.

INT. CHEAP HOTEL IN COLABA. NIGHT.

A very tired Krishna, Xerxes and Ricardo enter a sleazy hotel. A fat, oily receptionist



CARTOON RANEESH

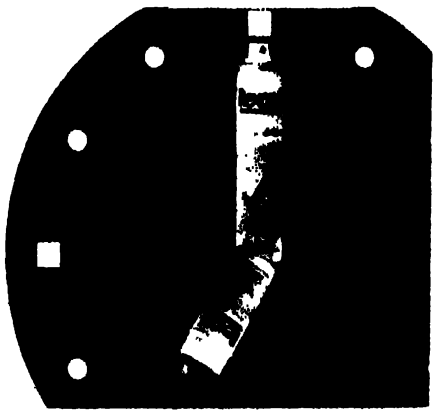
greets them in a soiled dirty vest.

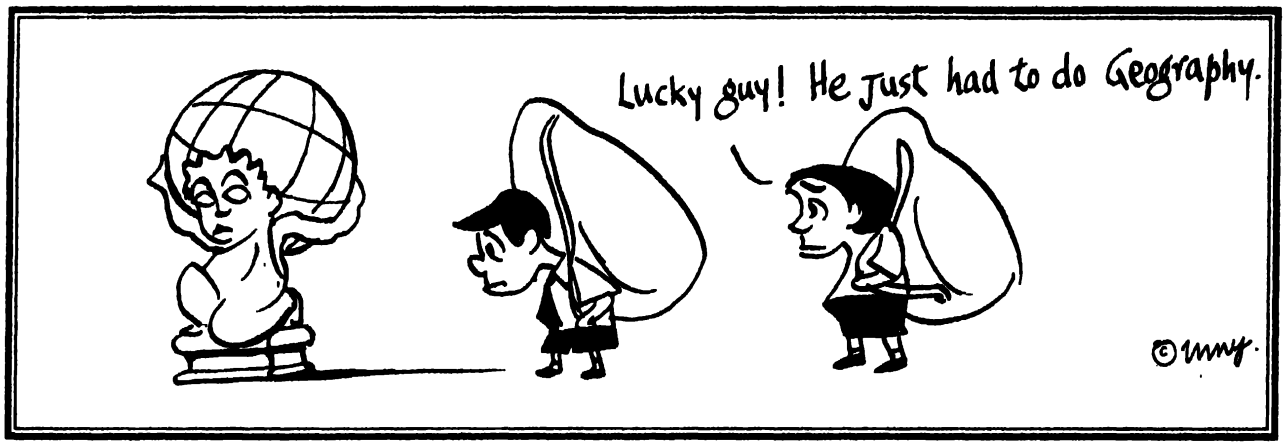
Through the baggage and cramped space, the three manage to shake hands and introduce themselves.

Krishna: Krishna Sahni. New York. You speak Hindi?

Receptionist: (smiling widely) Welcome to Taj Mahal Hotel annexe. How may I be helping you?
Ricardo: We need three rooms.

7.00 PM
From office, straight on board IC 911 to Delhi.
(Hope someone nice sits next to me!)
Rexona Deodorant. Still working.





CARTOON UNNY

BOMBAY BOYS

Receptionist: We don't have rooms. We only have suites. This is Taj Mahal Hotel Annexe. And we only have one left. This is high tourist season. You want?
Krishna: This is the tenth goddamn hotel we've been to already.
Receptionist: What to do sir, whole world come to Bombay this time of year. But you take suite, I give you three beds. Very comfortable — air conditioning, running water, sea view, carpeting, everything.

The three boys are by now extremely exhausted and frustrated. They shrug.

INT. HOTEL ROOM. TAJ MAHAL ANNEXE. NIGHT.

Krishna, Ricardo and Xerxes enter the room. It is a small, dingy room with peeling paint. Three tiny cots are cramped together. Several lizards scurry up the wall. A massive cobweb can be seen between the blades of the fan. Xerxes switches on the AC which is almost as large as the room. It rattles and wheezes and makes a loud noise before it collapses. Running water falls from the ceiling onto three well placed buckets. A small carpet which has seen better days is in front of the bathroom. Ricardo opens the window and in the corner between two tall buildings he can barely catch a glimpse of the sea. On one wall is a large framed photo of the actual Taj Mahal Hotel with the word *'annexe'* scrawled in long hand below it. The three expats are dumbfounded.

INT. IRANI RESTAURANT. TEA-SHOP. MORNING.

Krishna, Xerxes and Ricardo are sitting at a small restaurant drinking tea, checking out the morning newspapers.

Krishna: Indians are all crooks. They told me back home to be careful of them. All petty crooks I tell you. Dishonest as diarrhoea on a bad day.
Ricardo: It's this third world mentality.
Xerxes: (reading the newspaper)
No. Its the tropical climate. Makes crooks out of innocent people. The heat scrambles their brains.
Ricardo: Found a flat yet?
Krishna: What's a flat?
Ricardo: An "apartment" Yankee boy.
Xerxes: There seem to be several Paying Guest accommodations, whatever that means. I've circled them all. Let's check them out.

CUT TO:

INT MONTAGE. "LOOKING FOR APARTMENTS." DAY.

[Rapid-fire Montage: Shot as though the expats are taking interviews for jobs. They're nervous, on the spot and constantly underqualified.]

A fat Gujarati woman stares at Krishna, Xerxes and Ricardo "Sorry, No *Firangis*," she says and slams the door in their face. "But we're Indian," they retort." "I'm about as Indian as Geronimo," Xerxes states. An old man opens another door, "Sorry, no Indians." "But we're not Indian, we're for-



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BOMBAY BOYS

eigners." "I'm as American as a peanut butter and chutney sandwich," Krishna pipes in. The door is slammed in their face. A young man, very cool, "Sorry I only want women flatmates. Preferably young." Xerxes steps forward. The door is slammed again. "I want One Lakh Rupees deposit." "How much is that?" Ricardo wants to know. The landlord flips out a calculator. "3000 US dollars, 4000 Australian or 2000 Pounds. Take your pick. I also accept Yen, Rial and Dinars." The boys leave. "Why don't you open a bank, instead of a B&B?" Xerxes states. A fat voluptuous woman sees the three boys and is ecstatic. She hugs them tightly, dearly and squashes the lungs out of all three simultaneously. They can stay there, all right, free of cost also, provided they each marry one of her daughters. She shows them the daughters — each is fatter and uglier than the other. "And then you have to take them back with you to England, America and where did you say you're from young man? Never mind, as long as it's not in India." The three boys beat a hasty retreat. "Lights out at 10 pm, no girls, no phone calls." And still another, "No music, no boys."

"I'm outta here," Xerxes pipes in. "No *Firangis*, no Indians, leave you passports. One lakh deposit, ten thousand per month rent."

Another door slams in their face. Exhausted — the three slump on the stairwell and stare at each other.

Ricardo: Let's span out from tomorrow. We'll cover more ground that way

The others nod, half-heartedly

Shot on location in Bombay, Bombay Boys directed by Kaizad Gustad has premiered at the Toronto Film Festival, will be shown at the London Film Festival in November, and will be released in India in December. Rahul Bose, Naveen Andrews and Alexander Gifford star in the film.

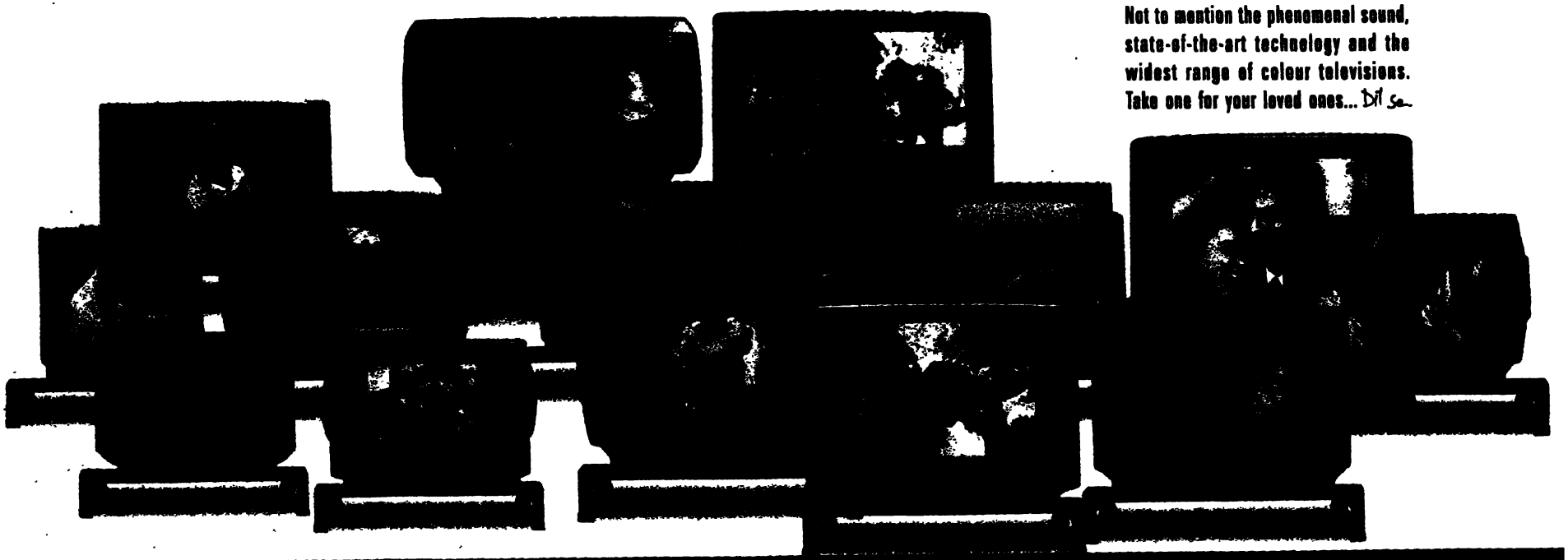


Born in Bombay, the 29-year-old **Kaizad Gustad**'s *first novel, Of No Fixed Address, was launched recently Gustad himself has no fixed home He shuttles between Bombay, New York and London*



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MAKING SENSE

It is with a sense of nostalgia and loss that I read the article on Mrinal Sen's career as a filmmaker which has run into a creative block ('Film and Sensibilities', August 2). The present system of education, merely a legacy of the British aimed at making clerks for their offices, does not offer any space or time to the young mind to widen its creativity or individuality. This may account for the lack of sensitivity and reflective thought in Indian films today.

KRITI PANCHAMIYA, JAMSHEDPUR

SIMPLY DELIGHTED

No Indian filmmaker could disturb, delight and enlighten me the way Sen had done. His repertoire includes masterly films like *Baishe Shravan, Bhuban Shome, Ek Din Pratidin, Kharij, Akaler Sandhane, Mrigaya, Khandahar,Oka Oriu Katha*, to mention only a few. It is really painful that such a genius, as talented as Welles or a De Sica, has not even been conferred the Dada Saheb Phalke award by our government.

Subhajit Ghosh, Shillong

The cover story on Mrinal Sen made interesting reading. But it was definitely a wise move on the part of the writer to desist from drawing a lengthy comparison between the two very different filmmakers, Satyajit Ray and Mrinal Sen. Each had their vision and own technique as filmmakers. Sen's works are no less sincere in their approach to humanity.

Tania Mitra, Calcutta

SPORTS, PLEASE

I am very unhappy with the fact that Graphiti does not have any sports or games column. All sports loving people would be delighted if a page or two could be devoted regularly to sports and sports personalities. What about profiling the present and the former Arjuna/Khel Ratna winners? I am sceptical about the acceptance of my suggestion but, nonetheless, I believe, I am making a just demand.

Debjit Gupta,Calcutta

WATCH STORY

It was fun going through 'The Best' of watches story ('Keeping Time', August 2). Designer brands like Chopard, Omega and Piaget are real beauties and definitely a cut above their *desi* counterparts, in terms of quality, make and elegance. But going by the fancy price tags, most end up opting for our very own Titan or HMT.

Hiten Maitra, Siliguri

graphiti ★ 20 September 1998

10 DESIGN CORNER Lamps and lampshades are more than just utilitarian items 13 SMALL TALK Is girl power on the decline? 16 MIXED BAG 18 RASOI 20 CYBERITE It's festival time on the net 26 TIME TABLE 28 THE BEST All you wanted to know about tea 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE When it comes to clothes, quality is the bottomline for designer Shahab Durazi

The idea behind great bathrooms



Fascinating Hindware

VITREOUS

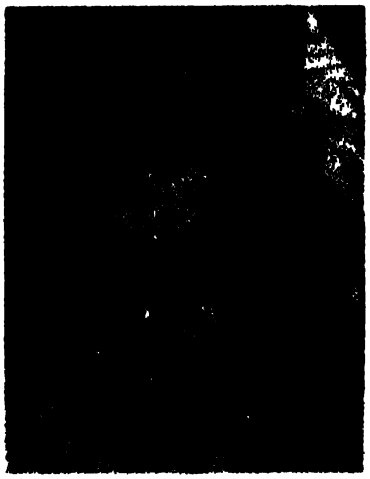
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ATAL BEHARI VAJPAYEE

NO CALL FOR OPTIMISM

Ask the Prime Minister about his life choice, and he will be quick to point out that he has opted for bachelorhood, not *brahmacharya*. But, if women are not forbidden fruit, why did the BJP leader never marry?

Ah, but there hangs a tale. Party sources have it that Vajpayee wanted to devote his life and energies to the country and felt that a wife and family would just get in the way. He has since got over such delusions, and now lives with his foster-daughter and her family.

But does that mean that he's now open to marriage? That's open to question, but a determined woman can always try.

Applicants must speak chaste Hindi, and enjoy poetry and long pauses between sentences.



ABHISHEK BACHCHAN

CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

The film Press has already anointed him the next superstar of Hindi [illegible], but Bachchan kid is having some trouble getting his career on the rails. [illegible] his debut in a historical movie, *Akhri Mughal*, directed by J.P. Dutta, [illegible] fond parents have now had second thoughts about that. They'd rather do the safe th[illegible] him in a love story.

That makes some sense, given Abhishek's dreamy, bedroom ey[illegible] undoubted charisma . And certainly making him play the angry youn[illegible] sad sense of *deja vu* about it. But whatever he does, Bachchan Jun[illegible] looks like he'll b[illegible] a lot of hearts in the process. And pretty young things can rejoi[illegible] the fact that there's [illegible] nothing to the rumours linking him to either Karisma Kapoor [illegible] onali Bendre.

AJAY JADEJA

BOWLING THEM OVER

If he wasn't a cricketer, you probably wouldn't give him a second look. The man is short, dark, and average-looking, though he does have a certain boyish charm. But that's not enough to account for the effect this diminutive dynamo has on the ladies. Whether it's the teenybopper brigade that hangs around at cricket matches or glamorous film stars like Tabu, they're all lining up to party with the Jadeja boy.

But despite his undoubted talent and popularity, something tells us that this man is not exactly marriage material. Certainly not for the next ten years while he's sowing prodigious quantities of wild oats. And even after that, the ladies should remain warned: monogamy is not a word Jadeja is intimately acquainted with

RAHUL GANDHI

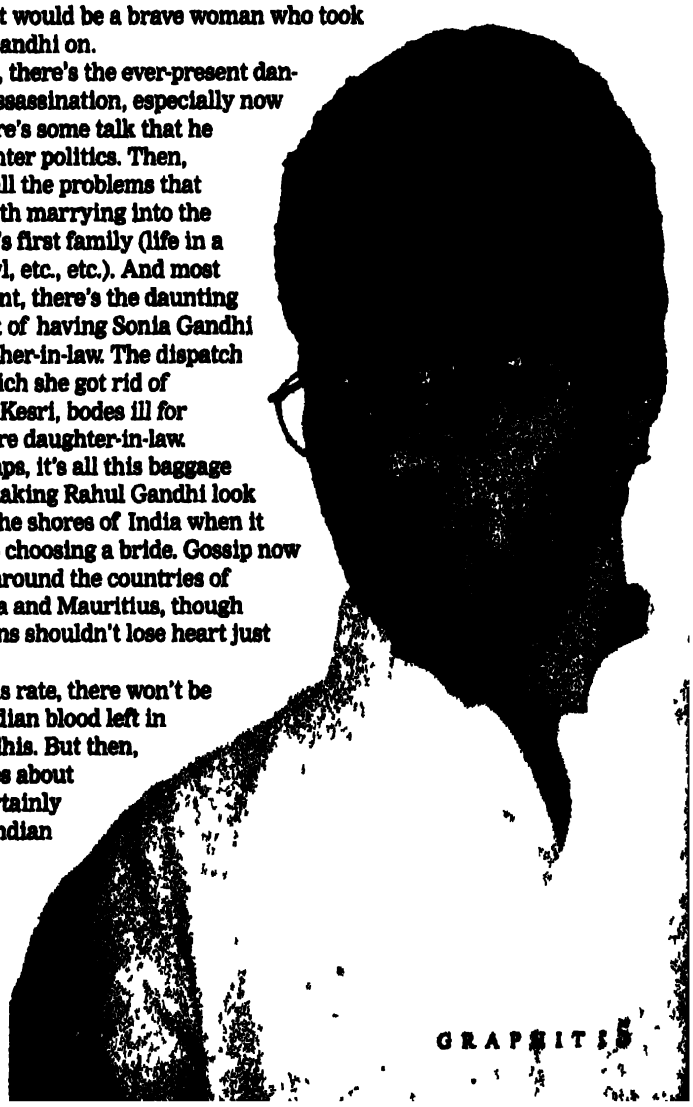
THE HEIR APPARENTLY LIKES FOREIGNERS

He's good-looking, he's smart (he went to Harvard, after all), and he's heir to the famous Nehru-Gandhi name. But despite all these pluses, it would be a brave woman who took Rahul Gandhi on.

First, there's the ever-present danger of assassination, especially now that there's some talk that he might enter politics. Then, there's all the problems that come with marrying into the country's first family (life in a fish bowl, etc., etc.). And most important, there's the daunting prospect of having Sonia Gandhi as a mother-in-law. The dispatch with which she got rid of Sitaram Kesri, bodes ill for any future daughter-in-law.

Perhaps, it's all this baggage that is making Rahul Gandhi look beyond the shores of India when it comes to choosing a bride. Gossip now centres around the countries of Colombia and Mauritius, though Europeans shouldn't lose heart just yet.

At this rate, there won't be much Indian blood left in the Gandhis. But then, who cares about that? Certainly not the Indian people.



The Power and the Glory

The Power and the Glory

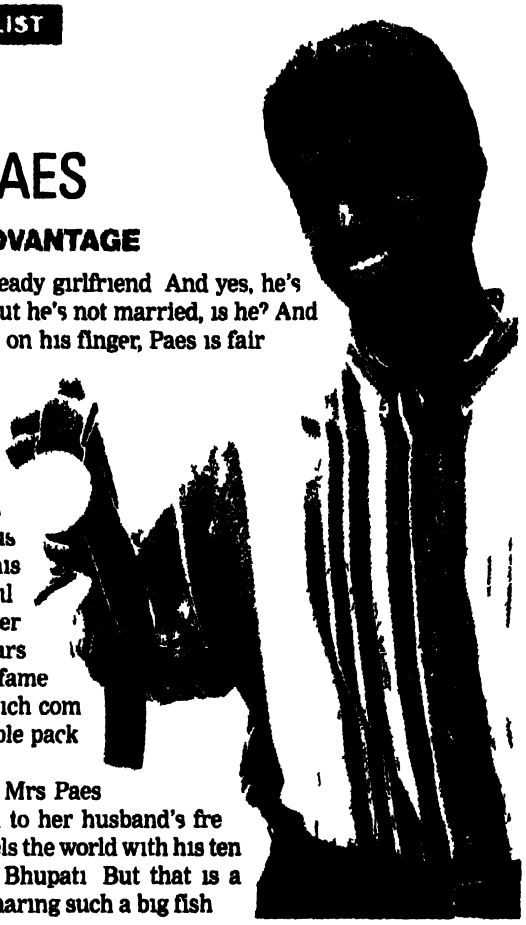
LEANDER PAES

THE LOVE-ONE ADVANTAGE

Okay, so the guy has a steady girlfriend And yes, he's madly in love with her But he's not married, is he? And until that band of gold is on his finger, Paes is fair game

Even though Leander is not among the top ranked tennis stars in the world — the odd upset win against Pete Sampras notwithstanding - such is the prosperity of the tennis circuit that Paes is a millionaire several times over (and we're talking dollars here) So, he has money fame and good looks, all of which combine to make an irresistible package

Of course, any future Mrs Paes will have to become used to her husband's frequent absences as he travels the world with his tennis racquet and Mahesh Bhupati But that is a small price to pay for ensnaring such a big fish





JEH & NES WADIA

BROTHERS IN CHARMS

They are the attractive sons of Maureen and Nusli Wadia, and both would have no problems making it to the finals of the Manhunt that their mom launches every year But when you're heirs to the Bombay Dyeing fortune, walking the ramp is not really an option no matter how good you look

At present, Jeh and Ness are being groomed to take over the company, but they still find time for fun and games with their south Bombay set (this, of course, doesn't preclude the possibility of being linked with such Hindi film stars as Karisma Kapoor)

So, if you're looking to make an impression, seize your chance. All you need is a black mini, lots of attitude and entrance to the right parties in Mumbai



RATAN TATA

TARGETING THE TYCOON

The problem with this is that many good women have tried before with very little luck Ratan Tata's dream — as he disclosed on the Simi Garewal show on Star Plus — may have been to have a family of his own, but somehow the demands of the corporate world have taken precedence over it

Now, Tata is too set in his bachelor ways to really contemplate a change in his lifestyle — but a girl can always hope, can't she?

The Big Bucks Brigade

Back on the Market

M.F. HUSAIN

BAREFOOT IN THE PARK

Let's be frank. You don't stand much of a chance with a man who's obsessed with Madhuri Dixit. But you have to keep in mind that this artist also spent many years painting horses — so you never really know.

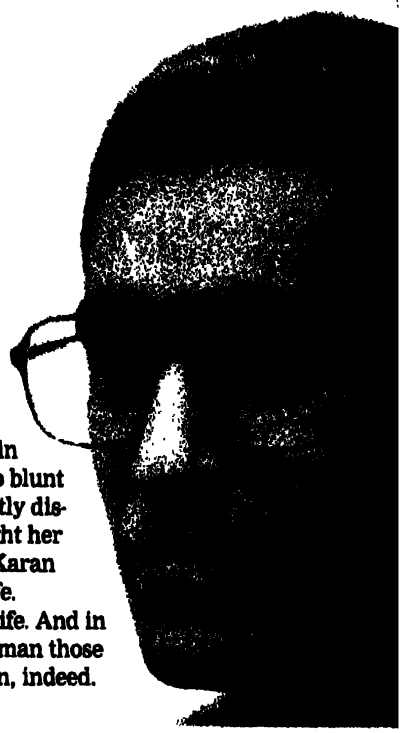
Of course, with the recession in the art market, Husain doesn't command the astronomical prices he did earlier, nor does he have the same stature he did in the artistic sphere. But he's still loaded, talented — and think of what you could do with the money saved on footwear.

KARAN THAPAR

BUT YOU ARE NOT SAYING NO

A tragedy lurks behind Karan Thapar's brave smile. He lost his young wife Nisha to a rare disease while in London, and the passage of time has done nothing to blunt the edge of his grief. Her pictures are still prominently displayed in his house, and the stuffed toy he once bought her on a trip abroad occupies pride of place on his bed. Karan Thapar is still very much in love with his adored wife.

But there comes a time for closure in everyone's life. And in time, Thapar, too, will learn to move on. And any woman those piercing eyes fasten upon will be a very lucky woman, indeed.





VINOD MEHTA

YEH! HAI WRITE CHOICE BABY

His is the brain that has launched a thousand bylines. But Mehta — with one book on Indian prostitutes to his credit — has proved to be an even better editor than he is a writer. His triumphs include *Debonair, The Indian Post, The Independent, The Sunday Observer, The Pioneer* and most recently, *Outlook*.

Mehta has had a run of bad health of late, but has since recovered and is now back on the job. He is amicably divorced from his first wife, Rekha, who remains a very good friend. He has no children, though, and lives alone in a bachelor pad in Delhi's Nizamuddin.

Is a good marital prospect, as long as you remember to leave him alone when he is working to the latest deadline.

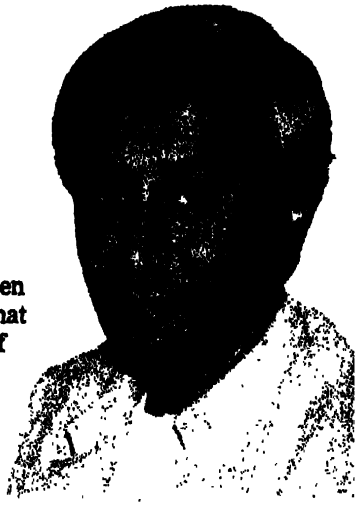
Confirmed Bachelors

NAVEEN PATNAIK

IRON IN THE SOUL

He should have been snapped up in the Great Matrimonial Bazaar years ago, but somehow Naveen Patnaik — Pappu to friends — still languishes on the shelf. That's strange, when you consider that he's loaded (papa Biju Patnaik wasn't exactly short of a bob or two), is a fully paid-up member of the international jet set (with such friends as the late Jackie Kennedy), and a charmer in his own right.

Perhaps things will change now that Patnaik is an important politician, and the Union minister for steel and mines. After all, nothing becomes a *neta* more than a khadi *kurta-pyjama*, and a demure, sari-clad wife by his side.



Confirmed Bachelors

RAJEEV SETHI

I LOVE MY INDIA

He's put on a lot of weight of late, but Rajeev Sethi's face — framed by a mass of salt and pepper curls — still retains vestiges of the cherubic charm that was his trademark in his younger days. This was when Sethi was the driving force behind the Festivals of India held in several world capitals, and was flying artisans, craftspeople and dancers all over the world in an attempt to showcase India.

Sethi is less high profile these days, but he still cuts a dashing figure on the culture circuit. Only women with a passing acquaintance with ethnic chic need apply.

ROHIT BAL

CLOTHES DO NOT MAKE THIS MAN

For a fashion designer, Bal presents a very scruffy appearance indeed. His suits hang on him, his jeans are frayed, his hair looks like it hasn't seen a comb in a long time, and it's a lucky day if you catch him freshly shaven.

But despite this unwashed, unkempt look, Bal is quite a catch. First of all, there's the fame factor. Then, there's all the money that he's made from selling ethnic ensembles to society ladies with money to throw around. And more important of all, is the fact that you'll never again have to worry about what to wear to dinner. How could a girl possibly resist?

VIKRAM SETH

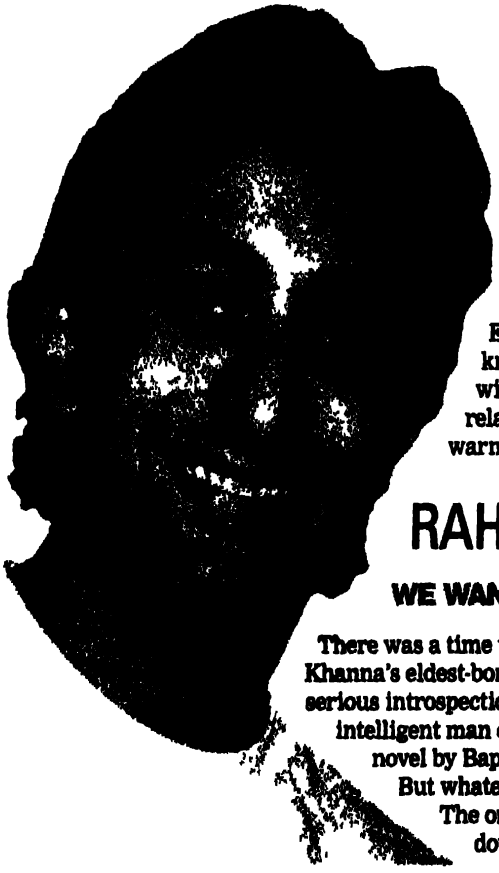
BUT IS HE A SUITABLE BOY?



Opinions vary on this score. While the women never tire of commenting on Seth's Peter Pan-esque charm, others who know him better say that Vikram can be a right pain to live with. Like all artistic geniuses, he is egotistical, vain, and cannot look further than his own desires.

But if you're the self-sacrificing type who loves the idea of putting her man before all else, then he's your Suitable Boy.

Hey, Good



SALMAN KHAN

THE SEX THIMBLE

Every month or so, the film glossies inform us that Salman is all set to tie the knot with long-time girlfriend, Somy Ali. But the assigned date comes and goes without any *nikkah* being witne-ssed. But given how committed Somy is to this relationship, it's only a matter of time before it becomes legal. So, remain warned: you only have a couple of months to make your move.

RAHUL KHANNA

WE WANT HIS MTV

There was a time when you couldn't switch on MTV with-out catching sight of Vinod Khanna's eldest-born doing the honours on the small screen. But now Rahul is engaged in some serious introspection about what he wants to do next — after all, there's only so much time an intelligent man can spend veejaying. He's already starred in a Deepa Mehta movie based on a novel by Bapsi Sidhwa, but is not sure he wants to do commercial Hindi cinema.

But whatever Rahul does, he is bound to excel in given his drive, energy and talent. The only catch is he's enjoying his bachelor days too much to think of settling down.

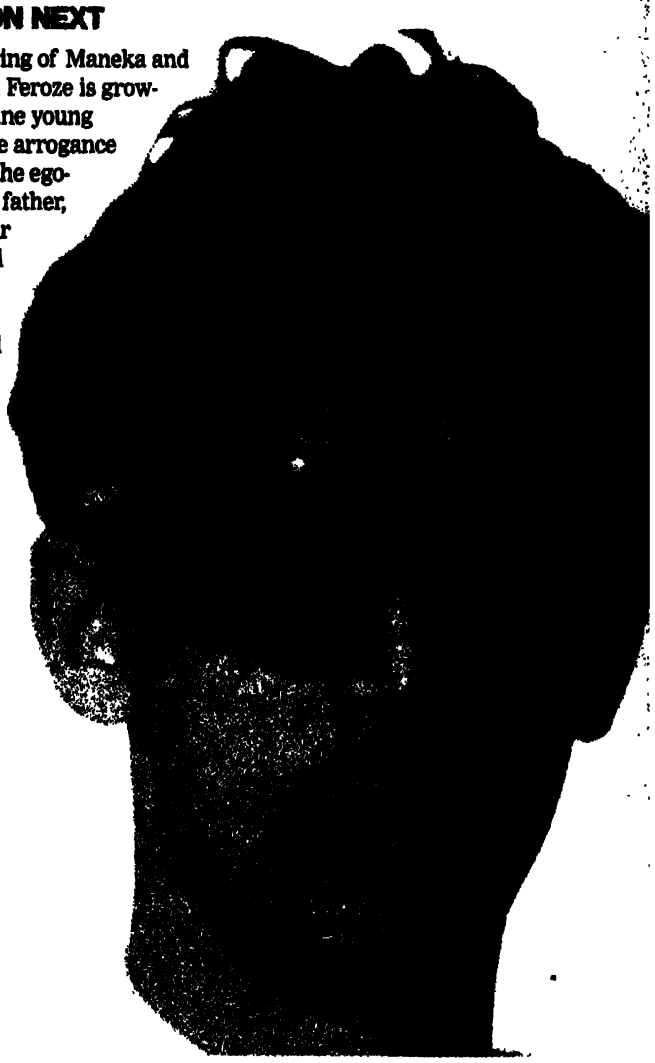


In the Making

FEROZE VARUN GANDHI

GENERATION NEXT

The only offspring of Maneka and Sanjay Gandhi, Feroze is growing up to be a fine young man. He has the arrogance of his mother, the egotism of his late father, and the glamour that the Gandhi name bestows on one. But whether he will occupy the centrestage like his dad did, or fade away to the sidelines like his mom, remains to be seen.



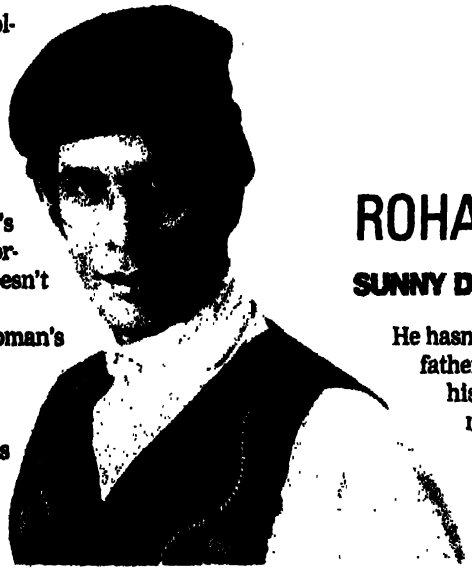
Looking!

MILIND SOMAN

HANDSOME IS AS HANDSOME DOES

Madhu Sapre is a hard act to follow, no matter how sculpted your figure, or how high your cheekbones. But something tells us that the dishy-looking Soman is deep enough to look beyond surface beauty to the person that lurks behind. So, it's not essential to be drop-dead gorgeous, though it would help (doesn't it always?).

Remember, however, that Soman's career is on a downward curve these days. He's through with modelling, but hasn't found a viable alternative in Hindi films or even television. But given Milind's past record, this has to be a temporary state of affairs.



ROHAN GAVASKAR

SUNNY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

He hasn't had the kind of success that his father, Sunil Manohar Gavaskar, enjoyed at his age. But given the adage that a fruit never falls too far from the tree, it's only a matter of time before Rohan — named in honour of the famous West Indian cricketer, Rohan Kanhai — begins to shine both on the cricket field and off it. ■

DESIGN Corner



Lamps and lampshades can transform the look of your house, says **Samita Bhatia**

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

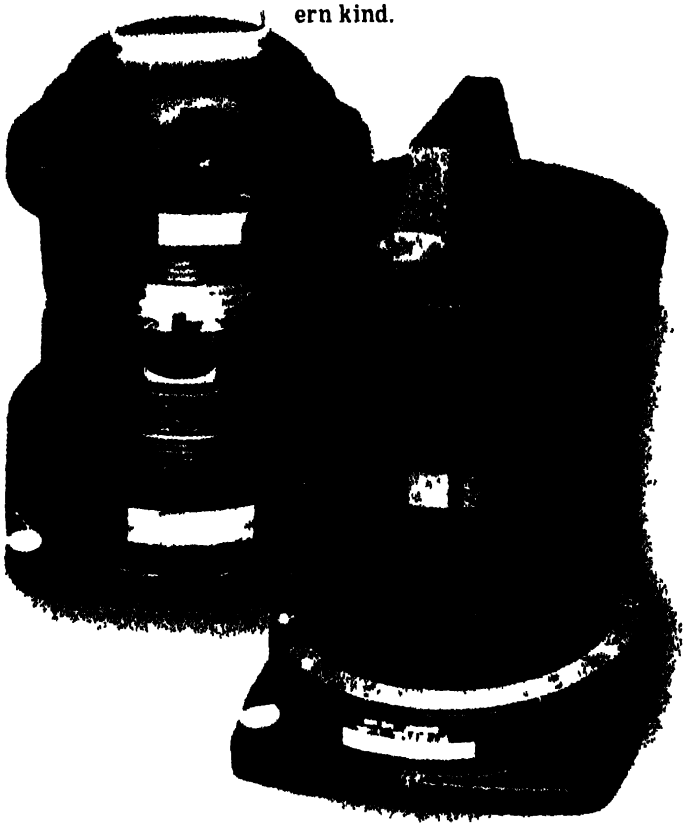
LIGHT TOUCH

It is more prudent, designers feel, to use soft lights for the bedrooms whereas a touch of drama can be imparted to the living rooms by opting for more innovative designs

They can be Old Timers, Seductresses or Abstractions. Call them what you will but they are a sure-fire way to conjure up an atmosphere — in an instant.

They demand in-depth research and relevant innovation. Some are lifts from global trends while others match local needs.

Yes, we're talking about lampshades, both the conventional and the modern kind.



Scout the market and you'll be amazed at the variety available Prices could vary from Rs 100 to scale Rs 3,000.

They come in all shapes, sizes and materials, while their functions vary according to their height. They could be used to brighten up dark corners, spotlight a painting or just add a touch of drama to your room.

Says Poonam Kalra, director, 'I'm', a storehouse of contemporary design, "When a new construction is near completion, the priority of the owner is then to create the ambience. And lighting with lamps and other fittings is one of the most obvious ways of doing so."

Some of the best designers of contemporary lights concur with the view that the best way of ruining a perfectly good ambience is by installing blue tube lights. Lavinder Singh, director, Decon, an engineer who has made crafting lights a profession, says with a shrug, "Lighting is directly related to a person's standard of living. A bulb, for instance, uses seven times more electricity than a tube light. So those who want to cut costs install tube lights."

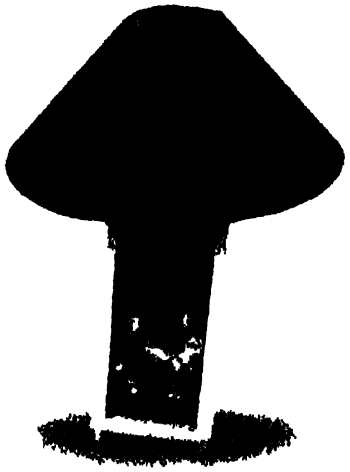
Designers note that the demand for table lamps is on the decline while pedestal or standing floor lamps and uplighters, recessed lights, lamps for sculpted corners and glowing areas take over in preference.

While lamps in wood are the most expensive, those made of iron prove to be the most affordable. At I'm, prices of lamps range from Rs 325 to Rs 4,500. The all-wood variety are the most expensive and can cost upto Rs 15,000.The floor lamps called Drop Lights give you a new look every time you change the fabric that shrouds the bulb.

Also popular are Geometrics, which are tall floor lamps with brightly coloured conical glass pieces resting on top. The latest are Pot Pourri lamps which are table lamps that are embellished with dried flowers.

Today people obviously like to give new designs a chance. G.K. Kedia, one of the partners of Lumiere on Shakespeare Sarani, Calcutta, believes that lampshades can provide that special touch to any room. "Depending on the shape and the material it is made of, a lamp can create just the effect you are looking for," opines Kedia.

He believes in the evolutionary essence of design. He explains, "Innovative, bold and sometimes even wild designs of lamps and lampshades are catching the fancy of Calcuttans although they still prefer the minimalist approach and clean lines."



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

Prices at Lumiere range from Rs 100 to Rs 10,000 and upwards. Lumiere gives ostentatious designs a wide berth, keeping the lines distinct, clean and graphic. The materials used are a combination of wood and metal, wood and ceramic and even some synthetic fibres.

Kishore Belani, owner of Mahal Lamp Shades that's located on AJC Bose Road, Calcutta, agrees that people are more adventurous today, "Besides, with people increasingly shifting to apartments, interior decor has undergone a sea change."

However, you can also light up your life at little cost, as low as Rs 50. Says Belani, "The light in a room must be functional and aesthetic but needn't be expensive". So at Mahal Lamp Shades, prices range from a modest Rs 165 to scale Rs 1 lakh. While bone china is out, wall washers (or uplighters) are in with a clear emphasis on clean lines.

Observes Atul Kumar Bothra, one of the managing partners of Superlite, which is located on Calcutta's Park Street, "Craftsmanship doesn't have a label of 'in' or 'out' since people show an amazing interest in the unusual and exquisite pieces."

Superlite is the leading importer and market distributors of Italian lights. Here too, prices can touch an unbelievable Rs 50 to scale to Rs 1 lakh. There is evidence of Victorian styling in Superlite's lamps.

Whatever the design or where ever it be placed, lamps must adhere to certain safety standards. Lavinder Singh of Decon Lighting, points out the salient features of lamp design, "A lamp should be designed in a manner that there are no sharp edges on its contours. A well-designed lamp", he says, is one that doesn't topple over even if it is tilted at a 27 degree angle.

Trends indicate that lighting for effect is much in vogue. Says Poonam Kalra, "Of late, we find that innumerable people go for false ceilings into which are fitted recessed halogens " Chandeliers, she says, are out while people are opting for clear or coloured glass.

Explains Deepak Kapoor, director, Kapoor Lamps. "Apart from ceiling recessed light fixtures, energy saving lamps with different types of bulbs and halogen tube fittings are a rage — for homes, hotels, offices and shopping complexes "

So, how do you decide what goes where? Poonam Kalra advises, "For a study area use white PL tubes which are efficient and cost effective. The bedroom asks for soft lighting which can be achieved with halogens while the dressing area can use tubes that give yellow light The living room on the other hand demands dramatic lighting "

Keeping customer preferences in mind, the designers are kept busy Hot from the design boards of Decon are the latest Italian products from Targetti Italy A technical collaboration was signed for the production of Structurella low voltage lights Decon's range of downlights is being updated by introducing pre-polished reflector material from Germany for optimum reflectivity and energy saving.

The latest feather in Kapoor Lamps' cap is S&O, a new range of premium lights with internationally acclaimed designs that was launched recently at Kapoor Lamps' Bangalore showroom.

With so much in the market, wouldn't you like to exchange your old lamps for new? ■

ADDITIONAL INPUTS BY AJANTA KRISHNAMURTHY

POPULARLY YOURS

Preference has shifted from the staid blue tube lights of the past to chic and adventurous designs



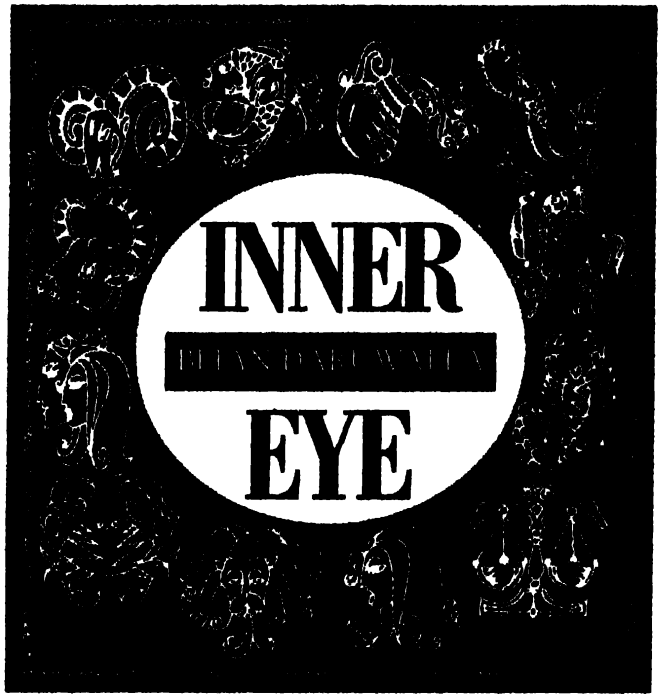
★ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Ganesha says take time by the forelock and make it work for you Challenging time if you are looking for perfection A lot of energy can be devoted to finance, romance, family and work and that's quite a terrific range to run through Children will be a source of joy Tensions on the work front predicted and you need to tackle it calmly

★TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) Quality control will now be imperative if you are in business, sales, production Others are likely to offer help from behind the scenes Travel is a strong possibility "Workers and friends will work their magic from closed doors" for you, Taureans Bigshots spend money for self-gratification and cheap publicity, also charity!

★GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Lay the groundwork and be clear about finances You could well be at the right place at the right time Groups headed by important persons could back you big time If you don't have clout, get someone to bat and bowl for you This is a great time for those who are innovative — and most Geminis are just that Travel is on the cards

★CANCER, (June 21- July 20) The trick, dear Cancerians, is to break through old thinking patterns because Mercury gives one intelligence and a new zest for living Do capitalise on your reputation, or take help to pull off something totally anew It is clearly action time and news, views, letters, calls should make your day A better chapter starts Recognition will come to you in due course Friends are a great source of comfort

★LEO, (July 21- August 21) Your ideas can be airy-fairy but your execution must be perfect You will be in a mood for grandiose schemes Active preparations for travel, publicity, ceremony, collaborations will definitely be made Your individuality will show A person close to your heart will have a change of heart Disappointments are in store for you



★VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) It is high time indeed for new relationships, new things, new tidings, new work Gentle and diplomatic negotiations can improve communications and forge links Loans, funds, joint bank accounts form a foundation the next 23 days Therefore, it is important that you attend to it Work pressures will tell on your health, so take care

★LIBRA, (September 23- October 22) Partnerships and links is the way it will go now Pride and ego can push you to do strange things, unless you are careful and reserved Also check the budget and gauge your financial risks Obviously, you are in a period of total transition and the moves you make in the next three months will decide many things

★SCORPIO, (October 23- November 22) Ganesha claims that job, work, social welfare, sanitation, public health, loans and funds, will take up much of your time. This is a good time for commitments and plans to become firm and more concrete Be your own mystic but rely on others for practical suggestions on a daily basis. Promotion is on the cards and a transfer is in the offing. Health of spouse may be a cause for concern but don't worry.

★SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) Fantastic week! Unexpected misunderstandings and confrontations are possible But so too, are happy alliances, sweet romance, good business and joy by children, specially grandchildren Speculations and game of chance, sports too, will find an admirer and fan in you The home comes in for full attention

★CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) You can keep up with the neighbours, make the necessary changes in your life, and despite the flak and opposition, keep a steady course, have a treat and get your work done Just remember that health will not be very good and you may have to make compromises and adjustments Marriage is very much on the cards.

★AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Good time to move on, be it in career, business or personal relationships Take a chance if you feel inclined enough A journey or a new contract makes you happy in the long run Calls, letters, messages, ads and the media in short will play an important part in your life and you must gear up for it Love is in the air

★PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Buying/selling/leasing/funding/shopping take top priority Do host parties and do make it a point to go for one, if invited Good appearance may cost you a bundle but it is more than worth it It is also time to be introspective and let your intuition decide for you Your dreams and inner thoughts will be quite prophetic. Do not cry unnecessarily over spilt milk.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Is Girl Power on the decline, asks Seema Goswami

The talking point is:
The current status of that all-girl band, The Spice Girls It is now clear that what some of these divas really, really wanted was to self destruct. First, they fired their manager, who, by all accounts, was the driving force behind their success Then Geri Halliwell — Ginger Spice to fans - broke away from the group for undisclosed reasons, reducing its strength to four

Matters went from bad to worse:
When two other members of the band announced that they were going to have babies Melanie Brown (Scary Spice) announced that she was three months pregnant, and planned to marry her boyfriend, dancer Jimmy Gulzar, in a small, private ceremony in her hometown, Leeds Victoria Adams (Posh Spice) was next to proclaim that she was with child. The proud father was England footballer David Beckham (in disgrace after his performance in the recently-concluded World Cup)

Why the hurry?:
Given that these women are all in their early twenties, there was no earthly reason for them to rush into motherhood. Their careers should have been priority at this time, given that the biological clock was not a factor in their decision-making.
And even though the two pregnant Spice Girls insist that child-bearing will not interfere with their careers, it already has. The group has announced that it is looking for two replacements, though it is not clear whether these will be temporary or permanent.

Is pregnancy a bar to being a rock star?:
Well, if you're a star of the Spice Girl variety then it does impose some restrictions After all, you can hardly bop around in a tank top if your stomach is protruding way beyond your bustline And the girlish charm begins to wear a little thin when you have a little girl of your own



Unless the Spice Girls manage to reinvent themselves, they may be just left with the task of bringing up their babies

So, how does Madonna cope?:
By re-inventing herself every time she releases a new album (with some help from *mehndi* artist, Sumita Batra), and getting her body back in shape in record time after the birth of her baby daughter, Lourdes.
But then, Madonna has many advantages Unlike the Spice Girls, she can hold a tune, has a genuine understanding of the music market, and is charismatic enough to sell albums on the strength of her name And she has survived long enough in the music business to be regarded as a sure fire box-office bet The Spice Girls, on the other hand, are widely perceived as a flash-in the pan phenomenon

So, is it all over for the Spice Girls?:
It is certainly beginning to look like it Bands of this ilk have a somewhat limited appeal anyway They are sold on the strength of slick packaging rather than inherent musical talent, and that kind of hype only works for a limited period of time

So, unless the foursome manage to reinvent themselves — and soon — they may just be left with the task of bringing up their babies One way out would be to embark on solo careers — as Ginger Spice is planning to do But for that you need talent, and while the Spice Girls have plenty of attitude (you have only to see them around Prince Charles to be convinced of that), talent is one thing they're conspicuously short of ■

SURVIVAL
Strategies



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

GENERATION NEXT

Q : My father and I used to share quite a good rapport when I was a child, but ever since I have started working, he has been behaving rather strangely with me. I am my parents' only child and have been used to a certain amount of pampering. However, nowadays, my father appears extremely suspicious of any female colleague ringing up at home. He also gets paranoid whenever I go out on tours, or ring up home to say I am going to work late. He tries to advise me on professional matters, issues which he has not much of an idea about since we are from different professions. He gets very upset and acts cold if I don't listen to him. Please tell me how to cope with my situation.

SANJIV CHOUDHURY, CALCUTTA

It is always difficult to let go of the next generation. Your father, who I think is intensely attached to you, can see the process of role reversal beginning in your lives. He is trying to hang on to the child who was his son. He wants to keep his authority, his hold over you, he is in denial about the fact that you are an adult, with a need for privacy and autonomy. The thing to do is breach the new distance between you ever so gently. Go for a walk together, have a beer together, seek his advice on a man-to-man basis. The father-son bond is a very precious one, all the more so, because men are so very shy about communicating their feelings. As you gently steer your relationship to an adult-adult equation from an adult-child one, you will be able to re-establish your earlier bond.

SEX, LIES AND EXPLOITATION

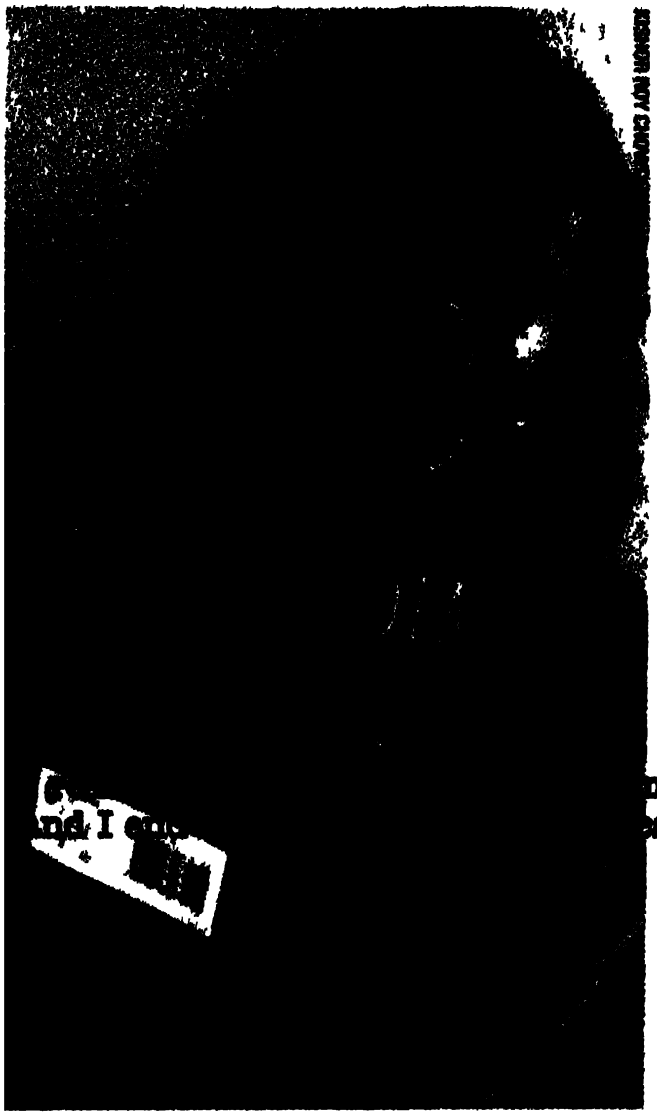
Q : I had an intense relationship with one of my colleagues and we were even planning to get married. I quit my job at his insistence. Soon, however, we developed differences (probably because of my career minded nature), and so we broke up. Meanwhile, he started seeing other girls to get married although we still had a physical relationship (he always kept insisting that we were only good friends). Needless to say, all this caused me a lot of pain. This continued for a year or so, and one day, he called up saying there is nobody quite like me and although his parents have found a girl for him, he wanted to get married to me and I should make up my mind. The next day, I rang up and he told me to forget the whole episode. He wants us to continue as good friends. In spite of everything, I still love him and blame myself for the whole imbroglio. Please tell me how to

A CASE OF PROFESSOR HIGGINS?

I am an ambitious 23-year-old student. We have a professor who is around 50 and has a very good hold over his subject matter. I always study his topics leaving out the rest. Now I realise I have a weakness for him. I have tried to draw his attention in various ways but he behaves as if he is unable to understand. How can I achieve my dual aim — my career on one hand and my professor as my life partner, on the other?

A.T, BURDWAN

Charismatic teachers often have this effect on their students, for, after all, they are opening a new world of ideas to their students. While this is a good recipe for hero-worship, it is quite disastrous for anything further. You are a young girl, this is your first glimpse of a larger world and you have, quite naturally, fixated on this intelligent and likeable male. Do try to get to know him better at a personal level, but I suspect he may be elusive. Don't neglect your other classes, that will be simply against your own interests. As you meet more people, encounter more learning situations, your perspective will change on its own.



lackle this problem. I feel I am in a mess.

REENA MANCHANDA, NEW DELHI

Young lady, you are certainly in a mess. Your generous and trusting nature has led this man (I certainly will not refer to him as your friend) to exploit you, body and soul. It is one thing to be nature and liberated and quite another o be used.

think it is your independent and career-minded nature which both, ttracts him and, simultaneously, puts im off. Tell him firmly that it is time for ou to part ways. Stay off commitments nd relationships for a while, just regain sense of self. The world is full of car- ng and decent men, the right one will come along when the time is ripe.

LOV(ING) THY NEIGHBOUR

Q : I am a 28-year-old man, working in a government organisation. I am in love with a girl who is my next-door neighbour. I recently proclaimed my love for her and she reciprocated. However, the girl's parents got to know about it and opposed the match as they are very

my professor s he teaches

ambitious about their daughter. The girl in question is a very obedient person and she will not go against her parents' wishes. In the meantime, my parents have started searching for a bride for me. I understand the hopelessness of my so-called love affair but at the same time, if I go in for an arranged marriage, I feel that I will not be able to love my wife and this will be unfair on her. I also hope against hope that some day, my neighbour's parents will be able to accept me. Please advise.

JYOTI, TEZPUR

It is certainly not a good idea for you to get married It would be unfair on the girl as your heart is so obviously set on your neighbour. Persist in trying to persuade her parents of your decent and honourable intentions, but give the whole thing time. Love can be a very transient emotion and it is essential to test your feelings. If, in a year or so, you still feel intensely about the whole thing, broach the subject again. But you are quite right in resisting an arranged marriage for yourself at this stage, it would certainly be unfair to all concerned.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Q : I am an 18-year-old man hailing from a fairly well-to-do family. The problem with me is that I stammer. I am the subject of mockery among my friends. I had an affair but that too broke up because of this problem. My aim in life is to become an Army officer but I realise that not only this, but all other avenues are closed for me. I am presently preparing for the National Defence Academy exams but I know very well that I won't succeed due to my problem. I feel like committing suicide as I cannot converse with people and have no career options. Can I be cured? Do I have a right to live? Please help me.

RAVI S, CALCUTTA

Stammering is an emotional barrier more than a social one, it reflects your lack of confidence and self-esteem, as is even demonstrated in your letter If an intelligent young man from a well-to-do family were to contemplate suicide because of something as superficial as a stammer, what would happen to all those who are struggling with much graver, even insurmountable disabilities and handicaps? As for your friends and girlfriend, they seem a singularly insensitive and worthless lot It is quite possible, however, that you too tend to over-react to people's imagined reactions to you. I have found that there are specific cues and words that cause panic reaction and precipitate a stammer What you have to do is unlearn your speech patterns and begin all over again You could try a speech therapy course, if you can access one Good luck and keep in touch. I would like to stay informed about your progress ■

MIXED Bag



MANGAL KUMAR

OH YE OF LITTLE FAITH!

● Remember the Ganesh miracle that took place barely three years ago when the elephant-headed God drank up all the milk that was offered to him by devotees? Controversy raged as to whether this was a *bona fide* miracle or a mere stunt. And there has been no conclusive answer to that question despite the passage of time.

Now, the BBC is planning to examine all aspects of the Ganesh miracle in its series titled *Mysteries of Science*. The episode on the milk miracle includes, among other things, a five-minute interview with discredited godman Chandra Swami, who claims all credit for this event.

The 13-episode serial, to be telecast from January next year, features critical exposes of some of the world's best-known miracles. Among these, three are from India, the milk miracle and the secrets of levitation (flying while lying) and the great Indian rope trick. Other miracles that the series seeks to expose are about the Shroud of Turin (claimed to be that of Jesus Christ) and the Weeping Madonna (who supposedly shed tears of blood).

Fair and much more lovely

So what's new in the business of selling dreams? Well, to start with, Fem Care Pharma Limited (remember Fem, Fem *se gori, gori?*) has come out with a revised version of its bleach — the Fem Perfumed Blue Bleach. Billed as an advanced bleach, the product is said to work from inside the skin. That is, it penetrates the skin and bleaches the roots of the hair and matches its colour to the tone of the skin. Smart isn't it?

And that's not all. What's a product that doesn't have a scientific link to it? The new perfumed Fem's USP is that it even controls the release of nascent oxygen to ensure that the bleaching effects last for a much longer time than a normal bleach and gives one that extra fairness. Just apply it and keep it on for 25-30 minutes.



Real miracle stuff this. And what's more, it comes for Rs 29.80 (for a pack of 25 gm) and Rs 74.40 (for a pack of 100gm). What more can you ask for?

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: To add colour to your cheeks,

Om Shanti

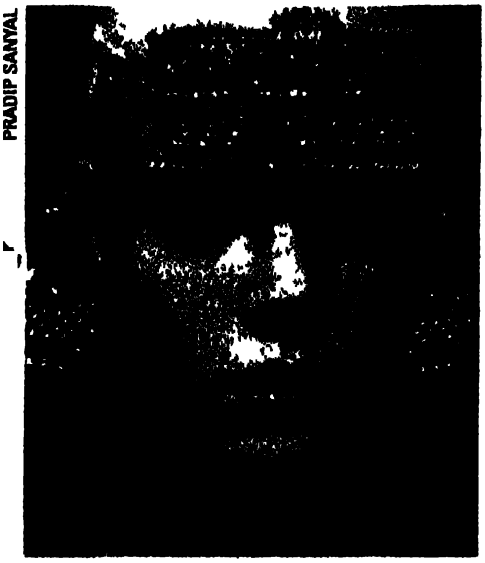
Shanti, Swabhimaan, Hasratein... while compulsive couch potatoes will rattle off the names easily, many others will string together an episode here and there from each and attempt to recall a story. But even as the plots of soaps become more and more bizarre, UTV, the producers of *Shanti*, have planned a talk show, *Aap ki Shanti*, slated to go on air on September 21 on DD-I.



"Shanti symbolises a woman of today who has made it on her own in the big bad world," says Nirav Vaidya, executive producer, UTV. "From the scores of letters that we have received over the last four years since the serial has been on air, it has been

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS GOLD

After the launch of the World Gold Council's (WGC) *Design Resource Book*, it's time for jewellery retailers to incorporate and interprit some of the book's designs in their creations. So, with much assistance from the WGC, Indian jewellers recently unveiled the Fusion range of jewellery that incorporates unusual patterns and motifs in gold ornaments.



PRADIP SANYAL

The Fusion range offers you themes inspired by Indo-regional, Indo-Asian and Indo-Western influences. All designs are based on the *Design Resource Book*, 1998-99 (Rs 1,700) which G. S. Pillai of the WGC says "are meant to unleash the imagination of consumers, retailers, craftsmen and designers."

The jewellers who crafted pieces for the Fusion range include some of the big names in the business — Jetha Bhai Zaveri, Khanna Jewellers, Bholasons Jewellers and Sant Ram Mangat Ram.

For those who came in late, the WGC — which operates in Calcutta, Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai — is an international non-profit organisation funded by leading gold mining companies around the world. The WGC works tirelessly in inspiring new gold jewellery designs and upgrading product quality. Besides, the Council acts as an agent of change in the markets that it operates in by inducing lasting-effect structural changes in gold markets.

a finger on your lipstick and blend it on your cheeks



clear that many women from across the country identify with her grit and ambition *Aap ki Shanti* is an attempt to give these anonymous people a platform " No celebrities or wannabes here, assures Vaidya

For Mandira Bedi, who plays the title role in the serial, this is "an opportunity to do something new and exciting" Says Bedi, "Acting a role is easy This is much more difficult since unlike acting out a persona in front of a camera, one has to deal with real people from real life here "

Is the show a mere appendage to the main serial, or an avenue for Mandira to dip her finger in another creative pie? "I have an open perspective on this, but the best part in all this is to meet all those people who have been inspired by the serial," she says

INDIAN INK

● Who said only the Chinese were good at their art—those delicate paintings one comes across in wall hangings or paper lanterns? A Ramachandran has honed the skill of drawing with Chinese ink on rice paper to perfection Depicting flowers, foliage, birds and often human characters, his works—exhibited at Gallerie Ganesha—came as a refreshing surprise

The drawings displayed a very interesting fusion of bold shapes, delicately defined by lines of varying tonal strength, in a spontaneous handling of brush and ink media "They were compositions created with a freedom of mind to render the spirit of things in a remarkable range of shades of black ink," says P N Mago



The delicate withered effect on the absorbent rice paper gave the drawings a mystic charm A touch of colour here and there, enlivened the pictorial effect, making his works a beautiful visual experience

The process of Ramachandran's artistic development is a synthesis of art and observation The tumultuous and fragmentary impressions of his sensibility have unleashed a vision of startling symbols of life and dreams His paintings have a dualism hard to miss they are Indian in theme, but the stylistic treatment is oriental Chinese—giving each of his works a strong identity

RASOI

The food column



All for Aroma

Jiggs Kalra on some aphrodisiac delicacies

Traditionally, it is believed—not only in Homeopathy—that like cures like, which explains the penchant for offals In the biological world, arousal is intriguingly associated with olfactory sensations The aphrodisiac delicacies prepared with offals are often fortified with aromatics that are guaranteed to restore lost vim and vigour What could be more effective than the seductive secretions of the musk deer? The poor creature has been hunted to the verge of extinction What delights us most with Team Rasoi's — my team-mate is Dr Pushpesh Pant, whose knowledge of the subject is second to none— recipes is that with clues by Hakeem Safdar Nawab, we were able to find a more than suitable substitute *Mushq e daana*

This and the other recipe can be enjoyed at The Kandahar, at The Oberoi Bombay, where our other team mates Chefs Raminder Malhotra, Manish Law and Mohammed Ilyas– are creating potent repasts

Dhingri Shabnam



DHINGRI SHABNAM

INGREDIENTS

- 200g/7oz **Raw bananas (boil,cool, peel and grate)**
- 150g/5 oz **Potatoes (boil, cool, peel and grate)**
- 150g/5 oz ***Paneer*** **(grate)**
- 3g/1 tsp ***Amchoor*****/mango powder**
- 1 5g/1/2 tsp **Red chilli powder**
- 1 5g/1/2 tsp ***Chotti Elaichi*****/green cardamom powder**
- 0 75g/1/4 tsp ***Daalcheeni*****/cinnamon powder**
- 0 75g/1/4 tsp ***Javitri*****/mace powder**
- **Salt**
- *Desi ghee*/clarified butter to deep fry *kofta*

The Filling

- 60g/2 oz ***Dhingri*** **mushrooms**
- 60g/2oz **Button mushrooms (chop)**
- 15ml/1 tbs ***Desi ghee*****/clarified butter**
- 10g/1" piece **Ginger (finely chop)**
- 2 **Green chillies (seed and finely chop)**
- 30g/1oz **Cheese (processed/cheddar; grate)**
- 2 5g/1 tbs ***Taaza Pudhina*****/mint (chop)**
- 15g/1/2 oz **Coconut (remove brown skin and grate)**
- 12 **Roasted Pistachio (peel and halve)**
- 15g/1/2 oz **Toasted almond flakes**
- 6 **Dried Plums (remove pits and chop)**

The Gravy

- 50g/1/4 cup ***Desi ghee*****/clarified butter**
- 20g/3$^{1/2}$ **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 5g/1tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 4 ***Chotti Elaichi*****/green cardamom**
- 4 ***Lavang*****/cloves**
- 2 ***Motti Elaichi*****/black cardamom**
- 250g/1 cup **Yoghurt**
- 9g/1 tbs ***Dhania*****/coriander powder**
- 3g/1 tsp **Red chilli powder**
- 1 5g/1/2 tsp ***Haldee*****/turmeric powder**
- 80g/4 tbs **Fried onion paste**
- 20g/1$^{1/2}$ tbs **Çashew nut paste**
- 1 litre/4$^{1/4}$ cups **Vegetable stock***
- **Salt**
- **A generous pinch of *Mushq-e-daana* powder**
- **A pinch of *Zeera*/cumin powder**
- **A pinch of *Chotti Elaichi*/green cardamom powde**
- **A pinch of *Lavang*/clove powder**
- **A pinch of *Jaiphal*/nutmeg powder**
- **A pinch of *Saunf*/fennel powder**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 2: 15 HOURS
COOKING TIME: 45 MINUTES

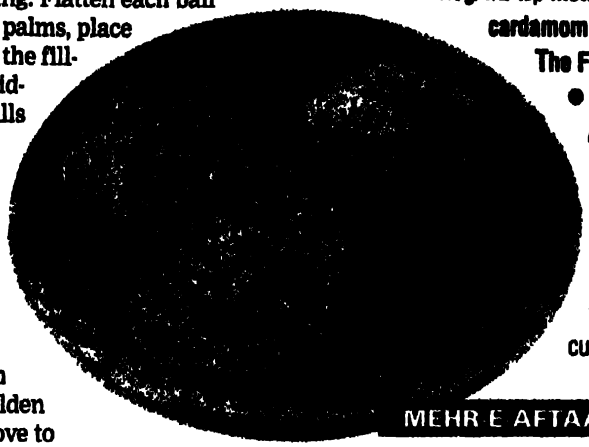
PREPARATION

- The *kofta* mixture: Mix all the remaining ingredients, divide into 12 equal portions and make balls.
- The Filling: Remove stems, wash *dhingri* mushrooms in running water to remove grit, drain, soak in lukewarm water for 15 minutes, drain and chop.

Heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add ginger and green chillies, stir over medium

heat for a minute, add mushrooms and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates. Remove, cool, add the remaining ingredients, mix well and divide into 12 equal portions.

- The Stuffing: Flatten each ball between the palms, place a portion of the filling in the middle, make balls again and shape into ovals.
- The *kofta*: Heat *ghee* in a *kadhai*/wok and deep fry over medium heat until golden brown Remove to absorbent paper to drain the excess fat.
- The Gravy. Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander, red chillies and turmeric, and whisk to homogenise.



COOKING

- Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add the garlic and ginger pastes, stir, add whole spices and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir-in yoghurt mixture, return *handi*/pan to heat and *bhunno*/stir-fry until specks of fat begin to appear on the surface. Now add fried onion paste, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides, add cashew paste and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides. Then add vegetable stock and salt, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer until gravy is of medium thin consistency. Remove and pass the gravy through fine mesh soup strainer or muslin into a separate *handi*/pan. Return gravy to heat, add the fried *kofta* and simmer until the gravy is of medium thick sauce consistency (approximately five minutes). Sprinkle *zarraqoosh*, cumin, cardamom, cloves, nutmeg and fennel, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning.

Mehr-e-Aftaab

INGREDIENTS

The *Kofta*

- 600g/1 lb 5 oz ***Kheema*/kid/ lamb mince (twice minced)**
- **60g/2 oz Kid/lamb fat (chop)**
- **10g/1" piece Ginger (chop)**
- **2 Green chillies (seed and chop)**
- **Salt**
- **3g/1 tsp *Zeera*/cumin powder**
- **1.5g/1/2 tsp *Motil elaichi*/black cardamom powder**

The Filling

- **8 *Kapoora*/sweetbreads**
- **8 *Kiri*/kid/lamb udders**
- **180m 3/4 cups Milk**
- **30ml/2 tbs Brandy**
- **25g/2 tbs *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **30g/1 oz Onions (finely chop)**
- **4 flakes Garlic (finely chop)**
- **Salt**
- **8 Eggs (boil, cool separate yolks and mash; discard whites)**
- **1.25g/1/2 tsp *Shahi zeera*/black cumin seeds**
- **0.25g/1/2 tsp *Zaafraan*/saffron (sun dry and crush flakes)**
- **30g/1 oz Cheese (processed/cheddar; grate)**

The Gravy

- **50g/1/4cup *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **3g/1 1/2 tsp *Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- **250g/9 oz Onions (finely chop)**
- **15g/2 1/2 tsp Ginger paste (strain)**
- **5g/1tsp Garlic paste (strain)**
- **9g/1tbs *Dhania*/coriander powder**
- **1.5g/1/2 tsp *Haldee*/turmeric powder**
- **1.5g/1/2 tsp Red chilli powder**
- **225g/8 oz Tomato puree (fresh)**
- **1 litre/4 1/4 cups Clear kid/lamb stock**
- **Salt**
- **9g/1 tbs Black pepper (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)**
- **A generous pinch of *Mushq-e-daana* powder**
- **A pinch of *Shahi zeera*/black cumin powder**
- **A pinch of *Motil Elaichi*/black cardamom powder**
- **A pinch of *Lavang*/clove powder**
- **A pinch of *Javitri*/mace powder**
- **45ml/3 tbs Coconut cream**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

PREPARATION

- The mince: Mix all the ingredients, except cumin and black cardamom, and mince again. Remove, add the spices, mix well, divide into 16 equal portions and make balls.
- The filling: Boil milk, cool and stir-in brandy. Remove the sinews of the *kapoora* and *kiri*, clean, wash, pat dry roughly chop and reserve in milk and brandy overnight in the refrigerator. Melt *ghee* in a frying pan, add onion and garlic and saute over medium heat until onions are translucent and glossy. Then add *kapoora*, *kiri* and salt, *bhunno*/stir-fry for 2-3 minutes. Remove, cool, add the remaining ingredients, mix well and divide into 16 equal portions.
- The Stuffing: Flatten each ball between the palms, place a portion of the filling in the middle, make balls again and refrigerate to firm up the meat (approx 15 minutes).

COOKING

- Melt *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add cumin seeds, stir over medium heat until they begin to pop, add onions, saute until light golden, add ginger and garlic pastes, and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the onions are golden. Add coriander, turmeric and red chillies (dissolved in 60 ml/1/4 cup of water), *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates, add tomato puree and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides. Then add stock and salt, bring to a boil, reduce to a low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until reduced by a third. Now add *kofta*, bring to a boil, reduce to medium heat, cover and simmer, swirling the gravy with a *pooni*/perforated spoon twice or thrice without touching the *kofta* until cooked (approx 6-7 minutes). Add pepper, *chaat chabila*, black cumin, cardamom, cloves and mace, stir and then simmer for a couple of minutes. Stir-in coconut cream, bring to just under a boil, remove and adjust the seasoning. ■

CYBER

PANDAL-HOPPING ON THE NET

Samita Bhatia catches up on the Puja spirit while surfing the Internet

The internet takes great pleasure in welcoming you to celebrate the Durga Puja in Calcutta. There are a host of sites that proliferate during the Pujas, helping you bring home the colour from Puja pandals, the streets and the markets of Calcutta. Some even offer succinct explanations, perhaps for foreigners who log in: "The Pujas are the single-most important celebration in the city's calendar. A time when the entire city comes alive to the beat of the *dhak* and *dhol*."

It is also "a time when people step out in their Puja finery as they pandal-hop and enjoy themselves." We all know that pandal hopping begins in earnest on *Shasti* and goes on through *Saptami, Ashtami, Navami* — culminating in the grand finale on *Bijoya Dashami*. But did you know that you could do it on the net, without leaving your desk?

To make your Pujas as enjoyable as last year, India on Internet has once again tied up with the Calcutta Police to bring you road maps and pictures of the pandals. These, apparently, claim the site, were a bit hit with Calcuttans the last Pujas. So the site once again supplies motorists and pedestrians with detailed computerised traffic maps and puja travel planners.

Some useful sites:

http://calcuttapolice.allindia.com/durgapuja/htm

From Calcutta police come handy road guides to tide you over the Pujas. On the Calcutta Police Kali Puja Guide you can click on 'Puja maps' for south, central and north Calcutta and Kabitirtha.

Fast routes to get you to the airport, Howrah Station and Sealdah Station are also charted out for your convenience. There's a pandal tour planner for pedestrians of north, central and south Calcutta.

The maps have been jointly designed by the Calcutta police and Computer Engineers India. You can print the maps and planners and refer to them as guides to visit the maximum number of Puja pandals in the shortest possible time.

There's plenty more. The site offers reviews of acclaimed Bengali films like *Dahan* and *Hatath Brishti*. You can also read through interviews with big names in the Mumbai film industry, and get a lowdown on the scenes in the pandals and streets of Calcutta.



http://parallel.park.org/india/Durga/dp_index.au

The site gives detailed analysis of why we celebrate the Pujas: "It's time for Durga Puja, a celebration of the ten-armed goddess of fertility and plants and the third embodiment of the Devi — Durga." The legend of Durga is woven intricately — from the Birth of Durga to The Death of Mahishasura.

The site also details the creative industry that the Pujas unleash. Before their auspicious, though brief, reign in Calcutta's pandals, the idols are created by sculptors called *futias*. The construction of most sculptures, explains the site, follow this basic progression:

* Make basic parts by binding straw and bamboo; tie together parts to form skeletons; mix clay and paddy husk and layer on to skeleton; put a final layer of pure Ganges clay; polish, paint and so on.

The site also affords a tour of the workshop with pictures of craftsmen at work.

http://www.allindia.com/cuisine/durga/thali.htm

Log in for some recipes of Bengal's traditional fare during the Pujas. This section is dedicated to dishes that one can toss up during the Pujas with detailed recipes alongside. The site has tied up with big names in the hospitality industry for the section.

http://wwwwestbengal.com/puja97

Besides giving you the chance to visit your favourite Puja pandals in and around Calcutta, the site brings you a photo-feature on shopping for the Pujas. Thema-Tech camera captures different moods of Puja shopping from Gariahat to Shyambazar.

ALSO GO TO

- **http://www.flash.net/~chatterj/ba/1996.html3**
- **http://www.westbengal.com/arts/painting/lamereoct97**

IN RELATION

PROTIMA AND THE BEDI CLAN

Seema Goswami examines the ties that bound them

So, did Protima Gauri Bedi have a premonition of her death? Her friends certainly think so, pointing to her statements in which she spoke of giving up her body to the mountains which she loved so much. But for someone who was preparing for death, Bedi was, by all accounts, amazingly full of life as she embarked on her pilgrimage to Mansarowar.

But that's what marked Protima through the years: her zest for life. Whether it was as a young Bengali student in Bombay's St Xavier's College — where she broke hearts with her ugly-beautiful good looks — or as the rebel who streaked across the beach, scandalising a still-conservative Indian society, Bedi always managed to make waves. Even when she was married to Kabir Bedi, she raised quite a few eyebrows with her statements on free love — not quite what people expected from a young mother of two.



ARVIND TEJU

The mountains claimed her for their own, leaving the Bedi family and Protima's innumerable friends behind

What the children — Pooja and Siddharth — made of their bohemian mother is a matter for speculation. They may well have cringed in embarrassment when their friends (from a far more conventional domestic set-up) visited. Or they may have revelled in the love that Protima — always a demonstrative person — showered so unconditionally on them.

Did that bizarre childhood — populated with several step-parents, multiple sets of step-children, a largely absentee father, and a mother who lived in the headlines — scar them? It's difficult to tell. Children react to a similar set of circumstances in such vastly different ways, that it's near impossible to decide which experiences have marred and which have made them.

And with the Bedi kids, it's doubly difficult, given how differently the two of them turned out. While Pooja flowered into an actress (though she never really made it beyond the gossip columns, thanks to her torrid affair with Aditya Pancholi, which ended among allegations that the actor had raped her maid), she gave up on films after a couple of years to settle down to happy domesticity with husband Farhan and her baby daughter. She also ran a bedroom linen business on the side, and wrote a book on getting back into shape after pregnancy. All in all, a successful transition from bimbo to a woman of substance.

Siddharth had no such luck, though. His strong bond with Protima wasn't enough to prevent him from descending into the murky depths of schizophrenia. He was in and out of treatment, but never quite conquered the disease that shadowed him through his short life. His suffering came to an end only when he took his own life, in order to escape the demons that haunted him.

Protima was devastated — as was the rest of the family — but rationalised her son's death by telling herself that for him it was a release from the pain that had made his life hell. But her health suffered after this trauma, and in an attempt to simplify her life, Bedi gave over charge of her pet project, Nrityagram, to an able lieutenant, and decided to spend some time in the mountains to rejuvenate her being.

But the mountains claimed her for their own, leaving the Bedi family and Protima's innumerable friends behind to mourn her passing. The most poignant picture in the days following her death was of a distraught Pooja clinging on to her tearful father at a memorial service to commemorate Protima. The only survivors of a family torn apart by strife and death, they seemed to be holding on to each other for dear life.

In time, however, Kabir will go back to his life abroad, and Pooja will have to deal with her grief on her own. And her only solace will lie in the fact that her mother does live on — in her daughter, Aalia.■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 30-year-old woman. My problem is that whenever I get my upper lip or chin area threaded, the skin becomes rather coarse. I have also tried waxing but it does not help. Is there any solution to this problem?

SAPNA MUKHERJEE, CALCUTTA

It is quite obvious that wherever you are getting the waxing and threading done from, is not being done properly. Try and go to a professional who knows her job and does it well.

After removing the hair from the particular area, I would suggest that you massage the area with a little moisturiser or honey and rub an ice cube over the area. This will prevent any coarseness.

I am an 18-year-old student suffering from sunburns. I also have a lot of pimples as well as acne on my skin. Please tell me what to do.

PREM VARDHAN DWIVEDI, BIHAR

It is very essential that you keep your skin clean and oil-free at all times. For this, I would suggest that you wipe your skin with ice cold rose water to which you have added half a teaspoon of powdered camphor. Make a powder of the following ingredients that will help the acne as well as soothe the sunburn — sandalwood powder, fullers earth, ten ground cloves, neem leaf paste. Mix all these with cold rose water and apply a thick paste all over the face and neck. Leave on till completely dry and wash off with ice cold rose water. Try taking an umbrella or wearing a cap whenever you are out in the sun. It is important that you have a clean stomach and avoid sweets, aerated drinks and heavy gravy items. Drink at least 10 to 12 glasses of water a day and eat as much of raw foods as you can.

I am 20 years old and my problem is that I am terribly underweight. I do follow a healthy diet plan but to no avail. Please advise.

SHARBANI RAY, PATNA

Its strange how food just does not seem to affect some people. I would suggest that you start taking a high-protein diet, lots of dairy products, lean meats, dry fruits, honey, and an ample supply of carbohydrates. A medical check-up, including a stool check-up, would be advisable especially for the presence of any worms. Start taking health tonics which are excellent for the body and made from nourishing natural ingredients. I am sure that if you are regular about your lifestyle, there will be a difference in your weight within two weeks.

How does drinking water help

For all those of you who are experiencing hair loss during the monsoon months, add castor oil to your normal hair oil and massage the scalp. This will prevent hair loss as well as thicken your hair —naturally



in maintaining optimum health? What is the advantage of wiping one's face with cold rose water? I would also like to know the correct temperature of the water for washing one's face. Kindly advise.

RAHUL, CALCUTTA

I could go on and on about the advantages of drinking lots of water. Water flushes out the toxins in the body and cleanses the system. It also prevents constipation and helps in bowel movement. Drinking water also helps maintain a clear skin and flawless complexion, it clears pimples, acne and dark circles. Rose water is a natural cleanser and toner. It is excellent for all skin types and feels very refreshing on the skin.The correct temperature for washing one's face varies according to one's skin type. Never wash your face with hot water. For normal and dry skin types, tepid water is the best whereas for oily skin types, I would recommend fridge water as this helps to close up pores and thus avoid grime and dirt from getting into the pores.

I am a 23-year-old working woman and have to continuously work in front of the computer. As a result of this, my eyes feel very heavy and I also experience pain on my shoulders. Please tell me what to do?

PRIYA, CUTTACK

Whoever said that we humans shall benefit from scientific development did not realise that we will also be most harmed by it. Try and avoid long periods of sitting in front of the computer and while sitting, do some simple neck stretching exercises like rotating the head from left to right. Also splash ice cold rose water in the eyes to soothe them.
It would be great if you could massage the eyes with cucumber juice ice cubes which can be very easily made by grating cucumber and freezing them in an ice tray. If done regularly, you will see a difference within two weeks.

Please tell me some natural ways to keep the ears and the region around it clean as this is a very neglected part of the body.

S. MITTAL, CALCUTTA

Wipe the area with cold rose water daily. Also the area behind the ears and the neck can be cleansed with a natural exfoliating scrub made from rice powder, gramflour, chokker and rose water. Mix the ingredients to a thick paste, apply on the area and scrub in a gentle, rotating manner. Wash off with cold water. You will be the owner of clean, healthy ears.

erwise a fair complexioned girl and my skin glows. Please suggest a remedy.

SAVITA SHARMA, CALCUTTA

You could be using a particular brand of lipstick which is causing a reaction. Also remember that darker shades make the skin look darker. Lips have no pore and it is thus important to remember that they also need moisturising. Apply vaseline or a rich moisturising cream. You can even apply almond oil to the lips and it is better to apply this at night. Apply the following pack thrice a week for a month and you will see the difference — three ground almonds, four teaspoon fresh cream and the juice of one lemon. Apply on lips and leave on for 15 minutes, wash off first with milk and then with water. You will see the results within three weeks.

TO TREAT CHIPPED NAILS

Include lots of dairy products such as cheese, *paneer* and yoghurt in your diet. You can also rub glycerine and lemon peel on your nails to make them stronger



I am a 23-year-old girl with an oily complexion. I have acne on my forehead but do not have it anywhere else. Please suggest a remedy.

SEEMA GUPTA, CALCUTTA

Check to see whether you have any dandruff. It is most probable that you have dandruff and this is resulting in acne on the forehead. Wipe your face with cold rose water several times a day.
I would suggest that you also treat the dandruff side by side.Oil your hair with warm coconut oil and then apply the juice of one lemon and steam your hair. Wash hair only after a minimum of two hours. Henna your hair once every ten days as this will help to reduce the dandruff. A healthy diet is always reflected in healthy hair. So, start now with a balanced diet, lots of water and a regular exercise programme.

I have very dark lips. I am oth-

I am an 18-year-old man. I have yellow teeth and eat *pan* regularly. I cannot avoid the *pan* but would like very much to lighten the colour of my teeth. I do brush my teeth regularly. Please advise.

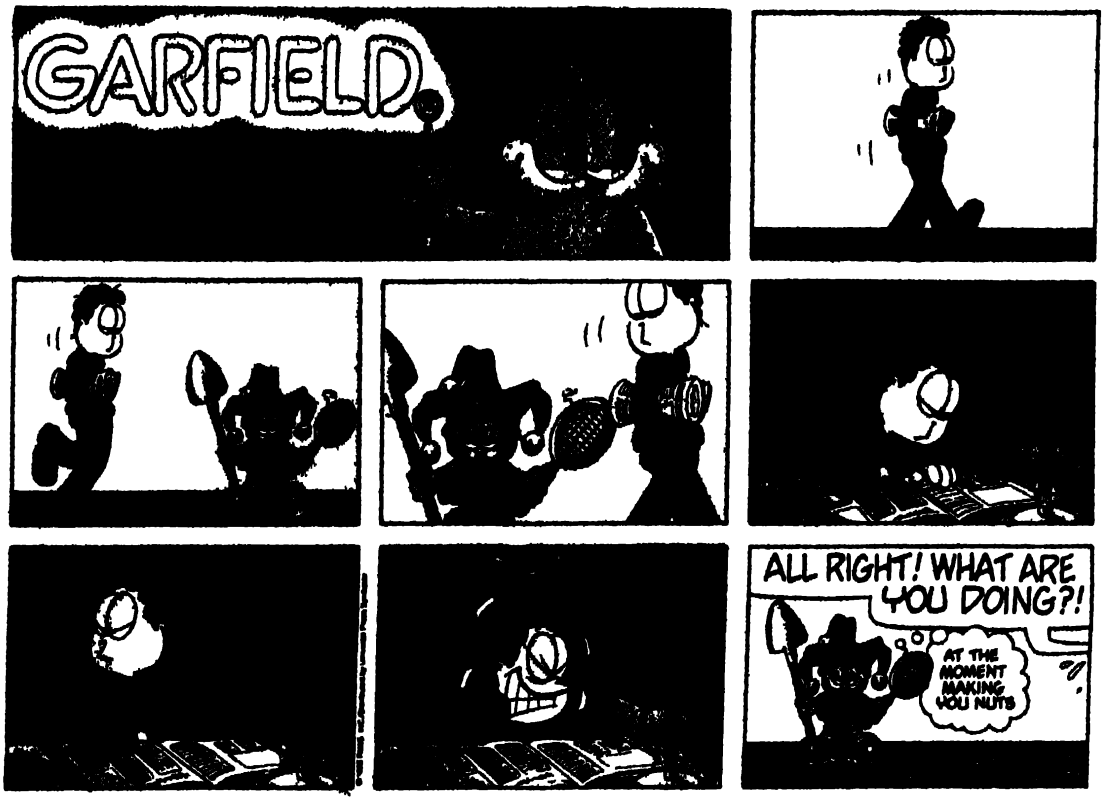
SANJAY SINGH, CALCUTTA

Since you are a *pan* lover, I know that you cannot be weaned away from it. Take care of it by brushing it twice — morning and night. Also mix three tablespoons bicarbonate of soda with two tablespoons salt, add some ground lemon or orange peel and use as a tooth powder daily for three weeks. You will see your teeth changing colour. ■

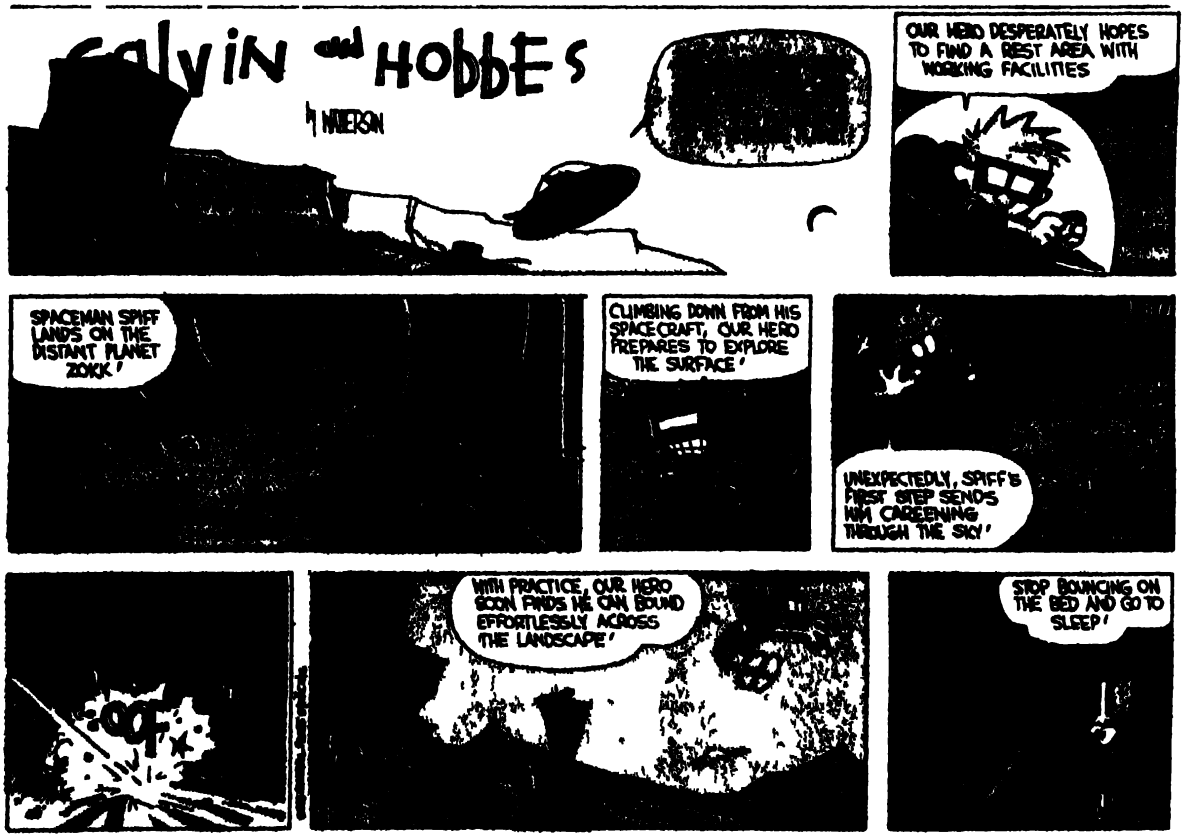
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC-201	0715	1, 2 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1345	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC-201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	0950	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201 *	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-856	0855	2, 6	IC-732 *	1810	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-858	1500	2, 6
AI-308	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
SHIRAZ					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal***

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1100	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
Up	Time		Time	Dn
2311	10-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	10-20	Amritsar Mail	7-55	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun. Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	10-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep. Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.	12-50	2306
2307	20-55	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2319	6-45	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2320
3074	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3073
3045	22-50	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.. Tues., Fri. & Sat.	09-30	3046
3049	23-50	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	3050
3047	15-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	3048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3037	7-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	19-15	3038
3055	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3056
3057	19-30	Amritsar Express	16-45	3058
3059	19-30	Kalinga Express	11-35	3060
3061	21-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3062
3063	21-00	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	5-00	3064
3065	7-45	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3066
3067	7-45	Coalfield Express	10-00	3068
3069	7-45	Asansol Express	9-45	3070
3071	7-45	Danapur Express	9-30	3072
3073	7-45	Jamalpur Express	9-15	3074
3075	7-45	Santhiniketan Express	16-45	3076
3077	7-45	Rampurhat Express	21-25	3078
1163	7-45	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs..; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1164
3079	7-45	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	3080
3081	7-45	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	9-55	3082
1165	7-45	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1166

Sealdah

3001	10-15	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-45	3002
3003	20-00	Darjeeling Mail	7-55	3004
3005	10-20	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	13-15	3006
3007	20-55	Kanchanjunga Express	4-40	3008
3009	6-45	Gaur Express	21-10	3010
3011	17-00	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	10-45	3012
3013	7-45	Kather Express	9-55	3014
3015	7-45	Jammu-Tawi Express	9-55	3016
3017	7-45	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	9-55	3018
3019	7-45	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	9-55	3020
3021	7-45	Ganga Sagar (Darbhanga) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	9-55	3022

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
Up	Time		Time	Dn
8005	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	8006
8007	19-30	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	9-30	8008
2809	13-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2810
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8001	20-15	Ahmedabad Express	9-45	8002
8003	19-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	15-55	8004
2841	13-15	Coromandel (Channai) Express via Cuttack	17-30	2842
2703	7-35	Falaknama (Secunderabad) Express	19-30	2704
8015	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-30	8016
8011	5-00	Jaipal (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8009	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	9-00	8010
8013	21-25	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-50	8014
8017	21-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	6-20	8018
8019	19-25	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	9-00	8020
2021	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-10	2022
2703	7-35	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	19-15	2704
8017	16-40	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	11-35	8018
2479	23-50	Tirupati Express	4-00	2480
1089	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr.: Tuesday & Sunday	5-15	1090
2421	17-00	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	10-35	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-45	2422
8029	09-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	09-30	8030
8027	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only	13-45	8027
8023	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	13-45	8023
8024	09-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	09-30	8024
8024	23-55	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	8023
8025	09-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	09-30	8026
8026	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	8025

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).

THE Best



The cup that refreshes comes in many flavours, says **Trina Mukherjee**

TETE-A-TEA



CUP THAT CHEERS
Indians like to drink it in so many different ways: with milk or without, with lemon or with spices; the choice is endless

It was called a 'divine healer' by the Chinese emperor Shen Nung. According to Japanese mythology, it grew out of Buddha's eyelids when he cut them off to stay awake and meditate. And, of course, no Bengali *adda* session is complete without it. No, we're not discussing some miracle drug like ginseng or even Viagra. We're just tracing the legendary origins of your humble cup of tea.

Tea had its genesis in China and its origins can be traced back to around BC 2737. Emperor Shen Nung was resting when he saw some wind-swept tea leaves drop into a boiling cauldron. Intrigued by the aroma, he tasted the concoction and discovered that it made for a nice beverage. Wild tea could also be found in many parts of Assam as far back as the 4th century. So it is quite possible that tea drinking in India is as old as in China.

So, the next time you sip your *garam cha* or *masala chai*, don't forget to thank *t'u* —as the Chinese originally called tea (meaning 'sow-thistle'). It was only during the T'ang dynasty (620-907 AD) when the word '*cha*' came into being and travelled to India, Japan, Persia and Russia.

The Japanese take their tea very seriously. Teaism (tea making and tea drinking) had acquired deep religious and ceremonial flavours in Japan by the 15th century. The tea-room was set apart and decorated with shrubs and flowers for this purpose.

After the Dutch imported tea to Europe, England took to it in a big way. By the 17th century it had become part of social ritual and English ladies used to attend tea parties, each carrying her own tea cup, saucer and a spoon! The merchants of the East India Company realised the lucre involved in the tea trade as early as the 17th century and began tea cultivation in earnest. By the mid-19th century they had managed to monopolise the export-import trade in India and China.

Previously, the native Indian population had known tea as a vegetable food or made infusions of it. The early British tea planters grew both Chinese tea and the indigenous varieties on the hills of Assam, Darjeeling and the Nilgiris.

Now, from history to matters more scien'tea'fic. The Chinese are not exaggerating when they sing paeans to *cha*. Green tea has a

SOUMITRA CHATTERJEE

Actor

I prefer tea with little sugar and occasionally with a dash of lemon. I am quite fond of Makaibari tea which has a good flavour. I have 10-15 cups a day, so there's no scope of being choosy about the crockery. Going by the practical difficulties, I make do with whatever is available



DOLLY ROY

Tea taster

I am very fussy about my tea. I follow the five golden rules while preparing it. Take fresh water and bring to a boil. Warm the teapot. Add 1 tsp per person and 1 for the pot. Brew for five minutes. First pour milk and then tea. I like my tea to be served in bone china

lot more to it than just aroma and taste. It has as much water-soluble Vitamin B and C as lemon or liver. Epidemiological studies have revealed that adequate consumption of green tea may prevent cancer in humans.

Ordinary tea, however, doesn't have any such advantage to it. On the other hand, one has to keep in mind the caffeine content (30-60 mg per cup) when gulping down cups and cups of it. Excess caffeine (over 200 mg) content may lead to sleeping problems, restlessness and other nervous disorders.

Today India is the largest producer of tea in the world, and had a relatively good run till the Nineties. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union in '93-'94, tea prices crashed in June '94 causing many tea factories to close down. Adding to the Russian problem was stiff competition from other tea-producing countries like China, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia.

Now, India is struggling to keep abreast of her competitors. "We're definitely going down," observes P.K. Bose, MD, Warren Tea Company. Bose feels that despite the global shortage last year and good export figures (206-216 million kg), India is finding it difficult to keep pace with the production target. "The crop scenario is better and though it is too early to predict, we should come close to 830 million kg"—again way below the Ninth Plan target of 1,000 million kgs.

What has really hit the tea industry hard is the off-today/on-tomorrow government policies. Says Pawan Khanna, Chief Buyer, Brooke Bond-Lipton, "There has been a 50 per cent increase in value-added export (a part of imported tea which is re-exported after value addition) over the last three years. But the newly introduced 8 per cent excise duty on tea will really hurt the industry."



In 1993, excise duty on tea was abolished by Dr Manmohan Singh but was reintroduced by the present BJP government. Though the final Budget exempted packet tea upto 100 gms from the duty, it is poor consolation.

"It will not only hurt us but will also take its toll on the domestic packet tea market as the consumers will be forced to pay for it," adds Bose.

Even big players like Tata Tea have a lot to worry about. Explains S. Kidwai, MD, Tata Tea, "Tea is not a one-time buy like say, a washing machine and it will be unfair to make the consumers pay more for something they would purchase on a regular basis." To counter this inflation, says Kidwai, "We'll have to sell more and we'll have to match last year's export at least to take advantage of the boom."

However most tea companies are optimistic that corrective measures will be taken to ensure that the 'cup that cheers' continues to do so without burning a hole in our pockets.

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR TEA? MILK OR LEMON

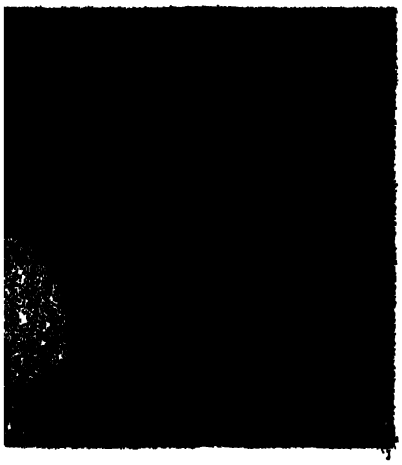
The English like it made in a 'proper' way, with a little sugar, milk or cream. The Russians and Germans go for black tea from India. The Chinese take their green tea without milk or sugar, or like the Japanese, have Jasmine tea —a variation of green tea with jasmine flowers. This is supposed to aid digestion. Sri Lankans specialise in fruit teas where fruit extracts like lemon, apple, strawberry are added to tea.

The Indians, of course, make tea in so many different ways. There's *masala chai* with cardamom, cinnamon, cloves and ginger, *Mintar chai* (with lemon added) and the Kashmiri *kawa* which has crushed nuts and saffron added to tea.

Sorry, but you cannot have tea liqueurs like, say coffee or fruit liqueurs, as tea does not absorb liquor.



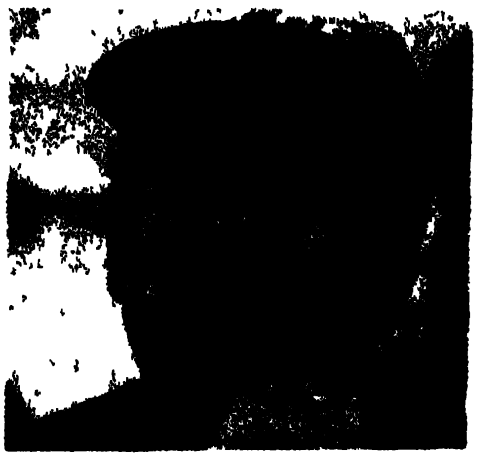
COFFEE, TEA OR...?
Nothing is more refreshing than a hot cup of tea, no doubt, but too much of it can lead to sleeping problems, restlessness and other nervous disorders because of the caffeine it contains



P.K. BANERJEE

Coach, former India footballer

My father was a tea taster and my career enabled me to travel widely and sample Indonesian, Sri Lankan, Chinese teas and more. I am partial to Darjeeling Happy Valley tea and take at least 2-4 cups a day, usually without milk. I like to have it in my gold bordered Sikaran tea cup



MY PERSONAL *Style*

That's the bottomline designer Shahab Durazi follows when it comes to clothes

ALL FOR QUALITY

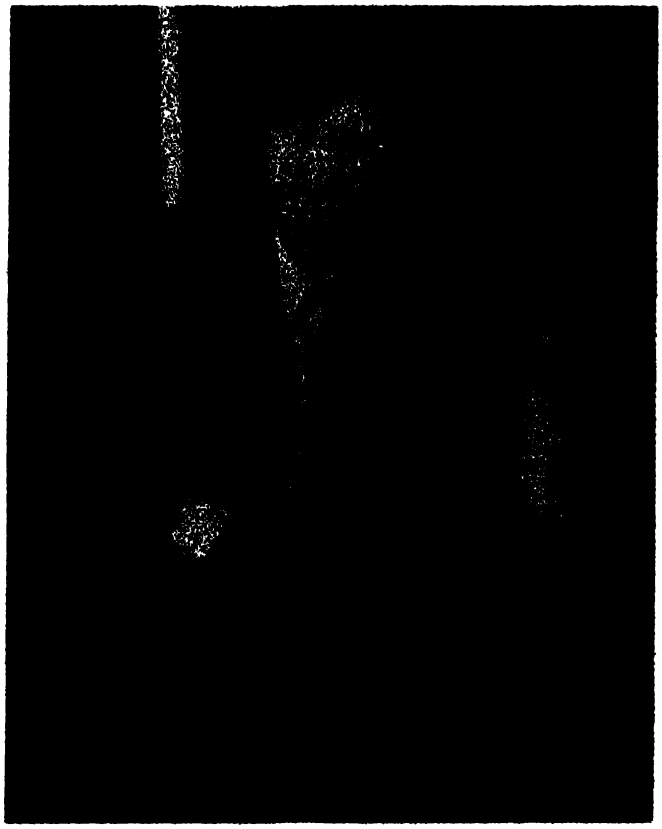
Quality, rather than quantity is the bottomline for me. I basically wear clothes that are of very high quality and those that I know will carry me through for many years. Aggressive styling has never done for me. And in that, I am a classic dresser and only settle for comfortable clothes tailored out of natural options like linen and cottons.

My palette consists of sedates like beiges, blacks and whites. Navy is the only dash of colour in my wardrobe. Actually, I like different hues of blues like ice, sky and cobalt blue. I like cold colours. If I wear a peach shirt, it is almost a colourless shade. I steer clear of baggys and all my trousers are flat fronted. I keep in mind that the clothes I wear during the day will carry me through an evening as well, when simply teamed with a jacket and a tie.

I have always preferred dressing down rather than dressing up. For then, I feel, you lose your identity itself within the flash of colours. Also, when people dress up a lot, I have observed, they look most uncomfortable with themselves and that ruins the whole purpose of dressing up in the first place.

Since I value quality clothing, while on shopping jaunts, I'd much rather pick up three good pieces than five average ones. Since I have got into designing men's line as well over the last few years, I design my own clothes. Otherwise, about four to five years ago, I used to pick up a lot of stuff like cotton T-shirts and khaki shorts from Fashion Street. Cotton World also stocks good clothes and I have picked up some items from Garden Vareli as well. But all that has been sometime in the past.

I must admit that I am a very fussy person. Even my wife has given up shopping for me. She hasn't really understood my tastes very well down the years, either! Whenever she has shopped for me, the stuff has gone back to the store with the cash memo. Now she doesn't bother. My sister in New York knows my tastes very well, though. I used to live with her as a student in NY. She shops for accessories for me. And I do have a fascination for accessories.



OUT OF THE BLUE

My palette consists of sedates like beiges, blacks and whites. I like different hues of blues like ice, sky and cobalt blue. I like cold colours. If I wear a peach shirt, it is almost a colourless shade

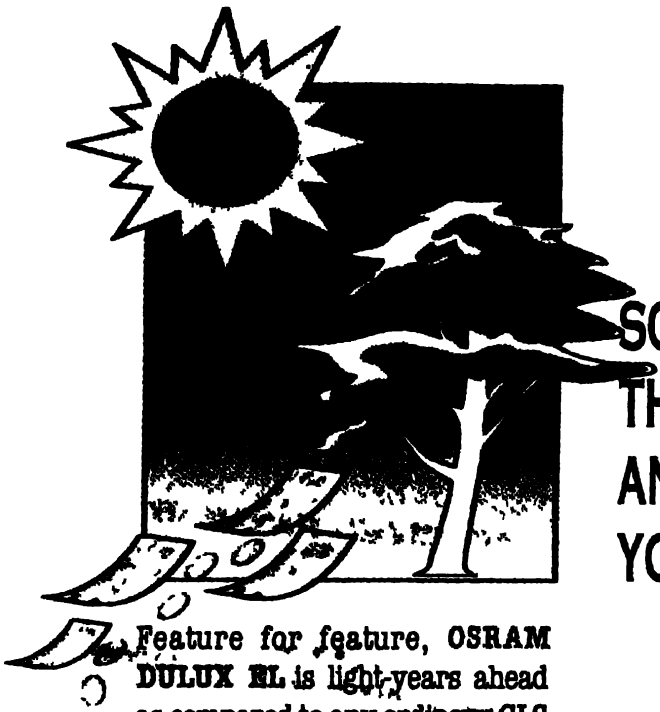
I like splurging on ties and shoes. I buy really expensive ones. The ties, like all other accessories, should be in sedate colours but bold designs. I experiment with textures and design but not so much with colours.

My most favourite pair of shoes were a pair of Bally that I picked up in '88 for $ 200, and another pair for Rs 5,000. The first one was a suede number in tan, wingtipped and it lasted me for more than nine years. I discarded them only some months ago. I like to wear woven socks. I pick up most of my accessories from Macys and Barneys in New York.

The one favourite item has been a pair of silk boxer shorts in burgundy that I have been wearing for five years. I really hang around in them a lot, and I think it is time for me to discard them as well.

My clothes have lasted me for long stretches of time because I look after them very well and follow the instructions diligently. If they have to be washed in cold water that is exactly what I do, otherwise I dry clean all of them. Starch and harsh soaps are absolutely killers for clothes.

AS TOLD TO SUPRIYA RAO

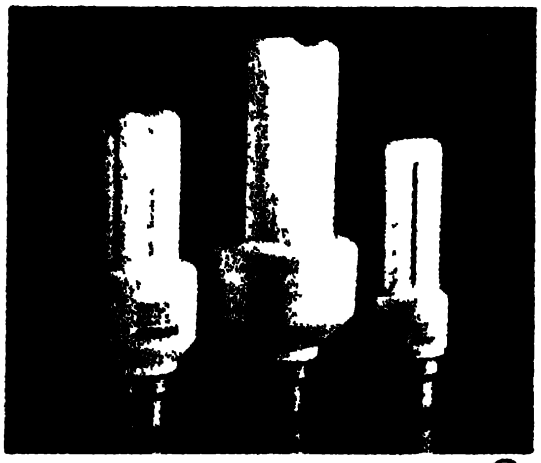


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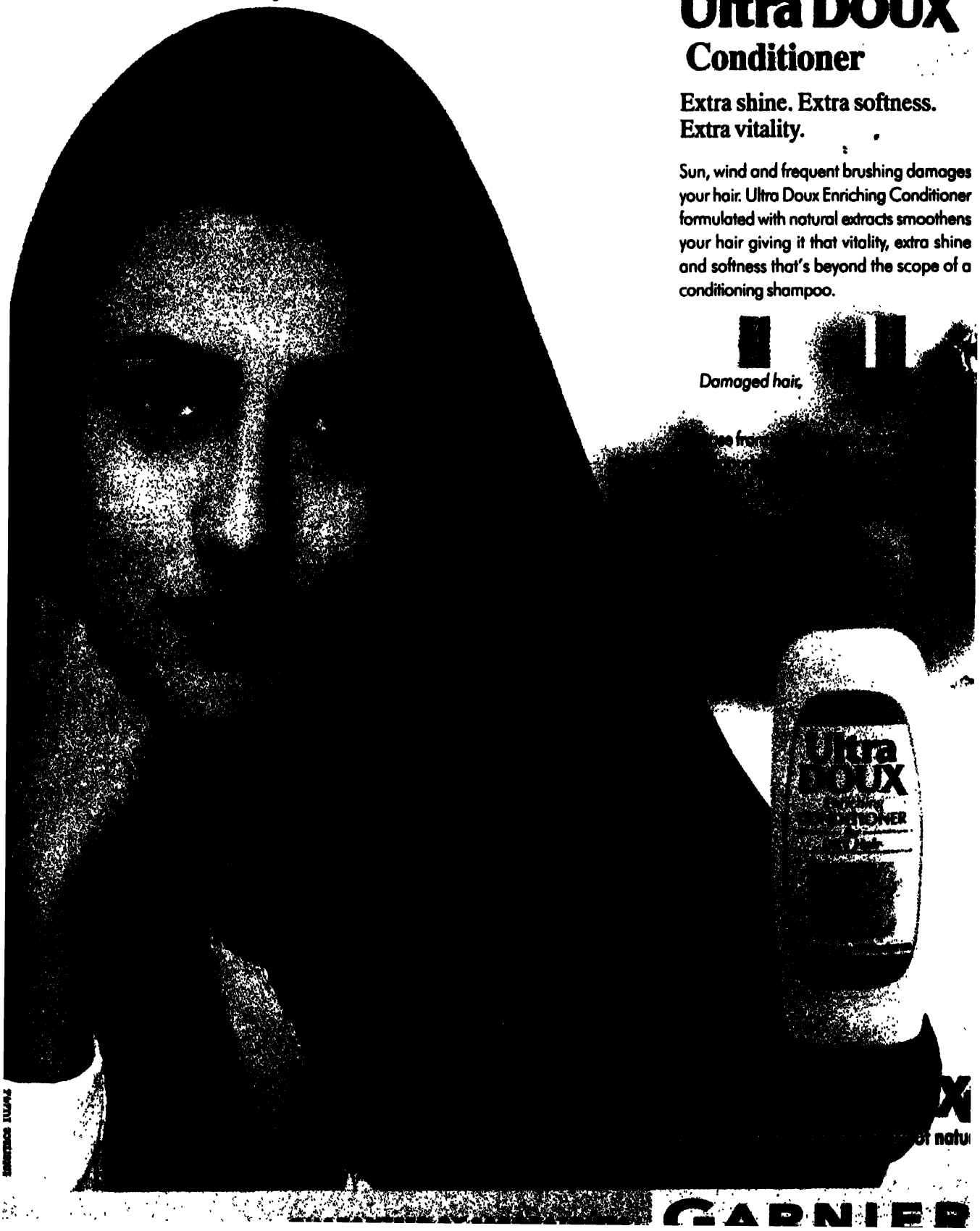
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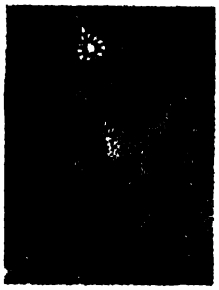
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WRITE IN



Address your letters to Write In, Graphiti, The Telegraph, 6 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Calcutta 1

SKIN DEEP?

Your cover story on the future of beauty queens ('Crowning Glory', August 9) was an eye-opener. We tend to look at these beauties with either awe or envy, but it is indeed true that life for them beyond the ramp poses a problem as they have no real openings except chattering away inanely as VJs. It also must be very difficult for these pretty women to suddenly stay away from the limelight after having basked in public adulation all this while.

RITTIKA DUTTA, CALCUTTA

THEY'VE GOT THE LOOK

We ought to be proud of our spunky beauty queens for achieving name and fame for themselves as well as for their country It is also heart-warming to note that our country possesses women who combine brains with beauty They have changed the impression about pretty women being mere bimboes

Subhro Roy, Siliguri

The cover story on beauty queens was, as usual, cliched stuff One cannot lay claim to fame unless one achieves something after having worked hard for it. It is tiresome to find the contestants spouting the same answers about how they will make the world a better place to live in, during beauty pageants In this article, one gets the impression that the Miss Indias are trying to justify what they had said while trying to win the contest

Neha Kapoor, Calcutta

DIFFERENT STROKES

Your last page ('My Personal Style') is devoted to especially the rich and the famous whose lifestyles just cannot be emulated by the vast majority By the 'majority' I mean the general public who have no time or means to emulate the subject's whims and fancies I think it will be more meaningful if you choose your personalities from the middle-class only. Of course, finding people worth emulating from this social strata is your job.

Arta Mishra, Cuttack

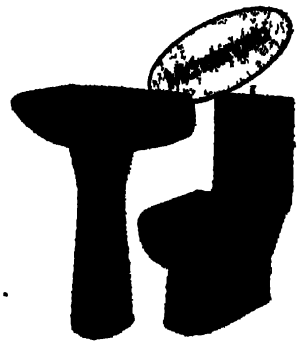
Congratulations for changing the face of The Telegraph magazine You could try to make it even more informative by including more stories on fashion, cosmetics, accessories and footwear Looking good and fashionable has now become a major concern with young, urban girls

M.Paul, Calcutta

graphiti ★ 27 September 1998

4 COSMETIC CHANGES Make-up artists are the new style gurus **10** DESIGN CORNER Bathrooms can be luxurious too **13** SMALL TALK Can TV stars ever make it to the big screen? **20** TIME OUT Experiencing the warmth of the cold desert at the Ladakh Festival **28** THE BEST Turning the spotlight on Mumbai's nightspots. **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE

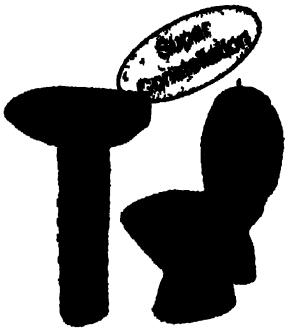
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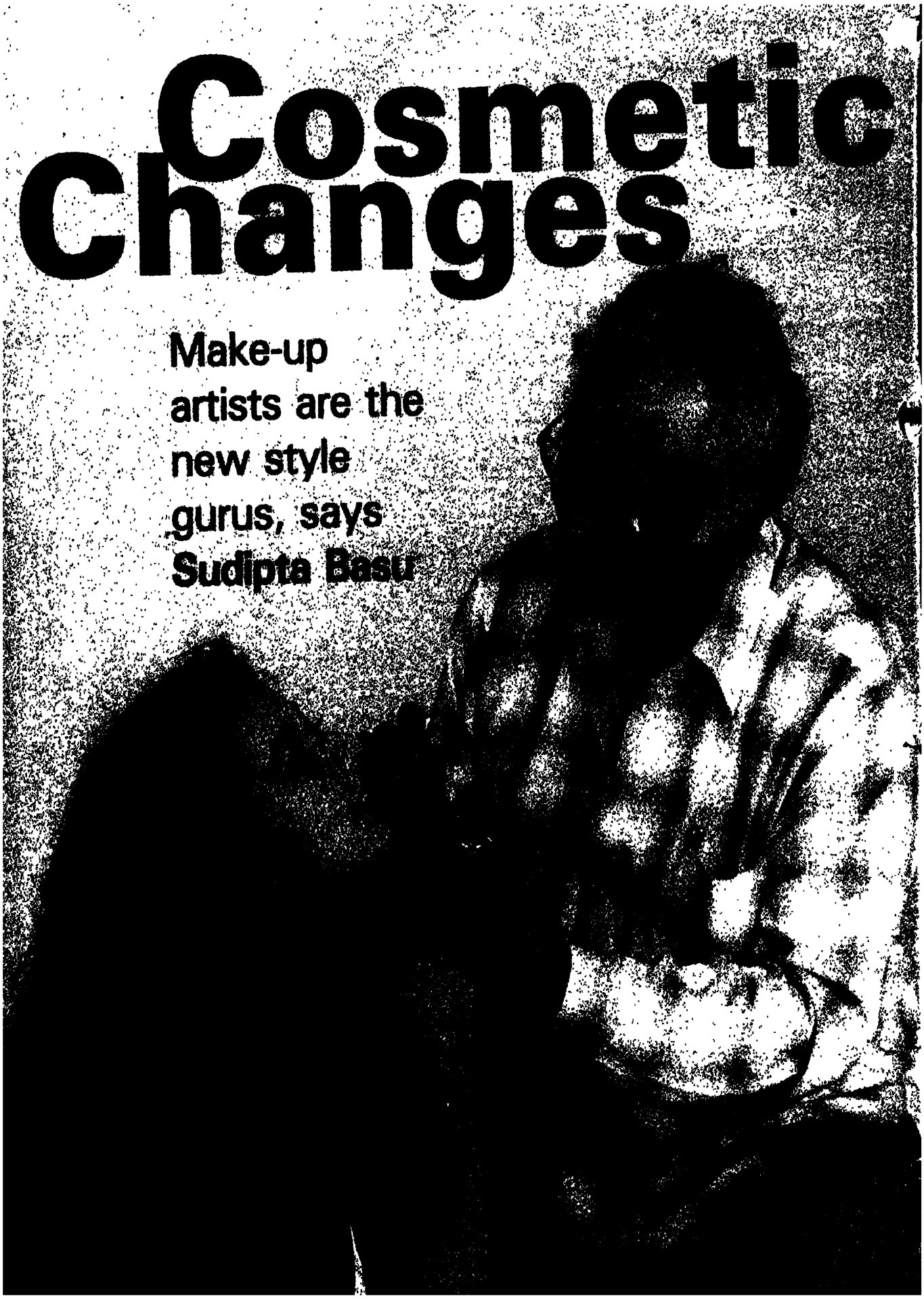
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Cosmetic Changes

Make-up artists are the new style gurus, says **Sudipta Basu**



Beauty may not be skin-deep. But in this age when appearances count for everything, an attractive face goes a long way. And if it has been enhanced with every cosmetic in the market — and then some — it goes high enough to make its place among the stars of this world. But not every beautiful woman knows how to make the best of what Nature has bestowed on her. And that's where the new breed of style gurus comes in. They call themselves artists — make-up artists — and why not, when their canvas is the human face; much more challenging than the canvas that others of that ilk paint on.

And as beauty becomes serious business, their numbers are burgeoning. While some of them have drifted into experimenting with powder and blush, some have doggedly pursued their craft as a vocation. But whatever their career graphs may look like, the bottomline is glamour and money — and lots of it.

"Family problems" drove Pandri Zukar, now a venerable 70, to a completely different palette from the one he was trained for at the JJ School of Arts, Mumbai. Fifty years down the line, those 'problems' have long since disappeared and Zukar is today revered by many in the film industry as one of the pashas of pancake.

The accolades can be overwhelming, but Pandri Zukar nurses some grudges against the industry as well. "There is more money but lack of attention to detail these days with people in the profession," says Zukar. "Faces appear more like random sketches, worse sometimes even than Xeroxes, thanks to the predominant use of the yellow tone and brown matte lip colour None of the faces display any glow and look flat."

And Zukar is in a position to be critical. One of his most challenging tasks in recent times has been the creation of the Onida devil ad. Zukar has worked on faces ranging from yester-year star Meena Kumari to Juhi Chawla and Madhuri Dixit. With the advertising industry looking for his services as well, his schedule has become more hectic. But what he misses from the good old days is the opportunity to participate with the director and scriptwriter in readying a scene for a film.

He started his career with V. Shantaram in *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baje*, went on to work in the era of *Taj Mahal, Noor Jehan*, and right down to contemporary films like *Darr, Chandni, Lamhe* and *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge*.

One of his more memorable tasks has been transforming Waheeda Rehman into the character of a Rajasthani girl in *Reshma aur Shera*. "In today's scenario the same girl would be made to slap on some pancake, her eyes done up like a city siren who is here to frolic in the desert for a weekend," he says. "In *Reshma aur Shera* though, there was a challenge to get that tanned skin tone which can be acquired only after exposure to t[illegible] in the dese[illegible]

Adds Zukar, "Today, even if [illegible] to be depic[illegible] state of *vanvaas*, she will have [illegible]ue-grey eye[illegible] and pink cheeks intact."

What compounds his distress[illegible] absence of [illegible]co-ordination with the production un[illegible]alogues a[illegible]en on the sets, actors are unaware of [illegible]quenc[illegible]y are about to play and "there is no sense [illegible]y between each day's work", laments Zukar.

Bharat and his wife Dor[illegible]ed their backstage craft und[illegible] Zukar. Bharat has been aroun[illegible] while Doris has been in busine[illegible] 15 years, and [illegible] they run a school for aspiring m[illegible]-up artists in showbiz[illegible] well.

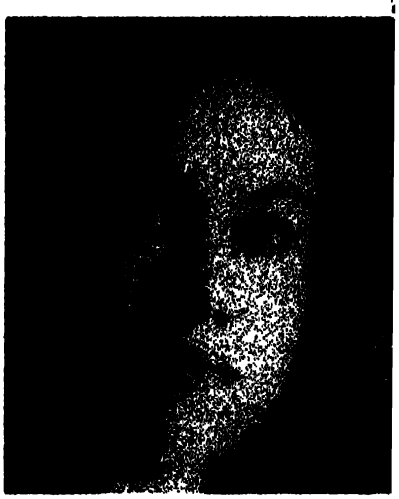
According to Bharat, in ea[illegible] days the make-up m[illegible] did not command any respect. It[illegible]nly in the last 15 y[illegible]s or so that the equation has change[illegible]ides, there[illegible]ore money for us today than there was be[illegible] from fea-





PASHA OF PANCAKE
That is how Pandri Zukar (extreme left) is known in the industry, having worked on faces like that of Juhi Chawla, Madhuri Dixit and Rani Mukherjee; Cory Walia (top) loves the face of the Indian woman for her beautiful eyes and Mickey Contractor (below) is fascinated with the beauty of the skin itself

CHANGING FACES



BALLET DANCER TO MAKE-UP ARTIST

Marvie Beck loves the funky look; trying ou new hairstyles with wires and neon ropes

ture films, there are ad films and othe freelance work as well."

Says Bharat, "Make-up is an ar There is natural make-up, heavy mak up and theatrical make-up. The indu try is very competitive and those wh do not know the art can be easily foun out. I personally prefer the heavy mak up look, where you can play aroun with colours. There is no challenge witl doing the simplistic."

One of Bharat's more interestin assignments was the heavy made-u look of Parveen Babi in the night clu song *Jawan e janeman* in *Namak Hala* "Let's admit it, in India, films carr only two per cent of reality. The rest o it plays with dreams and aspirations o the layman. Hence, the characters ar also made up to represent this." Hi favourite face these days is that o Aishwarya Rai.

The 60s bouffant hairstyle is Doris favourite. She has been trying it out o Tabu and hopes that the trend will catc on. "This started with the time whe Sushmita Sen became Miss Universe Since then the bouffant has been pop ping up now and then in Press ads an stills," says Doris. "But one hopes tha people will make more random use o the style on screen as well."

The West has been the traditiona haunt for inspiration for those lookin

for different styles. If Madhubala sported a short hairstyle *a la* Ingrid Bergman and Vyjayantimala a close-cropped do like Sophia Loren, these days Indian women are copying the likes of Cindy Crawford. The Spice Girls' wild and funky look has also found its share of devotees.

Doris agrees that the West is influential, but feels that its styles have to be altered to suit Indian looks. "For example, when I had to do a Spice Girls-like style for one of the shoots recently, I simply did a bit of wiry innovations on the popular ponytail," she says. "Otherwise, can you imagine what a truly spiky hairstyle would look like on an Indian face?"

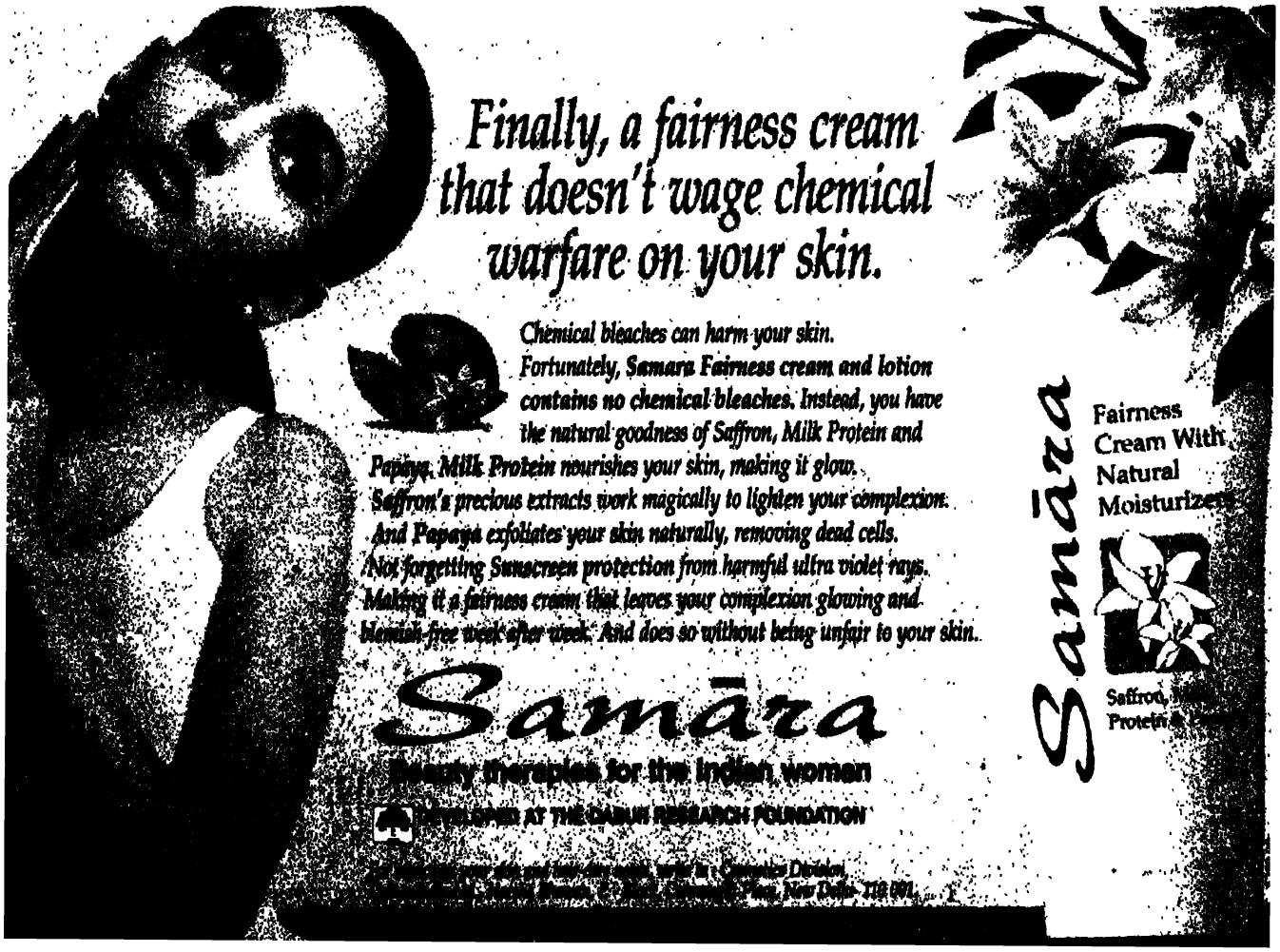
As the craving for individuality becomes a global phenomenon, make-up is going to get better, slicker and more colourful

Cory Walia agrees with Doris, but hopes that with the deluge of hair cosmetics in the Indian market today and their growing popularity, people will get more adventurous. "Some women even get away with close-cropped hair while teaming it with a saree. But look closely, and it actually appears very incongruous," says Cory.

However, with avante garde make-up kits available in the market, he feels, people are coming into their own. "I helped a friend of mine with blond hair to make a hairdo like a flower with a long stem-like clutch of strands dropping on his back. It had mixed reactions in the beginning, but people gradually started getting used to it," says Walia.

He feels that more men are getting out of their shell than women, perhaps because of the simple fact that most of them can get away with it more easily than women can. His favourite look for women though is "long, clean and flowing hair with tints of blue-black".

Cory has been in the business for the last eight years. He was drawn to the craft after being fascinated with the way his mother and sister dressed up during his childhood. A couple of courses in the US and the UK gave him the basis to improvise, but mostly he has "followed





VIKAS KHOT



A DIFFERENT CANVAS
Vipul Bhagat trying out some 'outrageous' style on Nafisa Joseph (left) while Bharat Godambe imparts 'heavy make-up' on Aishwarya Rai's pretty face

his heart".

Today the fashion industry has branded him an 'eye specialist'. "I love a distinctive and dramatic look. The greatest kick that I get is when I have to improvise on the spur of the moment," says Walia.

While he strictly works for the ad industry, "rather than play second fiddle to a film star's tantrums in the industry", he can see the effect of his art work spilling on to the streets as well.

Cory likes the minimalist look — "fortunately Indian women have beautiful eyes, well-defined eyebrows and mouth, and all it takes is highlighting" — and counts author Shobha De among the most memorable faces he has worked on. "It was for the BBC shoot at her house in Alibaugh and all I had to do was use highlights. She has a naturally interesting face," he says.

Ace make-up artist Mickey Contractor has no illusions about his art. He has been around for the last 20 years and feels that the most dominant factor of staying alive here is a willingness to flog it out, with family life taking a heavy beating.

"Let's not push that bit about an art form and all that. Well, it is, but just like any other," dismisses Mickey. "And the plus point is that if you work hard you can easily bring home about Rs 60,000 each month."

What he takes credit for is what he calls giving "make-up artists their due" by ensuring that they receive their credit lines. "And it has been only as recently as the last 10 years. So you can imagine very well how little we figured in the larger scheme of things. The environment for us is much more friendly now," he says.

Mickey's favourite is the no-make up, slicked hair look and he is fascinated with the beauty of the skin itself. This was evident in the recent Lux campaigns with Pooja Bhat, Juhi Chawla and Raveena Tandon, that he worked for. Says Contractor, "That way the face looks more dramatic."

His all-time fascination has been the face of Nutan and, more recently, Mehr Jesia, Kajol and Madhuri Dixit. But the biggest challenge for him was to dress a man as a woman, which he achieved with Aamir Khan in Baazi and more recently, with Shah Rukh Khan in Duplicate.

The biggest challenge for Mickey Contractor was to dress Aamir Khan as a woman

Marvie Beck was a ballet dancer who swerved backstage to make a full-time career in make-up. She doggedly believes that one has to be an artist of some sort to be able to become a good make-up person. She is most fascinated with the texture of the skin and the eye. "The only difference between us and the more conventional artists is that we work on a different canvas altogether," she says.

The most important element in her kit is the thin liquid base and concealer, for she believes "the most important aspect of beauty is a clear skin, no one should look overly made up". She likes doing up Malaika and Bipasha's large eyes as well as Raageshwari's small but sharp ones.

However, when it comes to hair, she compulsively digs the funky look. In the recent remix video of Remo she used wires in the hair of the model to make her look like an antelope. In another she used neon ropes. But the most innovative hair style has been that of Rajlakshmi Soni's, where she used clay in her hair.

"Each person's hair has a different manner of moving and the skin is just

as distinct A make-up artist's eyes have to have the feel for colour and texture, and it is up to us to bring out the best in each person," says Marvie

Beck is the grooming teacher for Jet Airway recruits, and with each passing year she encounters an even more aggressive lot of freshers who demand accurate information about how they can look their best "People are so bored with their lives that they are always looking for fresh occupations, and in a way we worship ourselves since people come to us for that complete personality make over"

Jaiwant Thakre has been a "female artist" in the industry for the last 18 years — that is, he works on female faces The challenge for him is when he has to subdue the so-called negative aspects to make the woman look more lively and glamorous And sometimes, work the other way round as well

One such opportunity was when he recently got to touch up Sharmila Tagore's face for a forthcoming film to make her look an 85 year old "It was so much of hard work that we had to do a test shoot before moving on," says Jaiwant

A similar opportunity came by him in the past on the sets of *Buniyaad*, where he worked on Anita Kanwar's face, ageing her from a young girl to an old lady Then there was the much appreciated *BPL Oye* show hosted by Raageshwari last year where she alternately appeared as a 10 and an 80 year old

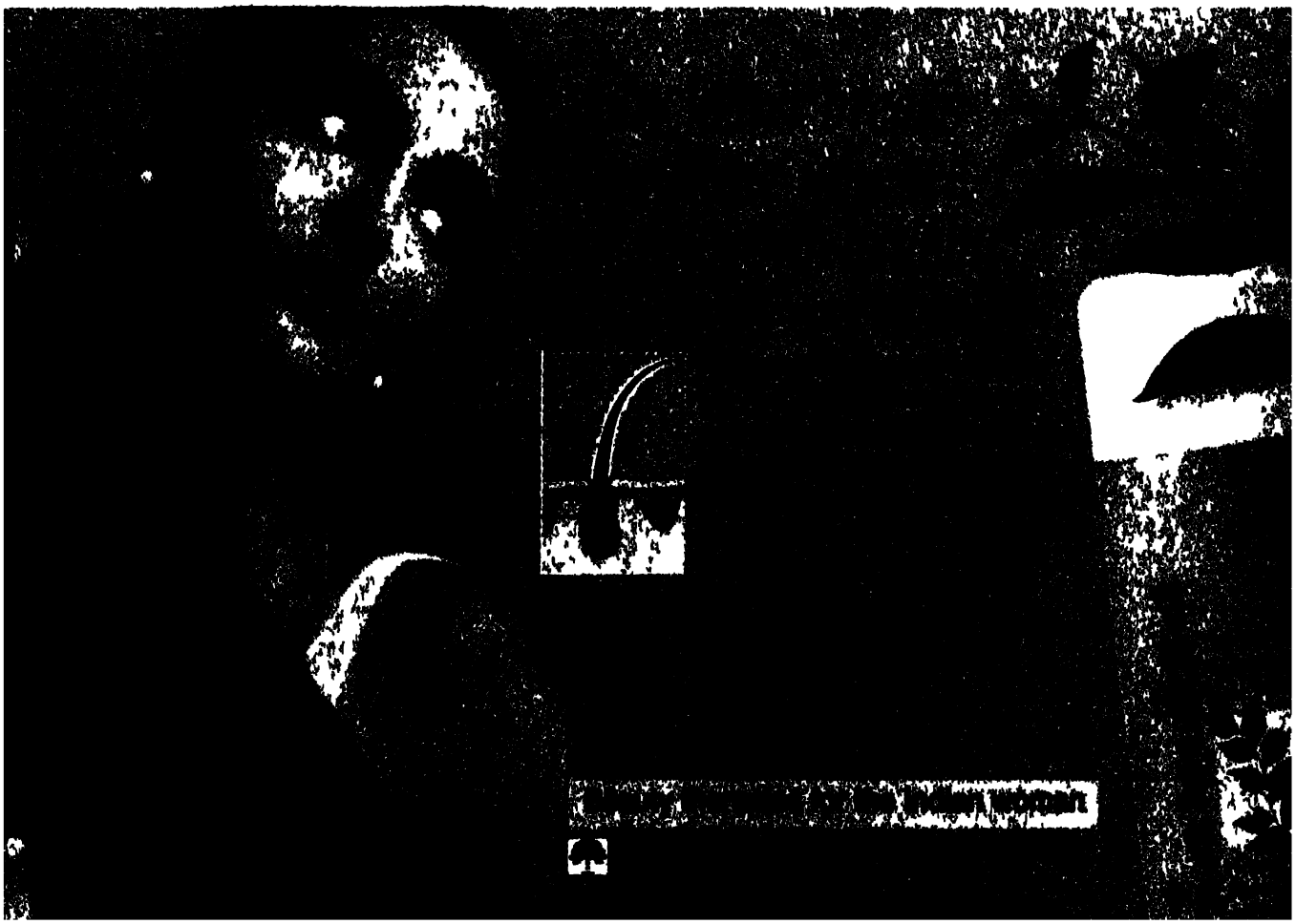
After a small stint with dress design Vipul Bhagat moved from the sketch pen to the eye pencil, giving in to the sheer kick of creating believable funky looks His sensibilities are appeased when he encounters such bold and adventurous souls as Madhu Sapre and Meghana Reddy

"Every time they travel abroad for shows they come back with fresh ideas that they are willing to implement, and that is when you can let go completely to experiment with something completely outrageous," says Vipul

In the six years that he has been in the industry, Vipul has confined himself to working for fashion shows and TV commercials His most memorable look has been in a Star ball-point pen commercial where he played around with different kinds of hair colour to go with each colour of the ball point pen

"Well, I hope some of us will be willing to experiment with the same at least soon after the year 2000 AD Go all blue or pink over the head, and give us a chance to go wild with colour"

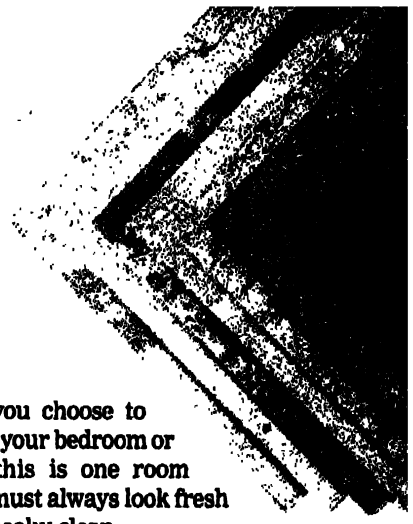
Never mind if purists shriek, and the timid run for cover As the craving for individuality becomes a global phenomenon, make-up is going to get better, slicker and much more colourful ■



DESIGN *Corner*

Bathrooms can often be the best places to relax, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

SHOWER TO SHOWER



SMART AND TRENDY

Bathroom fittings should be functional, long-lasting and visually attractive. More importantly, they should match the rest of the decor

Picture this. You are back home after a gruelling day at the office looking forward to soaking in your new tub. An hour later you emerge smelling wonderful, feeling refreshed and ready for a night on town.

A bathroom, to quote an old ad, is a room, too. It is that part of the house which speaks volumes about one's hygiene and civic sense. No matter how much you choose to neglect your bedroom or study, this is one room which must always look fresh and squeaky clean.

Whether one is planning a bathroom for a new home, renovating an old one or adding an extra one to the house, it is necessary to think carefully about the layout and fixtures before building it. Ideally, it might include a dressing and grooming area, a space for sunbathing and exercising, a sauna, hot tub or bathing pool or even an area for relaxing, reading and listening to the radio or stereo. Add to that a laundry, a beauty items counter and a linen closet and you could virtually live out of your bathroom. Unfortunately, given space constraints, most people consider themselves lucky if they can fit a bath into their loo.

Consider the family's habits before planning a bathroom. If one member loves long baths, or sticks to a lengthy exercise schedule, it may be best to locate some of the functions in an adjacent room. If two people have the same hours of work, a separate dressing space, with wash basin, could alleviate the early morning rush.



Bathrooms came in vogue as early as 3000 BC as a symbol of affluence. With the Greeks, baths were synonymous with physical fitness while to the Romans they were meant for relaxation. Today, baths are meant to be both luxurious and functional spaces.

The colour of sanitaryware defines the elegance of a bath with more than 30 shades in matt and gloss finish to choose from. Those with an eye for aesthetics can select shades as exotic as lapis lazuli, sapphire, orchid or ming green from Hindustan Sanitaryware's bold new colour range.

If one is using sky blue tiles, they can buy a 'Syphonic Suite' replete with wash basin, water closets and bidets in sky blue. Warm colours work wonders in a bath that does not receive sufficient sunlight. Conversely, pastels like ivory, green and blue, give an air of subtlety and space.

attached bath should essentially be an the bedroom. If one is considering

a master bath, it should be part of an entire suite, connected to the bedroom, dressing and clothing space. If a family bathroom lies upstairs, it makes sense to have the laundry vat next to it for convenience.

Under no condition should your bath be wet and stuffy. If a shower is installed, have an exhaust fan fitted or a self-venting exhaust system to provide ventilation and protect the walls and ceiling from excessive moisture.

A bathroom can be beautifully done up to take care of ablutions, hairdressing, telephoning and reading. Throw in a few bath mats, bric-a-brac and fresh flowers to make it appear trendy and personal. Soaps, perfumes and cosmetics can be arranged on your bath dresser.

If one is unsure of whether to buy a shower or a tub, or if there is only one bathroom, choose a combination tub-shower. Although many tubs are used almost exclusively as shower receptors, a tub is adaptable, giving one the luxury of changing one's mind.

To conserve water which is often in short supply, water closets set to flush 6.5 litres instead of 10-12 litres have hit the market. By changing the profile of the bowl and reducing the water seal area in line, there is considerable reduction in water usage and improvement of flushing efficiency. These water saving closets are hassle-free and cost-effective.

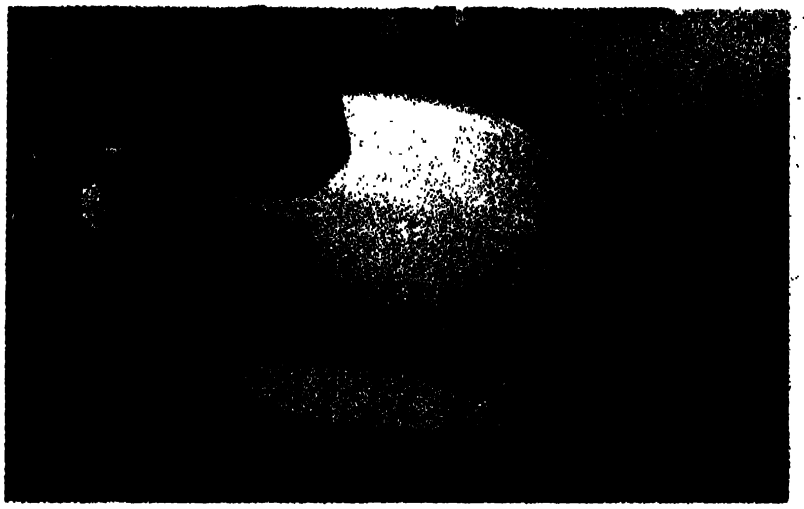
For small bathrooms, use of corner wash basins, shower trays and water closets, save on space. Use a light colour to give a sense of space and go low on contrasting shades and patterns—they contribute to the bath's cluttered effect. Avoid too much light inside the bathroom for it would make the walls appear closer. Installing mirrors, specially when it reflects some greenery or picture—improves the overall look.

Bath fittings should be functional, long-lasting and visually attractive. And, of course, they should match the rest of the decor. Use simpler designs because the elaborate ones easily go out of fashion. Should you want to shop for bath accessories, try the Hawk Rangers from Ess Ess which gives a wide range of products from towel rails to corner shelves.

A bath should ideally include features of good ventilation and lighting, a mirrored area, sufficient storage and dressing space. "When a person buys sanitaryware, make sure it is functional, durable, hygienic, non-porous and impact-resistant," says V. Krishnamurthy, brand manager of Hindustan Sanitaryware.

To combine "personality and practicality", the Florentine Collection from Jaguar gives a range of superbly crafted bath fittings that blend beautifully with today's lifestyle. The collection — comprising a wall mixer with telephone shower, rose shower with arm, bath tub spout and sink mixer — comes with the convenience of a full flow at just the quarter of a turn. A choice of chrome, white, black and gold makes it possible to harmonise Florentine with any bathroom decor and style. Their Continental bath collection have introduced interchangeability of internal pistons in concealed divertors and flush valves for the first time in India. Jaguar also has an Ornamix range for giving an ornamental look to the bathroom besides giving one the privilege of preselecting temperatures.

WARM AND SUBTLE
Warm colours in a bath can do wonders if there is insufficient sunlight and conversely, pastels like ivory, green and blue add a touch of subtle elegance





The wall and floor changes the whole look of a bathroom. Earlier, marble, granite, mosaic using marble chips were the best options for floor covering, but now, companies like Kajaria Ceramics are coming up with ceramic wall and floor tiles to provide complete wall and floor solutions. These are more economical compared to natural stones with names as exotic as Sorrento Blue, Blanco Nieve, Solaris Maroon and Serenato Burgundy.

A well-kept bath is your signature to a beautiful home. For some, it is a haven for reflection and meditation. Others chart out their day's agenda in the exclusive preserve of a bath. No matter which way you use it, your bath has to have a touch of class.■

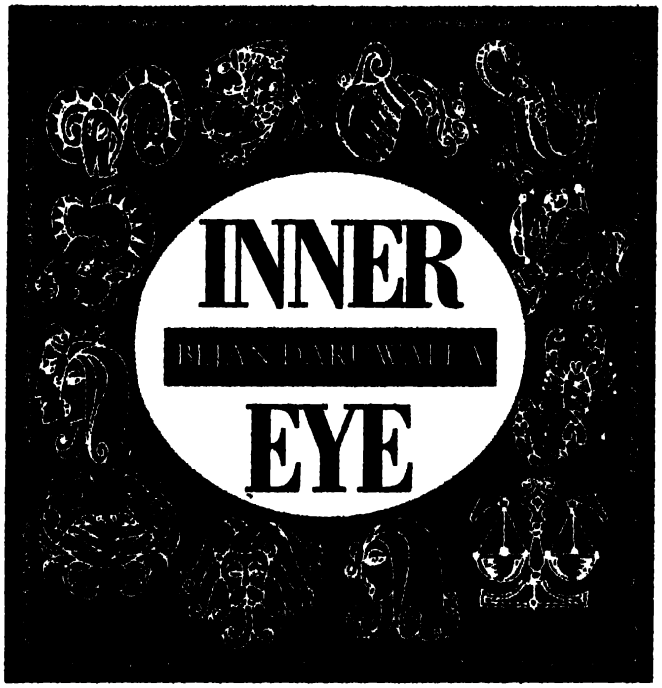
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) You will, willy-nilly, have to turn your attention, energies and time to the domestic scene in terms of home and hearth, family ties and concerns. Ganesha warns you not to stagger under this awesome double burden. This may trigger off an unfortunate tendency to ride roughshod over others. So try to be diplomatic with near and dear ones.

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) The prelude to the financial theme becomes a strong crescendo with the focus firmly on finance. Money matters, personal belongings, funds and finance, all factors which affect your pocket, need attention; so develop the ability to handle finances. Possessions and investments are most important. Take care of your health.

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) Entertainment, amusement, games, hobbies, warm interaction with children, love and romance on moonlit nights. Alongside, there is also speculation and trying your hand at the luck of the draw. Don't be tempted either to be careless with important papers, documents, or be too trusting with friends. Try not to look for quick profits.

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) The emphasis shifts to trade, travel, matters related to spirituality, higher education, law, order and justice (most definitely). The spiritual inclinations are really strong but beware of "otherworldliness", find ways to concretise achievements, improve property and acquire belongings. Also, find some time to spend with your loved ones, namely children and spouse.

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) Love some and hate some in equal measure — this is definite. Paradoxically, even though the mood of introspection is strong, there is much gadding about, socialising and interaction, making you practically a party animal. Some kind of wish-fulfilment is a strong possibility. Expect visitors or relatives to drop in unexpectedly.



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) The emphasis, very particularly, is on social service, work relationships with your boss, colleagues, subordinates and helping others out. Besides relationships in general, there may be correspondence, trips (not journeys) to nearby places, watching over the interests of kin, neighbours, near and dear ones. An eventful week, on the whole to try out various options.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Ganesha says, the three P's — power, position and pelf — for you. You will merit the just rewards that you now earn. Those who matter — boss, in-laws, parents and elders— will cause you concern vis-a-vis their health. You should also guard against letting communications deteriorate or not getting others to cooperate.

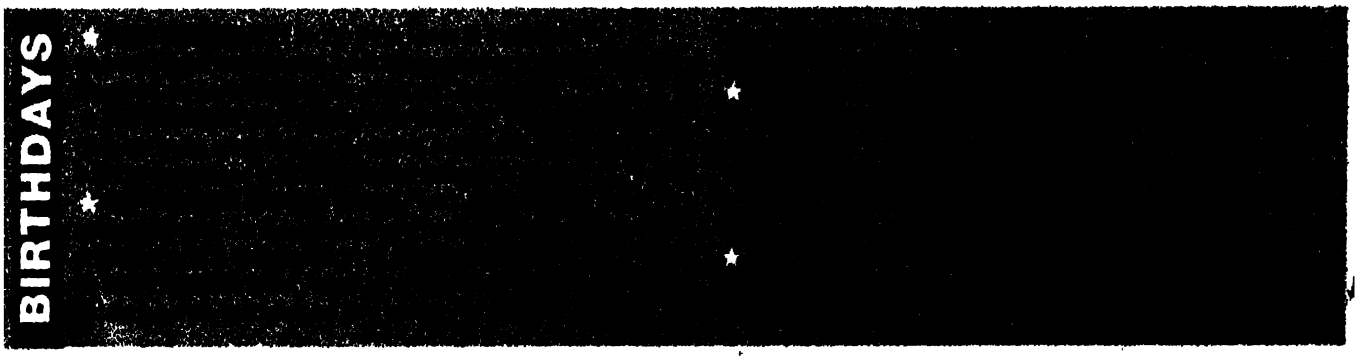
SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) The earlier emphasis on your mental capacity, social ties with relatives, and on taking vital decisions has an add-on. There is great personal progress, but don't achieve it by displaying either too much egotism or submissiveness but strive for a fine balance, control, especially over your emotions and temper. Self-restraint is definitely the need of the week.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) Zeroes in on property and land scene, involving you with house, home, building, construction, land and family. You evince a strong desire for action and are keenly set on the advancement of your own interests as well as your image in the eyes of others right through this week and this month.

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) The lunar cycle brings love, romance, passion, friendship to the fore. The other important areas of focus and interest will be trade, agency, partnerships, law courts, legal issues and a journey with a stopover (whether business or pleasure, or a combination of both). Pay heed to letters, notes, calls, faxes, telephones and information.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Another strange phenomenon, bringing both hard work and happy times. You win kudos and glory, "joy and gladness, shall be thine" as it says in the *Bible*, but the health of officials, parents, in-laws and older people may give you some anxious moments along with the rewards. But you need not panic.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) This week finds you carrying on from where you left off last week. Concentrate on improving relationships with colleagues and co-workers and streamlining office procedures. You make money. Share it, help others, start a new project, a venture or an enterprise, even business or just acquire a pet. Take care of your health as nagging ailments like aches might persist.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Can TV stars ever make it to the big screen, asks Seema Goswami

The talking point is:
Sony TV's decision to re-run such teleserials as *Fauji, Circus, Dil Dariya* and *Doosra Kewal*, all of which feature Shah Rukh Khan in his earlier incarnation of a television star. All of these ran nearly eight years ago, when Khan was a baby-faced teenager with an effervescent charm that leapt right off the small screen and into your face. Shah Rukh's amiable ruffian act or even the dutiful son routine, went down a storm with female audiences, and he had the ladies — from six to 60 — eating out of his hands.

Bad move:
Said all of Khan's critics, as he became more and more popular on the boob tube. Now that he was seen as a TV star, there was no way he would ever make it in the movies. People, they said, became too accustomed to seeing television actors for free in their living rooms. And since familiarity breeds contempt, they would never ever pay good money to see these same faces on the big screen.

Right?:
Wrong. Shah Rukh made the transition to the movies with remarkable ease, even though he made some tough choices along the line (like choosing to play the anti-hero in *Baazigar, Darr* and *Anjaam*). And after the mega-success of *Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge*, Khan came to be counted among the top three stars of Hindi cinema.

They should have been so lucky:
In this category you can include the mythological greats like Arun Govil (Ram), Nitish Bhardwaj (Krishna) and Mukesh Khanna (Bhisham *Pitamah*), who despite their massive fan following among TV audiences couldn't quite translate their success into big screen popularity. Or even such sensitive actresses as Kitu Gidwani — who excelled as the quintessential Jane Austen heroine in *Trishna*, the Hindi remake of *Pride and Prejudice*, and Anita Kanwar, who attained mythic status thanks to her role of Lajjo*ji* in *Buniyaad*. Even Neena Gupta, who earned the sobriquet of television's Rich Bitch, never quite managed to recreate that same magic in the movies.



There isn't a single other name which comes to mind, apart from Shah Rukh Khan's, when you try to think of television stars who have made it big in film land •

Also on this list would be such wannabes as Sudesh Berry who was touted as the next angry young man of Hindi cinema, but failed to fulfil that early promise. Instead, he flourishes as the leading man of several middling serials on television. And then there are such might-have-beens as Abhinav Chaturvedi — Nanhe of *Hum Log* — who now languishes in well-deserved obscurity.

So, Shah Rukh's an exception then?:
It would certainly seem like that. There isn't a single other name that comes to mind when you try and think of television stars who made it big in film land. The traffic the other way round is quite heavy, though.
From such ageing actresses as Sangeeta Bijlani, Poonam Dhillon and Farha to such fading actors as Shekhar Suman and Kanwaljit, all those who failed to secure a toehold in the movies slithered down the ladder to make their home in television instead.

So, have they come down in the world?:
Some would certainly think so. For one thing, the money isn't half as good, and for another, television stars don't have quite the same status as film stars. What they do have is a steady income, and loads of fans — and the hope that that elusive movie offer is just one phone call away. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

WEDDING WOES

Q : I am a 32-year-old government employee. After one year of marriage, I realised my wife had sexual relations with a man before we got married and she kept me in the dark regarding this. I have concrete proof of the same. Now I hate her and wish to divorce her but she threatens to commit suicide and her parents are also threatening to book me for the Prevention of Torture Against Women Act. I am, as you can imagine, very unhappy. Please tell me how I can separate from my wife and lead a normal life.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

I understand and empathise with your agony, but you must bear in mind that she did what she did before her marriage to you. To err is human and to forgive divine. It is evident that you all are caught up in a web of recriminations and conflicting emotions. I would advise you to try and make peace with the situation, and give your marriage another try. Decide to give yourself a year to work things out. In this period, keep a distance from each other, even while living in the same house, and try to keep a degree of normalcy in your conduct. Extract a promise from your wife that she will never err in her integrity and trust again. Try to mutually look only for what is good and positive in your relationship.If with the passage of time, you still harbour the same passionate anger, look at the situation once again.

PAPA DON'T PREACH

Q : I do not wish to boast but I have been fairly brilliant with regard to my academic career and am doing pretty well in the job front as well. However, none of my children have done well. My son regularly skips classes (so I found out) and hangs around with a group of good-for-nothings. Both my wife and I are shocked because of this. It is disappointing to note that both are turning into veritable vagabonds, even though my wife and I have tried to guide them in many ways. Please advise.

S. BANNERJEE, HOWRAH

You have done well for yourself but perhaps you have stressed this fact too long and too hard to your children. Perhaps, they are frightened of the impossibly high standards that you have imposed, and so prefer to stay out of the competition altogether. There is nothing so absolutely shocking as skipping classes; students have done it before. Do not be so quick to classify them as veritable vagabonds. Rebellion is a healthy assertion of their individuality, it means that you have not broken their spirit.

I would suggest that you start treating them as adults, building up their strong points through positive reinforcement. Tell them that you trust their judgement,

PERSECUTION COMPLEX

I am a 34-year-old man and working in a good post. I am reasonably intelligent, imaginative, well behaved and highly sensitive. A feeling often haunts me that I am not given due respect and being overshadowed by others. I am poor in projecting myself and cannot push my way through. I am, therefore, not given enough responsibilities and even if I am, I have the feeling that somebody else will walk off with all the credit. Please advise.

ARVIND KUMAR, ASANSOL

You seem to be in the beginning stages of persecution complex. Try not to feel besieged by the world around you. Try and increase the level of trust and self confidence in your daily dealings. Outside recognition is not the most important factor, aim to satisfy yourself and you will see that you are a happier person. If you can reach the goals you set for yourself, the respect and admiration of your colleagues will soon follow.

and fully believe that they will make the right choices, but it is time for them to find their own feet. Do not make them feel over secure financially, for this is also a great deterrent to growth. If you are patient and mature about the situation, in time you will be able to communicate with them at an effective level. Then I am sure that you and your wife will be able to guide them better.

HEART OF DARKNESS

Q : I am 23 years old and a fairly extroverted and cheerful girl. However, I am extremely dark and ugly (I am made to feel this in several ways). Is there any way to solve my problem? I know I am perhaps being a trifle touchy, but my friend's comments and my parents pondering over how I could be such a black sheep makes me feel sick.
UTPALA, CALCUTTA

I fully appreciate how you feel. Unfortunately, our country is full of people who are obsessed with the 'fair and lovely' syndrome. In my personal experience, most of the intelligent young women who have to bear the brunt of these silly prejudices tend to be spectacularly successful in life, perhaps because they are driven to prove their worth. The same sometimes apply to short men, also.
You may be dark, but nobody who is intelligent and cheerful can possibly be ugly. Andy Warhol once said that beauty is a form of intelligence. Most people, be they men or women, are more turned on by energy and vitality than by symmetrical features and pale colouring.
I would suggest that you take it as a challenge to become extremely well-groomed and carry yourself with confidence and style. I predict nothing but the best for the future. Good luck.

CHILD OF A LESSER GOD

Q : We are a very happily married couple and recently we had a baby. We were soon told, however, that our child is going to be retarded. We are obviously struggling [illegible] Please tell us how to cope with the burden of bringing up the child in this highly competitive world.
S.S, BURDWAN.

Everything in life has a pattern and a purpose. Your child's life also has worth and value, whether or not it fits into the demands of this highly competitive world. This is a test of your faith and love. I personally have been profoundly impressed by some of my friends who have faced a similar challenge and wrested the human dignity of their children against great odds.
There are several support organisations, such as The Spastics Society of India, or the Tamanna school which provide qualified help to parents of children with such difficulties. There are many aspects of your child's growth and development which are not hampered by these disabilities. Skills like drawing or music appreciation may actually be compensatorily augmented in some cases. Although this sounds easier said than done, do not lose courage, and keep your faith in God, in life and in your child.



CLASS STRUGGLE

Q : I am a 23-year-old girl coming from a very well-to-do family. I am also an engineer. For the last five years, I have seriously involved with a man who is three years my senior. The only problem in our relationship is that he is from a very middle class family and works as a bank clerk. My parents do not know about him as yet (neither are they going to love the fact, I am sure) but some of my friends who know about it advise me against it as it could cause serious complications and complexes later on in our lives. What do you think?
SHAILAJA KHAITAN, CALCUTTA

It all depends on how seriously you take your gender hierarchies. Your friends are quite right in that both of you might suffer some social dysfunctionalities, but then so many perfectly engineered marriages between rich and successful men and beautiful and docile women also end up in mutual hurt and recrimination. It all depends on how conditioned you are to society's approval, and how far the two of you can walk alone.
I can only suggest that you talk frankly to the man in your life, without pussyfooting around the subject or trying to protect him from the realities of the situation. Be realistic and if you truly feel that the relationship is too valuable to abandon for such external reasons, do give it a try.

Otherwise, come to terms with your own expectations. At any cost, keep your mutual friendship and affection alive. ■

MIXED Bag

ON A NEW TRACK

● The National Rail Museum in Delhi is striving to be the most happening archive in town. Visitors can now admire the exhibits in the gallery and visit a gift shop and hunt for souvenirs.

More recently, the museum unveiled a book-cum-video library that visitors can browse through. Books, periodicals and files (dating 1865-onwards), manuscripts (1893-onwards), maps (1852-onwards) and photographs and glass negatives (1880-



onwards) can be studied here.

"Of the collection, 60 per cent is rare material which needs to be preserved," says the museum's director, Rajesh Aggarwal. "Visitors can refer to as many as 1,000 books on the Indian Railways and other railways of the world."

There are films on some popular tourist trains of the UK. There are films on India's Metro Railways, and, an overview titled *The Great Indian Railways*.

The museum keeps in touch with The Films Division, Mumbai, and The Film Archives, Pune, for updating its collection.

The museum has announced that The Fairy Queen, the oldest working steam loco, will commence its Delhi-Alwar-Delhi run on October 31.

Mother's Day



What's a sure-shot way of making a film an instant hit? Why, a controversy! And the latest to join the list of controversial Bollywood films is *Mother '98*. This much-talked Rekha starrer has rubbed the censor board, more specifically, chairwoman Asha Parekh, the wrong way. And so the film has run into rough weather.

But what's the bone of contention? Why, a song, of course! Sung by Altaf Raja, the song is, according to Parekh, very degrading for women. "My only objection is to the lyrics which can be changed. The director can reshoot the song sequence," says the lady.

Director Sawan Kumar Tak, however, has other plans. Obviously, he couldn't dream of cutting out or reshooting the very song that has brought his movie into the limelight (the official reason of course, is that there is nothing in the song which is degrading for women). The case now rests at the mercy of the board tribunal. Whether Tak will reshoot the song or leave it the way it was is not the issue now. What is more important is that the movie is now all set to enjoy good screening, if not for its content, then for Altaf Raja, at least.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Apply a coat of lip base before us

THE SUNNY SIDE



Party animals of Mumbai were treated to a virtual freebie a couple of Sundays ago. Nothing could stop them, not even the incessant crackling up of the skies that evening as cocktails and drinks flowed non stop and the munchies did the rounds tirelessly at the Famous Studios. What people also hoped for was an opportunity for non-stop foot tapping at ten discotheques, all at once.

That last bit, however, was left wanting a little as nine DJs vied with one another for the winner's slot. Punjabi pop clashed with rap and rave, as did pop rock and reggae. The winner took it all, though.

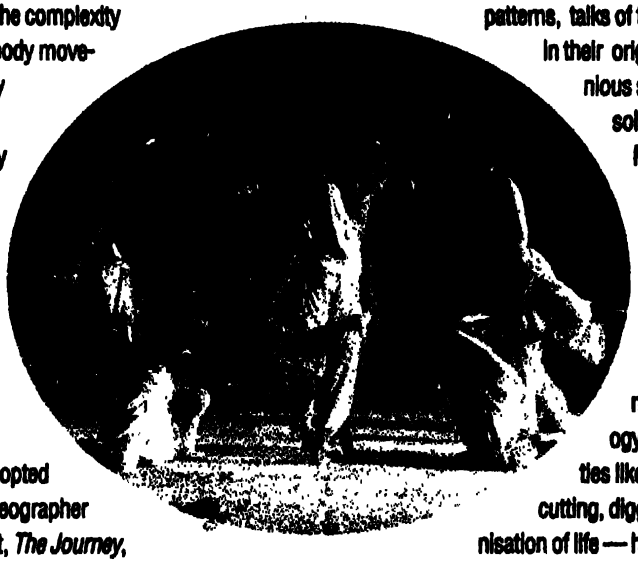
The event was the conclusion of the World DJ Mixing

CHEERS FOR CHHAU!

Though not yet classified among the 'classical' styles, the three varieties of Chhau dance, as performed in Mayurbhanj, Seraikella and Purulia, are drawing upon themselves greater interest and recognition for their sheer richness and variety of style.

In the Mayurbhanj style (which is performed without masks) the complexity and intricacy of body movements convey, by themselves, the frame of the story and the characteristics of the personae depicted.

And now, for the first time perhaps, this inspiring dance style has been adopted by an Italian choreographer to present a ballet, *The Journey*, which encompasses in its ensemble, a Greek myth and some cryptic lines from some Japanese poems.



Ileana Citaristi, the Italian dancer whose forte is Odissi dance and who has been associated with the 'Third Theatre' founded by Polish director Jerzy Grotowsky, has also put together *Pancha Bhuta*, a dance production in Mayurbhanj Chhau style to be presented during her tour of the country.

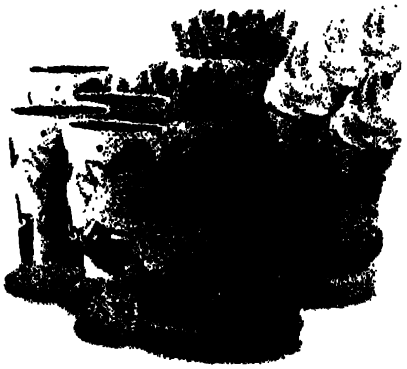
The ballet, conceived in different choreographic patterns, talks of the five elements in their original and harmonious states: Earth- solid, Water- liquid, Fire- heat, Wind- *Prana* and Ether-Space. The ballet then goes on to portray how intrusion by men and technology — with activities like construction, cutting, digging and mechanisation of life — have led to the collapse of the original balance. A happy mix of folk styles and formal dance, the choreography promises to be the *rasik*'s delight.

TASTE OF INDIA

● There is no beating the ubiquitous Indian palate. The latest to turn *desi* — in the post liberalisation era — ever since Kentucky Fried Chicken, TGIF and Domino's came knocking, is big brother McDonald's which has devised *shudh shakahari* family meals to greet (read woo) Delhiites during Navratri.

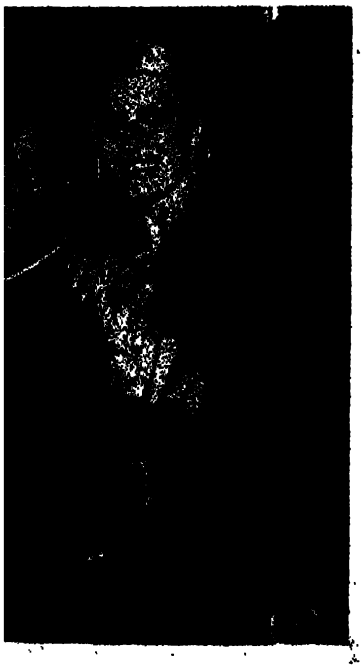
The all-vegetarian menu is likely to be on till September-end to coincide with the unveiling of McDonald's new vegetarian delight, the McAloo Tikki Burger.

During the promotional period, foodies can choose from two vegetarian meal combinations. The first being a meal for two priced at Rs 99 which includes a spread of two McAloo Tikki Burgers, regular French fries, two regular cokes and two soft-serve cones. The second is a family meal for four, boasting two McAloo Tikki Burgers, one vegetable burger, five pieces of McNuggets with McMasala sauce, two regular French fries, four regular French



cokes and four soft-serve cones — all at Rs 199. The McAloo Tikki Burger has an is a combination of buns, patties, potatoes, tomatoes and seven other vegetables. While the whole concept of McDonald's and vegetables seems a little odd, they are determined to take into account "local sensitivities" through this 'religious scheme'.

pstick; the lips stay protected and the colour lasts longer



Championship-India '98, in collaboration with Wizcraft India. The national level winner, DJ Sunny Sarid, of New Delhi received "a final stamp of approval" as he won a certificate and a customised car. Sunny has been DJaying for the last 15 years at New Delhi's Maurya Sheraton and Ghungroo. He will participate in the international round with 30 other contestants in Paris early next month.

"The DMC is to a DJ what the Oscars are for an actor and the Grammy is to a singer," said a visibly euphoric Sunny. "This is only the beginning. Next year will see a far greater participation." Sunny explains that it is the skill and the technique that he uses for mixing his music that sets him apart in the clan. He has performed with Bally Sagoo in Delhi and, independently, in Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Does he hope to raise in the *mooish* in Paris as well? "I am too realistic for that," says he with modesty. "This is my first time, and I am looking forward to it as a fantastic opportunity to be with fellow professionals from around the world."

RASOI

The food column



Merits of Meat

Jiggs Kalra on some recipes that act as tonics

Contrary to popular belief, *Ayurveda* is not a puritanically vegetarian science of life. Rather than proscribe, it prescribes consumption of meats when the need arises. And the need be more urgent when pleasure is being pursued. For such special occasions, it recommends shellfish as *veeryavardhak* or aphrodisiacs and tonics.

Those who prefer to preserve their vegetarian purity can derive their pleasure from Moong-e-Mohabbat, a delicacy that promises to bring a coral blush to the cheeks. Team Rasoi's —my team-mate is Dr Pushpesh Pant—discovered that the miraculous masala incorporates the *kushta* of precious gems and noble metals. In fact, the lentil recipe 'belongs' to the treasure trove of Hakeem Safdar Nawab.

Mumbai's epicureans entered the Age of Ecstasy at The Kandahar, in the Oberoi, Bombay, where our other team-mates — chefs Raminder Malhotra, Manish Law and Mohammed Ilyas — ladled these and many other goodies.

Husn-e-dariya

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 minutes

INGREDIENTS

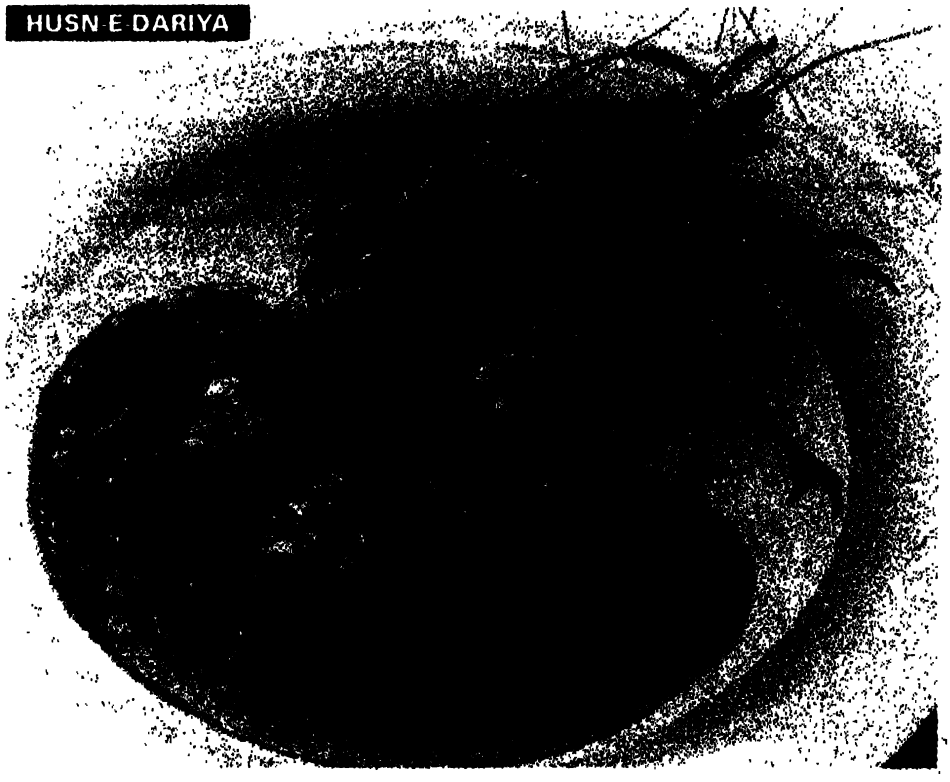
- 800g/1 lb 3/4 oz **Scampi meat**

The Marination

- 60 ml/1/4 cup **Lemon Juice**
- 20g/3½ tsp **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 10g/1¼ tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 2.25g/3/4 tsp **Kashmiri *deghi mirch* powder**
- 5g/1 tsp **Honey**
- **Salt**

The Gravy

- 60ml/1/4 cup **Cooking oil**
- 200g/7oz **Boiled onion paste**
- 15g/2½ tsp **Ginger paste(strain)**
- 10g/1¾ tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 175g/6 oz **Yoghurt**
- 9g/1 tbs ***Dhania*/coriander powder**
- 2.25g/3/4 tsp **Kashmiri *deghi mirch* powder**
- 1.5g/1/2 tsp ***Haldee*/turmeric powder**
- **Salt**
- 600ml/2½ cups **Scampi/fish stock**
- 1.5g/1/2 tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 1.5g/1/2 tsp ***Saunf*/fennel powder**
- 0.75g/1/4 tsp ***Lavang*/clove powder**
- 0.75g/1/4 tsp ***Dalcheeni*/cinnamon powder**
- 0.375g/1/8 tsp ***Chakriphool*/star anise powder**
- 5ml/1 tsp **Honey**
- 30 ml/2 tbs **Coconut cream**



COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

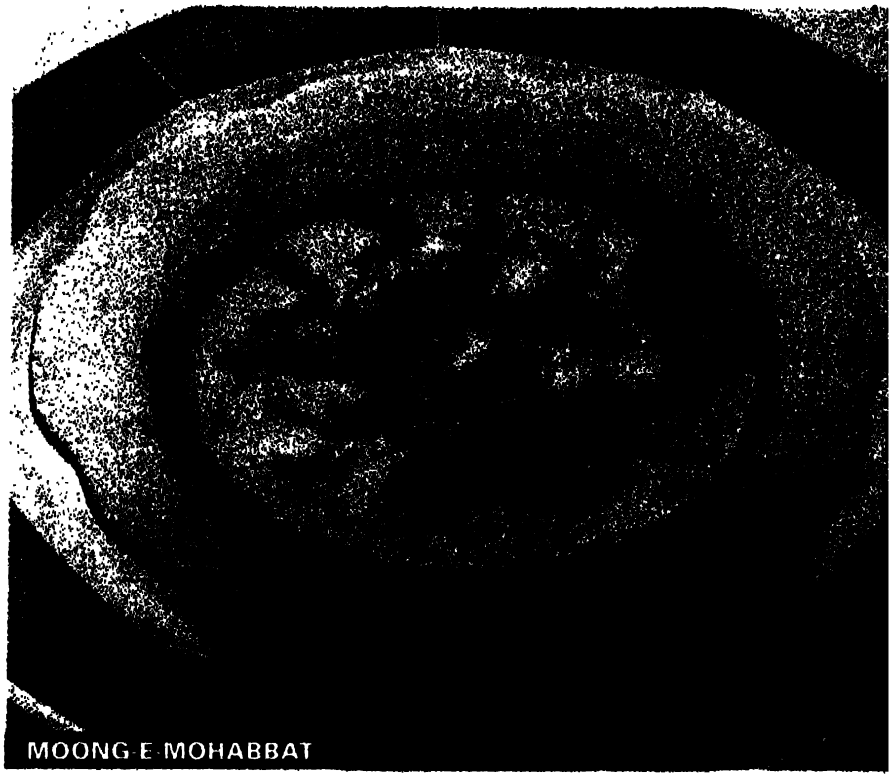
PREPARATION

- The Scampi: Shell, vein, wash, pat dry and cut into $1^{1/2}$" pieces.
- The Marination: Mix all the ingredients in a bowl, evenly rub the scampi meat with this marinade, and reserve for 15 minutes.
- The Gravy: Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander, *deghi mirch*, turmeric and salt, whisk to homogenise.

COOKING

- Heat oil in a *handi*/pan, add boiled onion, ginger and garlic paste, and *bhunno*/stir fry until the specks of fat begin to appear on the surface. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir-in the yoghurt mixture, return the *handi*/pan to heat and *bhunno*/stir fry until the specks of fat begin to appear on the surface.Then add stock, bring to a boil, reduce to a low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 4-5 minutes, add scampi, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, for $1^{1/2}$–2 minutes. Now add green cardamom, fennel, cloves, cinnamon, star anise and honey, and stir for a minute. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir-in coconut milk, return *handi*/pan to heat, bring to just under a boil, remove and adjust the seasoning.

Moong-e-Mohabbat


MOONG-E-MOHABBAT

INGREDIENTS

The *Kadhi*

- 500g/2 cups **Yoghurt (1-day old)**
- 60g/2oz ***Moong daal*** **(husked)**
- 3g/1tsp ***Kashmiri deghi mirch*** **powder**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Haldee*****/turmeric powder**
- **Salt**

The *Boondi*

- 100g/3 oz ***Moong daal*** **(husked)**
- **A pinch of soda bicarbonate**
- **Salt**
- **A pinch of *Shahi zeera*/black cumin powder**
- **A pinch of *Motii elaichi*/ Black cardamom powder**
- **A pinch of *Lavang*/clove powder**
- **A pinch of *Jaiphal*/nutmeg powder**
- **A pinch of *saunf*/fennel powder**
- **Cooking oil to deep fry *pakora***

The Tempering

- 50g/1/4cup ***Desi ghee*****/clarified butter**
- 2g/1tsp ***Zeera*****/cumin seeds**
- **4 Whole dried red chillies**

The Garnish

- **Golden fried onions**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1:45 HOURS
COOKING TIME: 1 HOUR

PREPARATION

- The *daal*: Pick, wash and reserve in water for an hour. Drain, transfer to a blender and pulse to a smooth paste. Remove.
- The *karael/kadhi*: Whisk yoghurt in a bowl, add *moong daal* paste, red chillies, turmeric and salt, and whisk to homogenise. Then add 1.2 litres/5 cups of water and whisk again. (To geta *karael/kadhi* of better consistency, forget about yoghurt. Instead, use 1.7 litres/7 cups of *chaas*/butter milk.)
- The *Boondi:* Pick, wash, and reserve in water for an hour. Drain, transfer to a blender and pulse to a smooth paste. Remove. Mix all the ingredients, add water (approx: 45ml/3 tbs) and mix well to make a batter, Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok, force the batter through a *pauni*/perforated spoon to make droplets and deep fry over medium heat until golden. Remove to absorbent paper to drain the excess fat.

COOKING

- Melt *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add yoghurt (or buttermilk) mixture and bring to a boil, stirring continuously. Reduce to low heat, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until of thin sauce consistency. Now add *boondi*, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, but carefully, until the *kadhi* become of a medium thick sauce consistency. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

To prepare the tempering, heat *ghee* in a frying pan, add the cumin, stir over medium heat until they begin to pop, add red chillies and stir until they change colour (bright red). Remove and pour this tempering on the *karael/kadhi*.■

TIME Out

Ghazala Wahab is smitten by the beauty of Ladakh

THE WARMTH OF A COLD CLIMATE

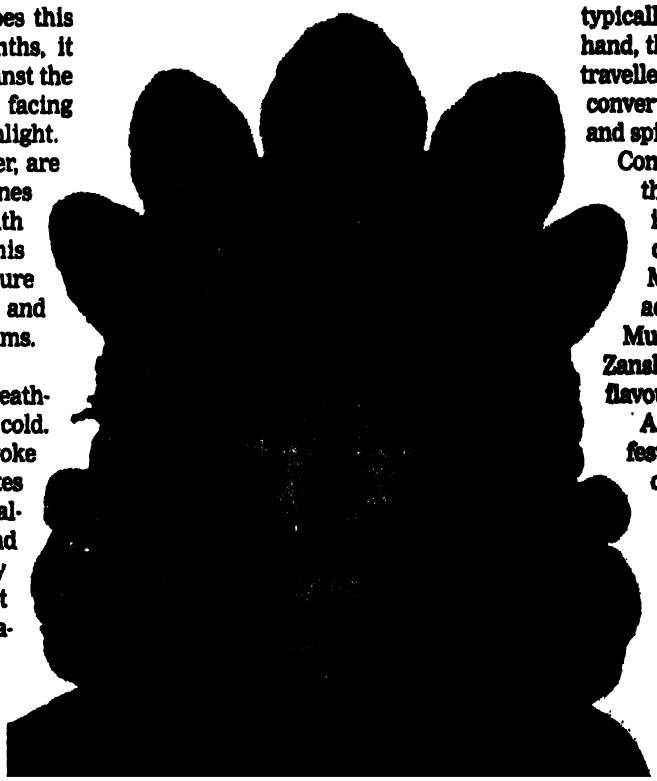
If you go to Ladakh be prepared to travel on roads that really aren't there. The highway from Srinagar to Dras remains open only for a few months in summer. Then it is extensively used by the Army and the state government takes no responsibility for it. In fact, the tourism commissioner of Jammu and Kashmir, Parvez Dewan, is unapologetic about the roads. "Roads will always be like this," he says crisply. "My job is to develop destinations, not roads."

But for all that, the dusty, back-breaking journey is worth every minute. As much for the scenery on the way as for the second coldest inhabited village in the world after Siberia — Dras. It is cold more because it is situated in a slight depression which creates a wind tunnel than for its height.

People in rural Ladakh work for around four months. The rest of the year is spent savouring the fruits of that labour inside the house as the snow takes its toll outside. The houses are made of mud with haystacks on the roof for the cattle. Not only does this serve as fodder in winter months, it also works as an insulation against the cold. They have glass windows facing the south-east for maximum sunlight.

The houses in Dras, however, are different. They are made of stones and look more like barracks with very small windows. Perhaps, this has something to do with the nature of the village, which is remote and inhabited by conservative Muslims.

Despite the terrain and the weather, Ladakhi people are far from cold. Their weather-beaten faces evoke sympathy and after a few minutes in the village, the guests are totally won over by the warmth and happiness of their hosts. They don't want sympathy, they want appreciation and with good reason.



SPIRIT OF BUDDHA
In Zanskar Valley, the monastic element is predominant in the events that mark the festival

The Ladakh Festival is under way, and though Leh remains the centre and, perhaps, the inspiration for the festival, it is the small villages which steal the show. It is here that one comes across the innocent, unrefined grace that only rural people have.

No elaborate dresses for them and no extensive musical instruments. Their songs are accompanied by native instruments, clapping hands and gentle, graceful dance movements.

It is tempting to bracket the Ladakh Festival into two broad categories: Muslim and Buddhist. There are two broad cultural streams in Ladakh, which sometimes merge and Ladakhis revel in this versatility.

Of the total population of Ladakh, 40 per cent are Muslims and not of Kashmiri origin. Most of them are travellers from Central Asia who chanced upon the Suru valley a few centuries ago and decided to make it their home. Their features, their clothes and also their eating habits are typically Central Asian. On the other hand, the Buddhists of Ladakh, again travellers from Tibet and some local converts, look upon Lhasa for cultural and spiritual inspiration.

Consequently, the festival embodies these distinctive features depending upon the region. The Kargil district in Suru valley has a Muslim majority so the cultural activities there have a strong Muslim element in it whereas in Zanskar valley, it is the monastic flavour which dominates the events.

As in other Muslim villages, the festival at Dras began with the traditional *naat* or a song in praise



MUSTAFA QURAISHI

of God. This was followed by a *balti ghazal* which was more like a *qawwali* in our part of the world. (This *balti* has nothing whatsoever to do with the *balti* curry popular in the United Kingdom; perhaps it has something to do with Baltistan which falls in Pak-Occupied Kashmir and is close to Kargil district.)

This year, the festival was not merely an improvement on the last such event, it also had many firsts to its credit. As Dewan pointed out on every given occasion, this year, even the Kargil women participated in the festival. "These public appearances by women are something unheard of in these areas. The last time it was an all-male affair," said Dewan.

But this concession was made only for girls below 12. Pretty, school-going girls and boys in school uniforms sang songs and did impromptu dance numbers.

In the entire area, whether it was Dras or Trespone or Panikhar, the programmes were dominated either by children or middle-aged men. There was no sign of women. Dressed in muddy-brown sheepskin clothes, a few men passed off as women.

Two plays, which were re-enacted everywhere seemed to be local favourites because despite repetition, they always managed to evoke a hilarious response from the audience even as the guests from the plains looked around bemusedly, incomprehension writ large on their faces.

The festival began with a traditional song in praise of God

The Muslims of Ladakh are extremely conservative and fiercely possessive about their culture. Outside influence is abhorred and that is one reason why, till a few years back, they did not even welcome tourism, the economic advantages notwithstanding. The Buddhists are different though. Not only did they embrace tourism faster, their culture is also an amalgam of many influences, which has probably made it more colourful.

So Rangdum in the Zanskar valley is different in many ways. Not only does the topography change, the people, the customs and the culture also changes. One thing that comes to notice immediately is the liberal nature of the society. Women not only performed for the audience, they constituted a large part of the audience.

The character of the festival also changed here. It was more sophisticated and one could feel the closeness to Leh. Women dressed up in their traditional robes, called *goncha*, with silk jackets and a turquoise-laden headgear called *Perak*. *Perak* is actually a statement of one's financial standing in the village. As Dewan said, "People, instead of putting their wealth in banks put it on their wife's head." Normally, a *Perak* is passed on from a mother to her daughter.

The sporting passions of any true-blue Ladakhi are polo and archery and they form an important part of the festival. They also have a Ladakhi version of the Afghan sport *Bushkashi* where instead of impaling the lamb the riders vie to smash a stone pyramid in one shot.

But it is not as popular as the other two. The Ladakhis, though, have divested both the games of the glamour attached to them in the plains. No dashing riders with colourful sashes, no furry headwear. Only simply attired men of all ages united in their love for the sport.

The most interesting part of the entire festival was the re-enactment of the Silk Route in Leh. People in traditional dresses, two-hunch camels, brightly-dressed horses, ponies laden with wares passed through the town just as the silk route travellers would have done. The procession then congregated at the polo grounds where more merry-making followed.

In the end, what made the 15-day festival stand out was the fact that it enveloped the entire region of Ladakh this time unlike in 1993 when it had remained concentrated in Leh. It did not matter if the shows were repetitive in village after village, it did not matter that many could not even manage elaborate costumes and that school children performed in their uniforms, what did matter and saw the festival through was the spirit and enthusiasm with which people participated.

The idea was also to extend the tourist season, which normally gets over by the end of August, by another 15 days, thereby giving people, thriving on tourism, a chance to earn a little more. And going by the number of foreign tourists around, it seemed that the idea was not wholly unsuccessful. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 23-year-old man. I have started getting a lot of white hair recently and want to know if there is any medicine I can take to prevent this. Please help.

SAURAV DUDEJA, CALCUTTA

Many times, premature greying can be due to hereditary reasons, internal illness, stress or a sudden hormonal change in the body. I would suggest that you start to *henna* your hair regularly as this will darken the hair naturally. This must be done at least once a week for effective results. Also, I would suggest that you do not shampoo it out but rinse it with water. This will help darken the colour. Stop worrying as it will only lead to more white hair.

I am 19 years old and want to know if there are any dangers involved in using bleach on my face. I am quite hairy and in the past, I tried to wax but it was very painful. Which is the best bleach available and are there any natural treatments?

SONALI, CALCUTTA

No, there is no safe bleach. All of them have strong chemicals that are harmful to the skin. Waxing can be a little too harsh on the facial skin, although if done properly, it should not be so painful. It is better to have a professional do it for you. Try rubbing the juice of half a lemon daily for a month to lighten the facial hair. I would also recommend that you let the juice dry up on the skin and then wash off with cold water. It will sting a bit as lemon is acidic but then it also has a natural bleaching effect, without any side effects.

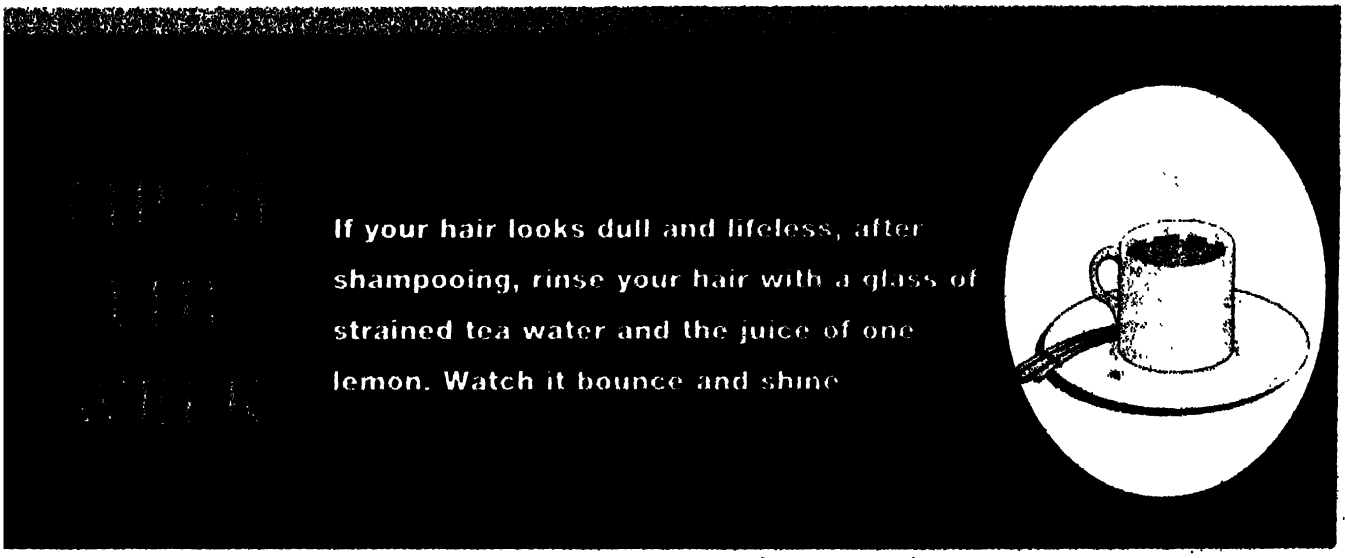
I want to know whether I can make a face pack at home. My skin type is oily. How often should I apply the pack? I am 17 years old.

ANURADHA, CALCUTTA

It's never too late or early to start looking after your skin and what better way to start than by doing it naturally? Since you have an oily skin, it is very important that you keep your skin clean at all times. Wipe the skin with rose water several times a day.

At home, you can make a face pack with the following ingredients — gramflour, sandalwood powder, lemon juice, a pinch of turmeric and mix these in rose water. Apply all over face and neck and leave on till dry. Wash face with cold water. Your skin will feel refreshed and the oily feeling will be removed completely.

Recently, I went to a beauty parlour for waxing. This was the first time and after a few



days, I started forgetting lumps in my arms. Why did this happen and is it harmful in any way?

PIYALI, CALCUTTA

Your skin must be very sensitive. It is important that you should have told the beautician that it was your first time and so she should have been more careful. Also many salons use a hot towel after waxing which is very wrong. One should always use a cold compression to close the pores.

What happens is that the pores open out and if one uses a hot towel after waxing, it can cause the skin to swell. Use a light moisturiser on the arms and rub an ice cube until it has completely melted. This should be done daily for three days for the skin to come back to normal.

I am a 21-year-old man. I spend a lot of time in the sun. People keep telling me that this is harmful and can cause skin cancer. What I want to know is how can I protect myself?

PRIYA, CUTTACK

Yes, the sun's rays are so strong that they can have damaging effects on the skin. Use a sun protection cream all the time that you are out in the sun. It is impossible for people who are working or students to avoid the sun completely but if you can avoid the sun during the peak hours, it would be good for you. You can also put on a cap or apply sun screen. There are many brands available in the market.

At home, you can wash your face with ice cold rose water to soothe the skin and freshen it. Make skin care a habit and what better way than to do it naturally.

I have a lot of dark circles under my eyes and no cream that I apply seems to be helping me. Someone told me to apply lemon juice but I do not think that is helping me either. Can you please offer your valued suggestions?

AMRITA PRASAD, HOWRAH

Lemon juice will only dry up the area. This area is very sensitive and has to be handled with a great deal of care. I would suggest that you mix almond oil and coconut oil together in equal quantities and massage the area around the eyes daily one hour before sleeping. This is to be done daily at least three weeks before you can see the results. Also, avoid late hours of sleep and drink at least ten glasses of water a day to flush out toxins. This will help tremendously in speeding the healing process.

I am a 12-year-old girl and want to have long and beautiful hair. Please suggest a natural remedy.

VIDYA DEY, ORISSA

The magic recipe is that you have to take care and look after your hair just like you look after your teeth by brushing them daily. Oil your hair with coconut oil once a week and use a mixture of *amla, reetha* and *shikakai* to shampoo your hair This will make them soft, silky and lustrous. I suggest that you brush your hair at least five to six times before going to sleep at night. This will help in blood circulation and make your hair shine. Always remember my golden rule for the skin and hair and that is whatever we eat affects the way we look, so eat health food, lots of salads and fruits, plenty of water. Avoid fried foods, sweets, colas and heavy gravy dishes. You will soon see your hair the way you always wanted it to be.

I am 29 years old and have a dark complexion. My legs are very dark with some patches on it. What should I do to lighten the colour of my legs?

SMITA SHARMA, CALCUTTA

It's no crime to be dark! For heaven's sake, feel good about your complexion. Some of the most stunning women are dark and sultry and sensuous. Yes, it is important for you to look after your skin as no one else will do it for you. Massage your legs and hands with warm coconut oil to which you have added the juice of one lemon. Leave on for about six to seven hours before bathing, preferably at night. When bathing, use the following — *loofah*, fresh cream, lemon juice and gramflour. Massage gently on the legs and arms and then bathe normally. This should be done thrice a week for results and remember, anything natural is not magical. It's only when you follow your beauty routine regularly will your skin respond beautifully to treatment.

I am an 18-year-old man. I have pores all over my nose and cheeks. Please advise a remedy.

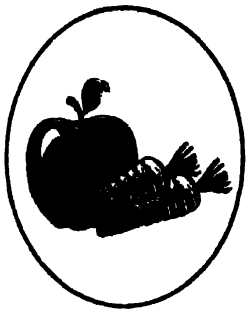
SAMEER JHA, CALCUTTA

Open pores are due to oily skin and I would advise you to wipe your face several times a day with rose water. Apply the following pack on the face — fuller's earth, sandalwood paste, turmeric and two ground cloves.

Apply all over face and leave on till dry. Also rub an ice cube regularly all over the face. This will help pores close up and bring a glow on your face. ■

TO TREAT BAD BREATH

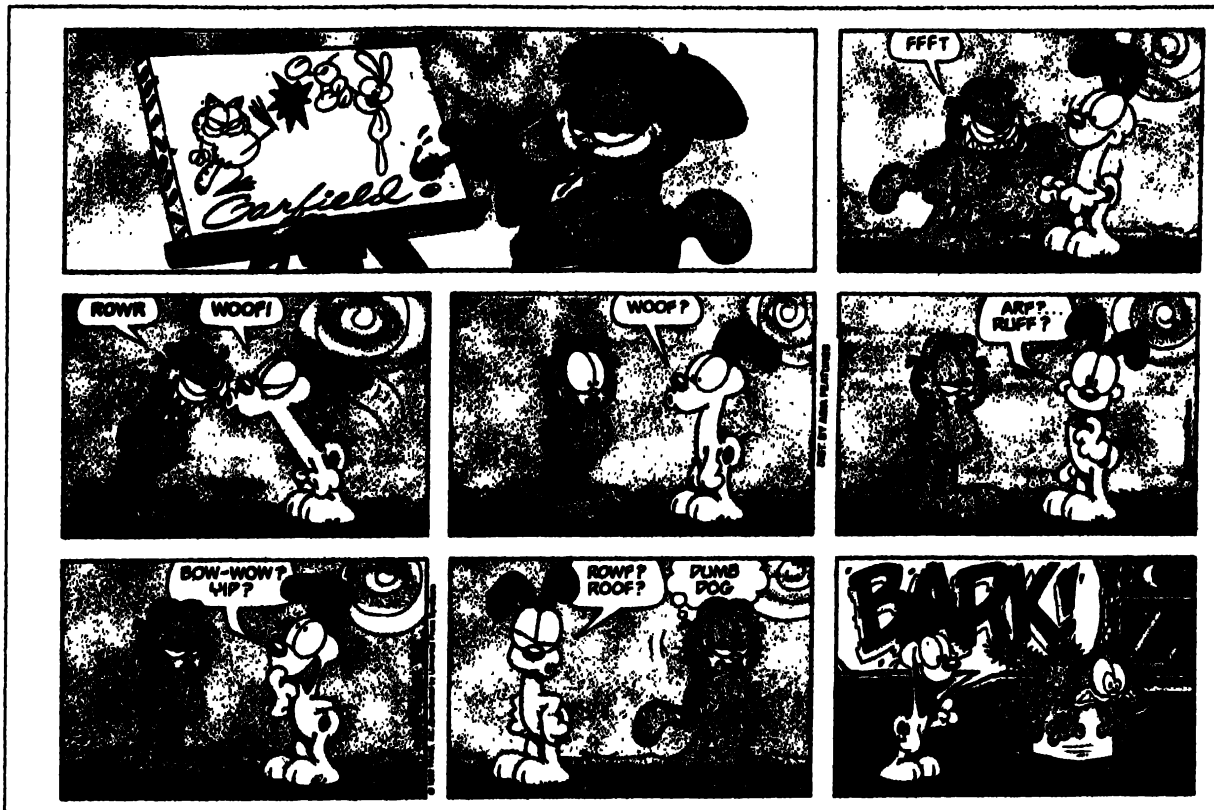
Go for a medical check-up. Try and include crunchy food in your diet such as apples and carrots. Cinnamon paste, if applied regularly to the mouth, also helps



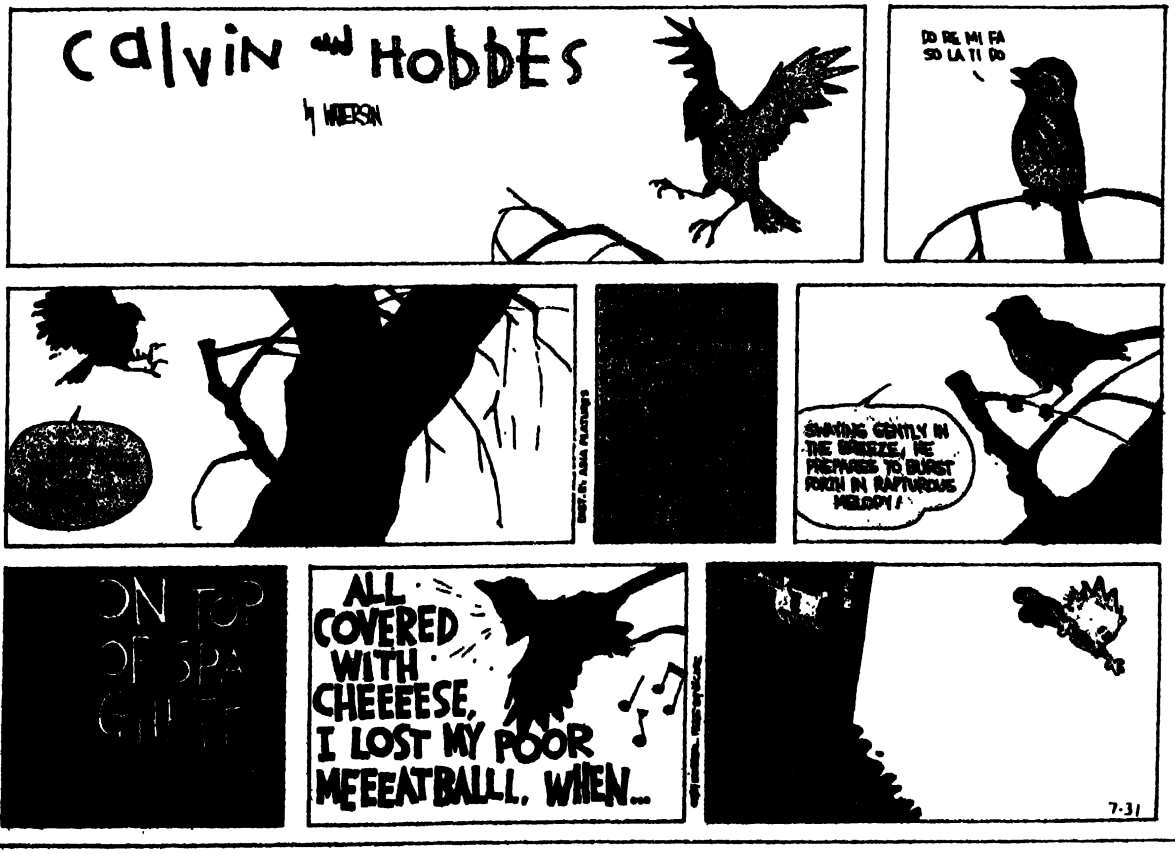
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC-742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC-743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC-743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD 268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC-202	1405	6
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 3, 5	IC 722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1345	daily	9W-512	2130	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC 965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
■ DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W 902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC 855	0755	2, 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W-912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2230	daily
CD 412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	3, 5, 7
			IC-230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W 611	0950	1, 2, 4, 6, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC 778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
■ IMPHAL					
CD-255	0630	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC 714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
■ JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LILABARI					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
■ PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ DHAKA					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-092	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1100	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs & Sun Arr. Tues., Wed. & Sat	16-15	2382
2309	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	16-15	2310
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr. Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep. Wed. & Sun ; Arr: Tues. & Sat	12-30	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2819	6-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2820
3073	23-00	Himgirl (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat., Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep.: Tues , Wed. & Sat; Arr.. Tues , Fri. & Sat.	09-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	6-45	Udyan Abha Tootan Express via Main Line	18-10	3008
3049	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3050
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-20	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-25	3020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	6-00	3022
3089	16-25	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	3090
3317	9-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3089	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-30	3090
3035	18-20	Asansol Express	9-45	3036
3231	21-45	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	23-20	Jamalpur Express	8-10	3072
3015	7-35	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	8-05	Rampurhat Express	21-45	3018
1159	16-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs..; Arr. Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	7-55	1160
3005	16-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	7-55	3006
1445	16-30	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	6-35	1447
1181	16-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri ; Arr: Tues.	7-55	1182

Sealdah

Time	Dn
9-15	3142
9-45	3144
7-15	3112
20-15	3084
5-15	3154
9-45	3146
4-55	3084
15-30	3152
12-00	3154
4-55	3152

Teesta-Torsa Express
Darjeeling Mail
Lal Quila Express via Main Line
Kanchenjunga Express
Gour Express
Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express
Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.
Kalkhar Express
Jammu-Tawi Express
Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop
Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express
Ganga Sagar (Dartharpur) Express
Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	6004
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	6-20	8001
2860	12-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-20	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-15	Ahmedabad Express	5-45	8033
8030	18-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-00	8029
2841	13-15	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	12-30	2842
2733	7-05	Falaknama (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2734
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	6-00	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8025	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8026
8015	21-25	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-30	8016
8007	21-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	8-20	8008
8409	18-25	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	9-00	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-15	2822
7046	9-35	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	16-15	7045
8017	16-40	Purulia Express Dep. Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	11-35	8018
7479	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-00	7480
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr. Tuesday & Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	17-00	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-35	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-45	2422
5628	09-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	09-30	5628
5627	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only	13-45	5627
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	13-45	5623
5624	09-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	09-30	5624
6324	22-25	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr.: Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5626	09-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	09-30	5625
6525	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	6525

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203546-54 for in-coming trains; 2203535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203495-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3503535/37.
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry).

THE Best

Manisha Pande turns the spotlight on Mumbai's nightspots



PUMP UP THE VOLUME!

HANGING OUT

Night life in Mumbai may seem like a thing of the past but the Generation Next is still to be found in discos and pubs like Copa Cabana till midnight

Once famous for its nightlife, Mumbai has now been reduced to just another metropolis where life comes to a halt after midnight. The government has donned the garb of the Thought Police to make sure that the city's inhabitants get to bed at a decent hour, and in a sober frame of mind.

While that aim is far from being achieved — young people will be young people, you know — this policy has ensured that the BJP-Shiv Sena combine earns the collective ire of the nightclub owners and the youth of Mumbai.

However, this doesn't mean that nightlife in Mumbai is over. Lights still flash in discos, beer mugs still splash over at bars and dance floors are chock-a-block with dancing couples. The options might have been reduced, but the enthusiasm remains boundless.

The most happening place (and the most upmarket too) in Mumbai is the 1900s at the Taj Mahal Hotel. The night-club boasts of hosting the *creme de la creme* of society. That the 1900s is the place to be seen in is without doubt, and the added attraction is the fact that during weekends it is open till 3-3.30 am.

"We have special permission from the commissioner of police to remain open till late during weekend," says Tej Deep, the ex-manager of 1900s. With the law on its side, 1900s has no complaints against the government despite the fact that during the week it closes down sharp at 12.30 am. In fact, for them the latest act is a blessing in disguise. While the rest of the pubs and nightclubs close around midnight, 1900s remains open, and hence has a bigger crowd.

Entry in 1900s is strictly by membership which amounts to Rs 45,000 annually. Hotel

NOYONIKA CHATTERJEE

Model

In the city, I like to go to Fashion Bistro because that is where my friends go. In the suburbs it's J-49. I like the music there. But my favourite remains The Ghetto

guests are allowed entry, though, along with their guests. The snacks are Italian, American and Indian, and come with every kind of imported liquor, including the finest French wines. Over the weekend, however, it takes a good 15-20 minutes to fight your way to the bar, and get a drink. This disco has, perhaps, the biggest dance floor in the whole city. No wonder then, that it's a favourite among the glitterati.

But while 1900s continues to pull in the crowds, other discos/pubs are not so lucky. "Our business has been affected quite a lot," says Ravi Shetty, owner of The Ghetto. "What's worse is that the law is not uniform. Some nightclubs are allowed to be open till late."

The Ghetto was one of the most popular pubs in Mumbai till some years back but lost out thanks to the government policy. However, it is still a favourite among teenagers and advertising executives as it is priced low and provides free entry.

Ghetto's claim to fame is its informal atmosphere. "Earlier, pubs used to be quite sophisticated. We were the first to make the pubs informal," says Shetty. With rock music and drinks costing less than Rs 150, The Ghetto is the answer to many youngsters with limited cash resources. Though the pub is for people above 25, gatecrashing by teenagers is quite common. But The Ghetto is determined to fight this. "We check ID cards on a routine basis. And unless they (the youngsters) show proof of the age we don't allow them in," says Shetty.

In between the elite 1900s and the informal Ghetto is Copa Cabana. With no entrance fee and reasonable prices, this is the place where the twain meets—the famous and the common.

Latin music, Spanish food and affordable prices have made this a popular stop. But the biggest attraction probably are the theme nights that the nightclub organises.

"Every Wednesday we have a ladies' night wherein ladies are given shooters (test-tubes filled with liquor) which they are supposed to empty at the bar itself. They can't share it or take it to their tables. It's great fun," says Anupam, the owner. He, however, is unperturbed by the government regulations. "Since we close early now, the crowds come early," he says.

Theme nights are a major attraction in these pubs and night clubs. The weirder the themes, the better. And that's what Copa Cabana is best known for. While Wednesday nights are for ladies only, Friday or Saturday are the happy hour nights. Buy a Margarita and have one free. The hour ends the minute anyone goes to the toilet or outside the nightclub.

Other popular spots for Mumbai's young and restless include Jazz by the Bay, the Fashion Bistro, home to the bold and the beautiful, and The Raspberry Rhinocerous which often has visiting film stars to pump up the glamour quotient.

Not that celebrities are an absolute essential when it comes to dancing the night away. All Mumbai kids need is a drink or two, good music, and a few inches to call their own on a dance floor — and they're in business. ■



FREEDOM AT MIDNIGHT

While the rest of Mumbai's nightclubs and pubs close around midnight, the 1900s at the Taj Mahal Hotel remains open well past midnight drawing in large groups of revellers

KASHMIRA SHAH



Actress

I like the Cyclone best. They really know how to treat their guests. The hostess, Hansi, knows how to make the guests feel comfortable. The ambience there is so nice, it feels like you are welcome there

SHAAN



Pop singer

I don't have any personal favourites actually. I go wherever my friends go and lately we have been going to Fashion Bistro. I feel it has the right mix of crowd, not the 18-20 year-olds, but people well into their mid-20s. I also like Copa Cabana

MY PERSONAL *Style*

BACK TO BASICS

Natural fibres and primary colours predominate in Anju Modi's wardrobe

My preferences change from time to time. I am a very emotional person and everything affects me deeply. So what I wear is very important to me as it reflects not just my mood for the moment but also my personality.

Sometimes I get in the mood for serene white, sheer lace, with pearls and diamonds to accessorise them. You know, a kind of cool, elegant look. Then there are other times when I go for riotous colours. But most of the time it is the subtle and the restrained which becomes me.

Despite my fluctuating moods and the choice of clothes, one thing remains constant—my kind of colours. I go for natural, basic colours. You know, black, white, lemon yellow, brick red, parrot green, sea blue, coffee brown and so on.

The appeal of these colours never wanes. A coffee shade of the colour brown is undoubtedly a most beautiful brown as all the other shades of it just fade away with time. After all, there has to be a reason why nature has used these colours and not the secondary ones. Even when I explain to my craftsmen what colour I want, I elucidate using an example from nature. Like, I tell them that I want a *henna* green or I want a turmeric orange.

Secondary colours don't appeal to me so much. Colours like maroon, grey or turquoise blue are not my kind of colours. They look good, but for me, their appeal is not universal. My all-time favourites are yellow and white.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

YOUNG AND CAREFREE

On a holiday, I really let my hair down. I get into shorts, minis, jeans or just about anything that catches my fancy. I like feeling young and alive when I am out of the confines of the city life

On a holiday, I really let my hair down. I get into shorts, minis, jeans or just about anything that catches my fancy. I like feeling young and alive when I am out of the confines of the city life.

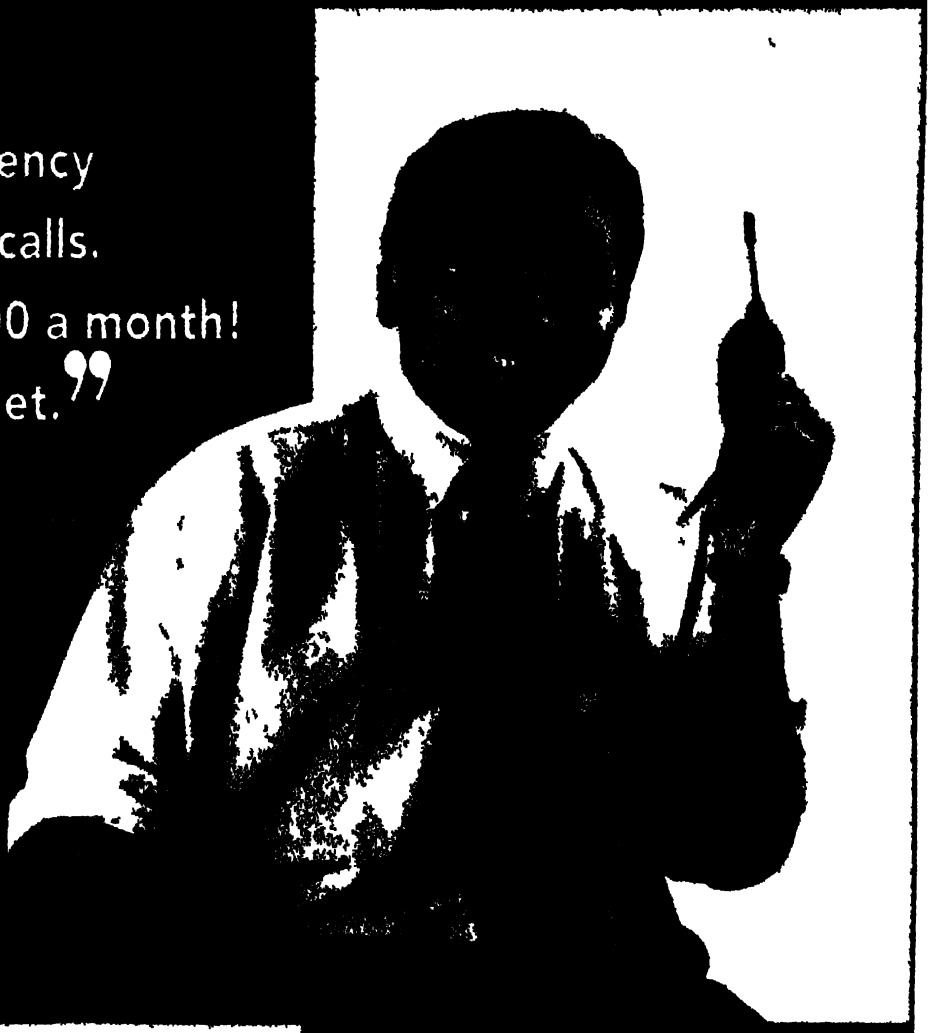
At work, I prefer trousers, pant suits and at times *churidar kurtas* too but for formal occasions, it's always a saree for me. I find it most sophisticated and elegant and above all comfortable.

I personally feel that clothes are very important. I cannot agree with the views of people who find it a waste of time to pay much attention to their clothes and their appearance. To me, it is just reflective of a negative attitude to life in general.

When one dresses well and is aware of the fact, one also feels good about oneself and this positive feeling shows in one's behaviour and one's work. And fashion is just part of this whole exercise of feeling and looking good. And for that reason, I think fashion should be taken seriously.

AS TOLD TO GHAZALA WAHAB

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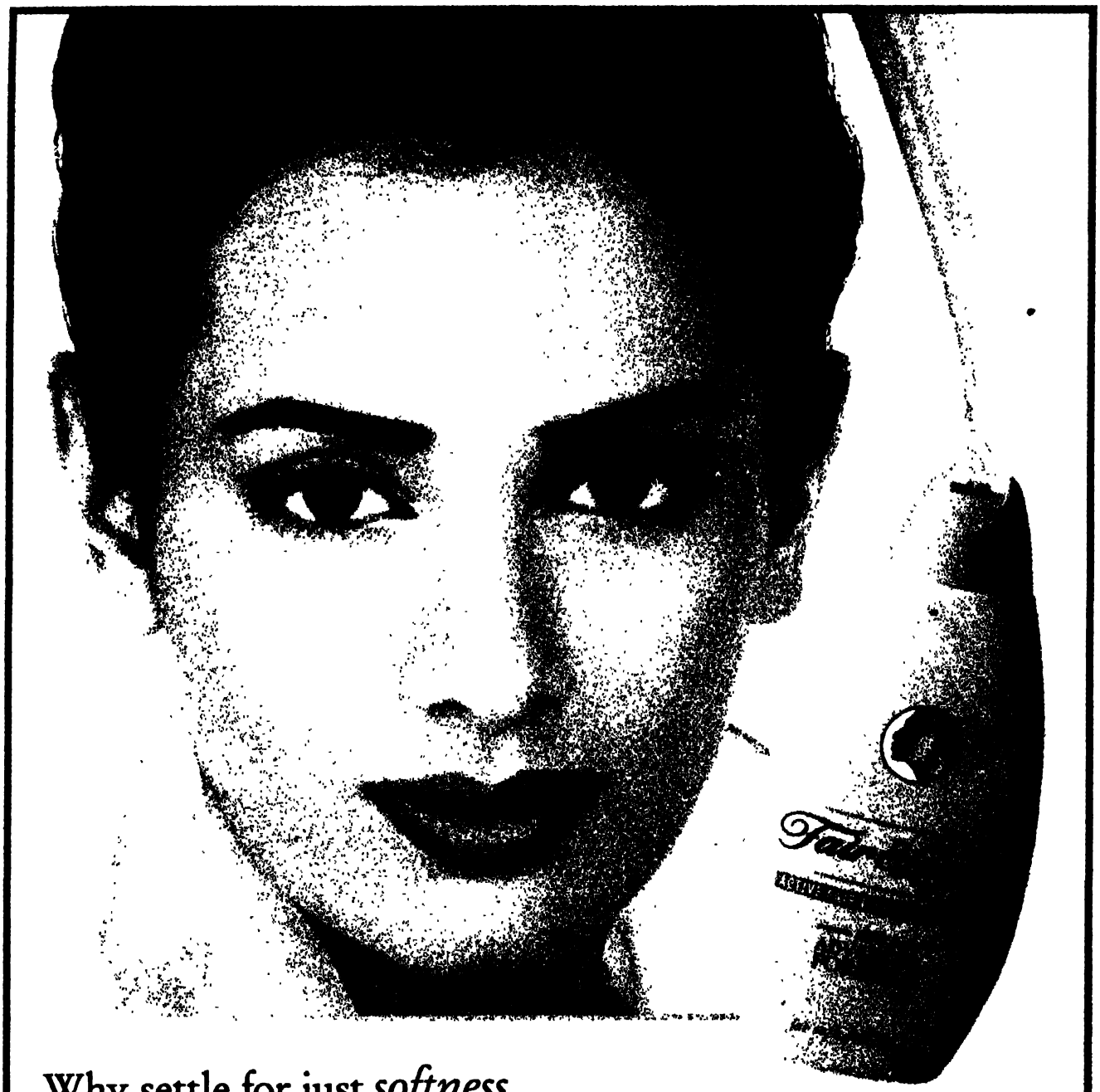
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ALL THE WORLD'S HIS STAGE

The cover story on Girish Karnad was immensely readable ('The Play's The Thing', August 30). It is good to hear that the man who had lent the silver screen so much depth, sobriety and sensitivity, has now found an effective medium in the stage. There is, after all, only so much that popular cinema can offer to men like Karnad in terms of creative and professional satisfaction. Karnad will always remain a great intellectual presence in the world of culture.

SUPRIYA CHATTERJI, CALCUTTA

PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

The profile on Girish Karnad was enjoyable. For once, you focussed on more thought-provoking matter than fashion and dress designers. I hope the trend continues. Although Girish Karnad is a name that one keeps hearing about, his background was not known to many people. He has indeed come a long way from a young boy who wanted to be a poet in far-off Sirsi. What was, however, poetry's loss became drama's gain. I am sure the stage has been much enriched with talented, intelligent playwrights like Karnad gracing it.

Shreya Dutta, Burdwan

NAME AND FAME

Small Talk is one regular column in *Graphiti* that I love to browse through. The piece on how pertinent one's name is in determining fortunes, was particularly humorous ('Small Talk') as well as thought-provoking. In India, (sur)names acquire major significance since the second name reveals everything: one's place of origin, caste and religion. And hence the divisions in society. Unfortunately, too much stress is still placed on these parameters than one would like to admit.

Ananya Saha, Calcutta

NOVEL IDEAS

The article on wrought iron furniture ('The Wrought Iron Age', August 30) was very informative. It is true that with living space shrinking, people are now trying out novel concepts in furniture design. It is for this reason that wrought iron furniture, which was used primarily as garden furniture earlier, now occupies pride of place in our homes. The article gave us new ideas about how to redesign our homes.

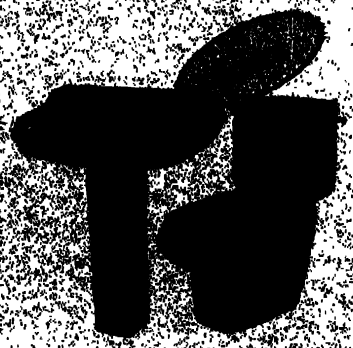
D. Ray, Calcutta

COVER : Sadruddin Daya's garden house on the Versova beach designed by Nari Gandhi

graphiti ★ 11 October 1998

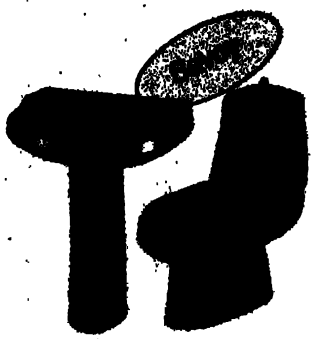
04 HOMING IN On some of the more unusual residences in our country 12 OUT OF THE CLOSET 14 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES 16 MIXED BAG 18 RASOI 21 SMALL TALK Why is the Hindi film industry in such a bad way? 28 THE BEST Diamonds may be a girl's best friend but there are other gems that are worth collecting 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE

The idea behind exclusive bathrooms



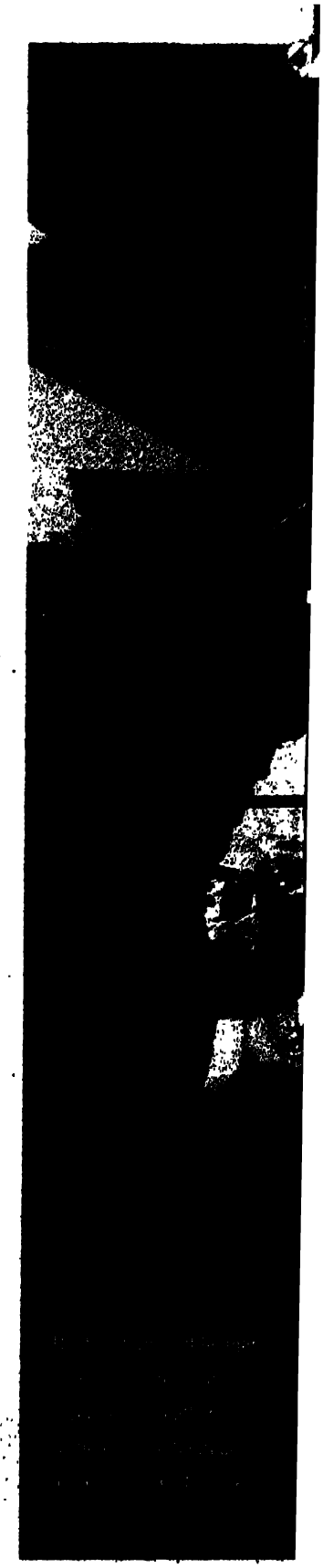
Fascinating Hindware

VITREOUS HINDWARE



HOMING IN

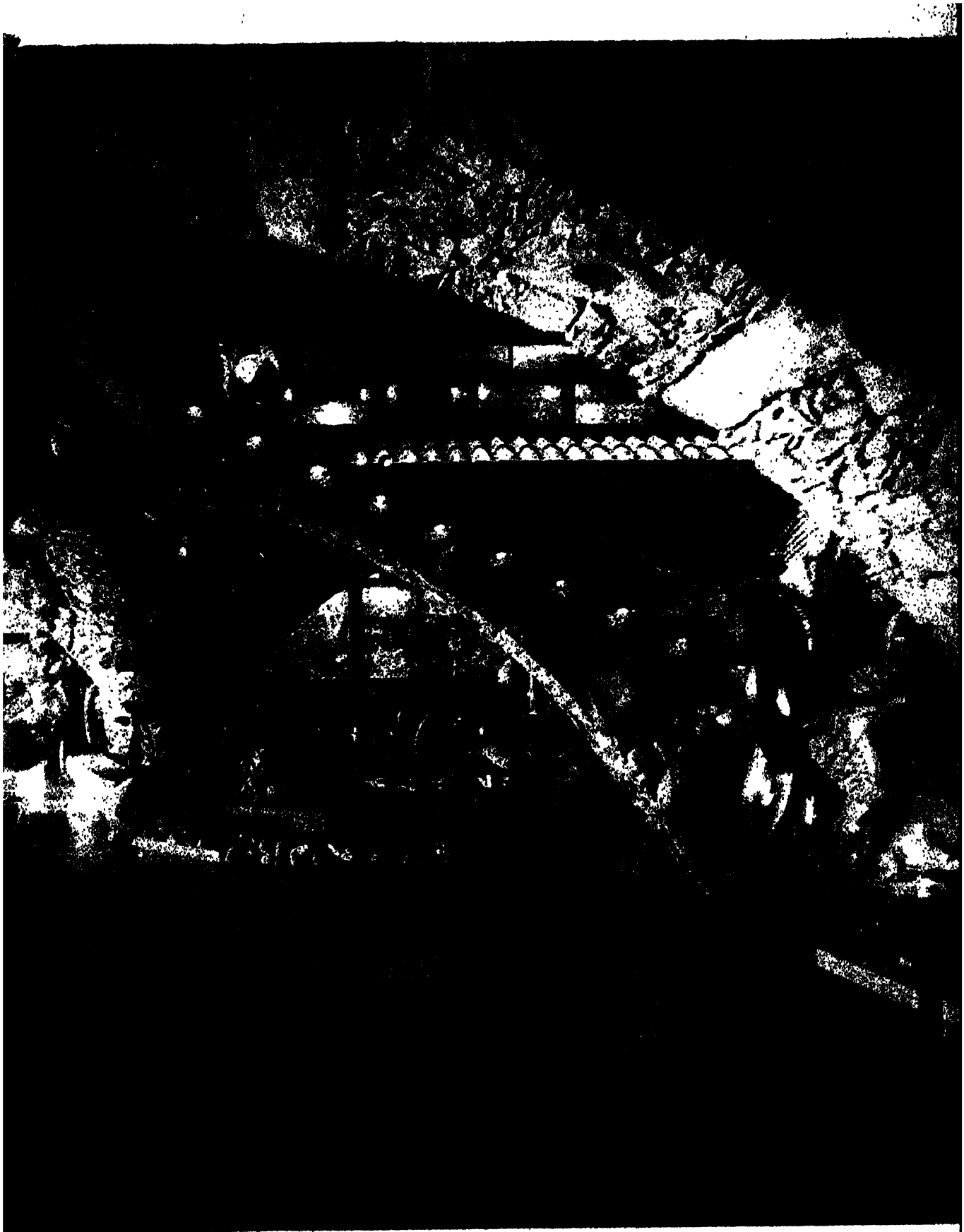
On some of the unusual residences in the country. ***Ghazala Wahab, Manisha Pande*** *and* ***Susmita Banerjee*** *get the grand tour*



When it comes to houses, size does not matter. What matters is the scope of your imagination. Because only that can transform a flat into a work of art and reduce a palatial house to a junk yard.

In fact, in this age of 'anything goes,' even the bizarre can be beautiful. You don't need to worry about aesthetics, congruence or even symmetry. All these are the things of the past. Follow your instincts and create your own dream house is the new-age wisdom.

But very few people have the courage to experiment with their houses. The furthest they venture is to hire an interior designer and give him/her a free hand. But with that, there's always the danger of your house being decorated to death, and looking like a mausoleum to good taste. Even vibrant bad taste would be better than that.



Sadruddin Daya ©

A home with a view

Imagine living on the sea front and having only a few windows looking out to the sea. Well, that's not Sadruddin Daya's problem. His architect, the late Nari Gandhi, did not believe in keeping nature — and the sea — at bay.

The house he built for this owner of Dawood Shoes is made entirely of stones and wood which either take the shape of floor-to-ceiling cabinets, partitions, or frames for huge French windows without many encumbering walls. As a result, there are only three-four walls in the house. "Nari didn't believe in creating walls," says Daya. "That was the first thing he told me, 'Don't ask me to create, ask me to destroy.' The walls that you see are there because I kept them."

As you enter the house from the main door, you are greeted by a wall on only one side. The other side is taken up completely by a series of floor-to-ceiling arch-windows with low seats made of stone slabs. The side opposite to the door comprises only floor-to-ceiling French windows. The fourth side of the living-cum-dining room is taken up by the kitchen and the guest room. Again the need for walls have been kept to the minimum as cabinets take up one side of the kitchen, whereas in the guest room it is the wardrobe. Plants and creepers double up as curtains.

This wall-less house has to be seen to be believed. The arches, made of stones, each chiselled to perfection and arranged artistically, bear the burden of the entire house. There are no columns and no iron rods. Simple floor tiles and huge French windows complete the Bohemian look of the ground floor. The furniture, soft-leather sofas and stone slabs covered with leather cushions give the hall a rustic look.

The way upstairs is another revelation. Carved out of a white boulder weighing up to 20 tonnes, the stairs wind their way up the arch on to the first floor. The steps and the entire flooring is of wood. Here again there is no wall between the sea and the house. The bedroom has only one-and-a-half wall; the rest of the space has been divided between French windows and a wardrobe. Obviously, Daya cares more for nature than privacy.

"The house took 11 years to make. I didn't even have a clue as to what Nari was doing," says Daya. "In fact, even Nari didn't know that. He used to say art is not planned. He was right. I love this house that's why I come all the way to spend the night here. I have about 10 houses but this one is the best. This house taught me to love art," says Daya.

And artistic it is. The entire house is dotted with plants and priceless pieces of modern art. "Nari has provided space for at least 2,000 plants inside the house," says Daya. It seems one is living with nature. Built on Versova beach, the low, double-storey structure is a feast for hungry eyes tired of scanning the multi-storied concrete jungle of Mumbai.



ALOKE MITRA

BOOK WORM
It is quite easy to get lost in the labyrinth of books in Ashok Mitra's house

Ashok Mitra ©

A study of life

What you won't miss in economist-author Ashok Mitra's Alipore Park Road sprawling flat are books. The bedroom, the study, sections of the living area, are all spilling over with periodicals, journals, old tomes, glossy paperbacks, magazines, bound volumes of classics and what have you. It's very easy to get lost in this labyrinth of books.

The living area is done up in subdued tones of maroon, black and white with some paintings of Mahim Rudra and Robin Mondal thrown in. Thrown in, because Mitra doesn't even remember how they came about. "I cannot recall how I acquired it, may be I did pay for it," he says about the Mahim Rudra.

A wall-hanging from Fiji adorns one wall while a white sculpture of Shankha Chowdhury languishes in another corner. Small artefacts like a copper *ghat* or a terracotta conch shell embellish the centre tables. The house decor, however minimalist, is all his wife's doing. A rather sedate ambience marked by the absence of any bright colours, or flowers and plants.

The bedroom also has the same no-nonsense look about it with a large bed in the middle flanked by ornate cup-

boards, chairs, a dressing table and racks — housing what else but books. Play a voyeur and peep under the bed: books and more books there, some in desperate need of attention.

However, the study is where all action is. The walls are lined with books arranged in racks, designed by his wife, he points out. Though if you expect order here then you are likely to be disappointed. Crime and philosophy go together as do works of Tagore and Karl Marx. "They are all in a jumble," says Mitra apologetically. So much so that, at times, even he can't find what he wants amidst this jungle of books.

But it is evident that as far as Mitra is concerned his study is the main room of the house. This is where he spends his day either dictating his newspaper columns, reading newspapers or simply watching cricket on television. Mitra has his own way of starting his day; he likes to be left undisturbed so that he can concentrate on his writing. "Between 4 and 6 in the morning I make it a point to get over with all my writing. Then my wife strolls in with our morning tea." Tea is followed by a newspaper-reading session which is taken quite seriously.

The septuagenarian communist gives the credit for keeping his book collection to his wife but at the same time laments the fact that had they been young, they would have been able to take better care of the books. "You know there is no one to dust them regularly, as a result half my collection has been devoured by white ants."

With a collection as large as Mitra's, one would really need an entourage of domestic help to bring them down from the racks every now and then and dust them. In fact, Mitra had approached the Jadavpur University some time back to help him catalogue the collection as in any organised library and they had asked for a period of three months to do the job. But Mitra turned down the offer because "I cannot allow my study to be taken over by them for that long a time."

"Earlier, my collection was even larger but somehow I had to get rid of them by gifting them to friends and acquaintances," he says. Casual kleptomaniacs have also run away with many of his priceless books from his drawing room in Delhi and yet others have borrowed and never bothered to return them.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

LOOKING UP Nalin Tomar's house looks like a beautiful toy-house; everything about it is small and dainty, including the staircase (left). The narrow space could permit only one room on each floor (right)

Numerically, his collection could come to about 5,000 books garnered over a period of 50-60 years. "Every single book has been bought by me," he says proudly but then concedes, "maybe one or two per cent of this collection has been gifted."

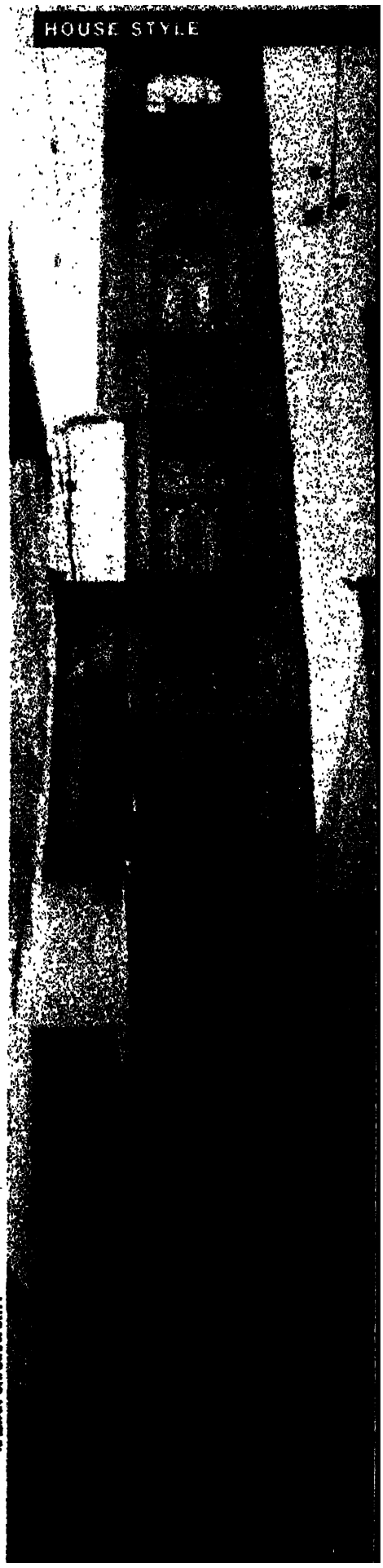
"But," he adds in a lighter vein, "I haven't stolen any of them."

Nalin Tomar ☙

Towering good taste

The muddy tract, made worse by rain, that leads to art and antiques dealer Nalin Tomar's house does not prepare you for what lies ahead. Situated in the midst of the historic Hauz Khas of Alauddin Khilji, Tomar's house is one with history. With an area of only 40 square yards, Tomar had no choice but to go upwards. "I bought the land because I liked the view and also because that was the only thing I could afford in the vicinity," he says.

So he mixed Badarpur soil with cement to get the old sandstone effect



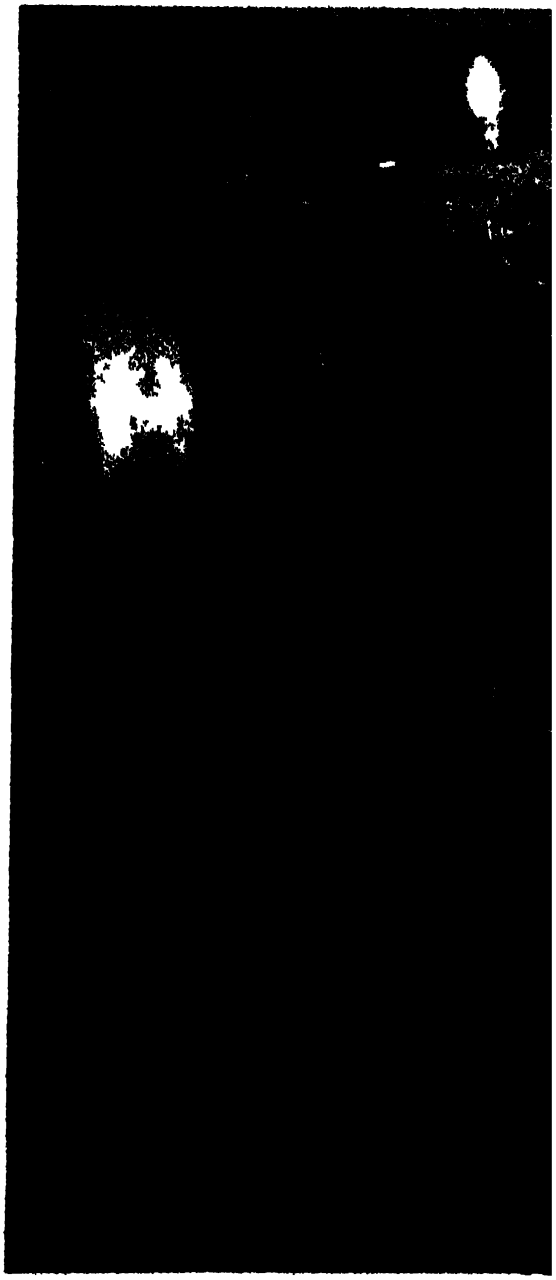
KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY



COLOURFUL ALL THE WAY
You'll find coloured fake flowers, terracotta figurines, birds in bright colours and three-dimensional stone paintings in Shahnaz Husain's house

and built a tower for himself. "Actually, credit for that should go to my architect, Revathi Kamath. It was her concept from the beginning and I did not interfere with it at all," says Tomar.

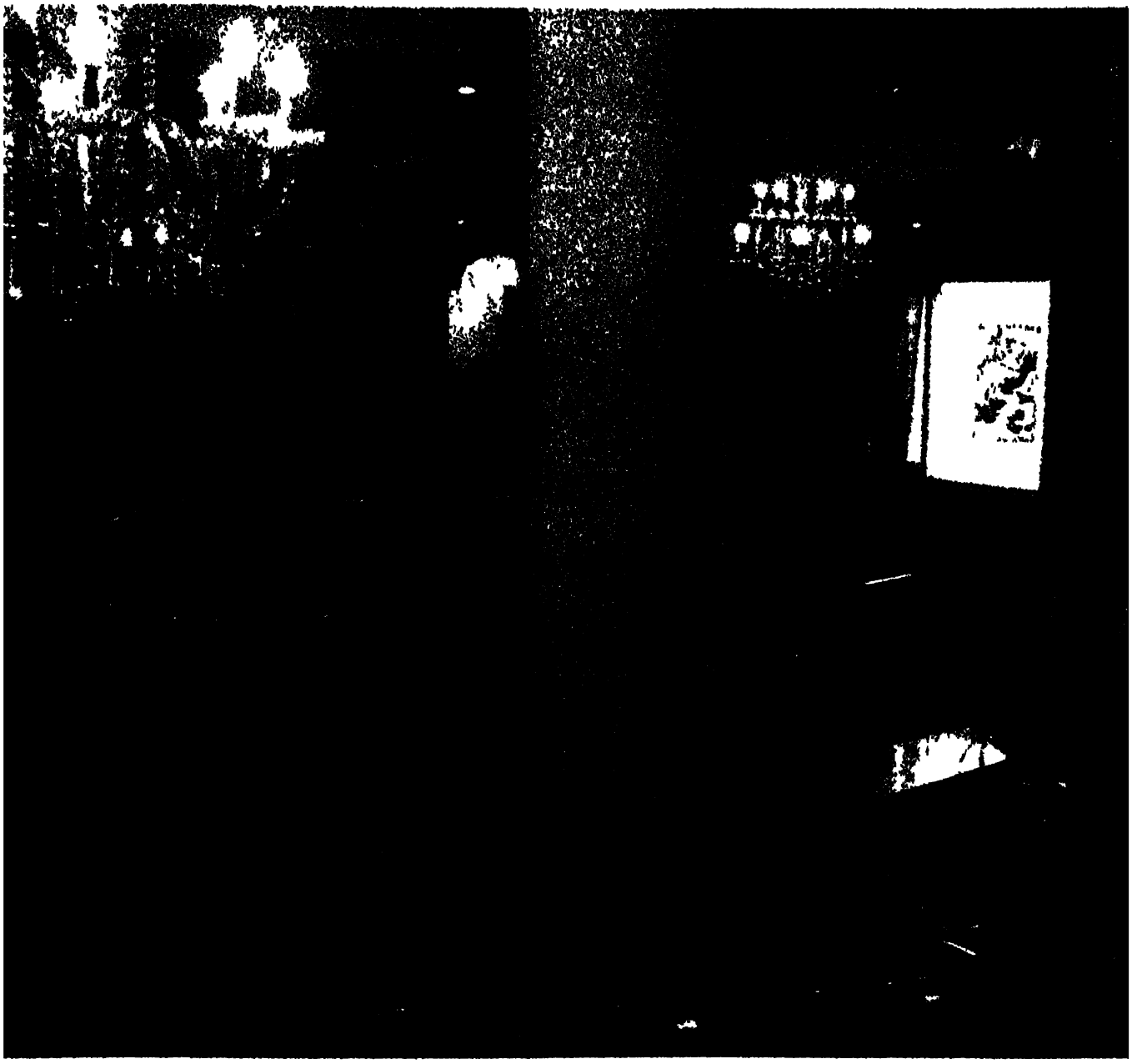
But tragedy of being one with history is that the house looks static. Perhaps, it has something to do with the surroundings or the compulsions of limited space that Tomar's house has left nothing for later. Because the rooms are small they have high ceilings for the required volume. The walls have wedges and built-in shelves for artefacts. Everything has been done to provide as much space, or at least the illusion of space, as possible.

The living room overlooks the ruins of Hauz Khas and capitalising on that Kamath has done away with the wall. Instead, there are tall, slim, curtainless doors opening in a narrow balcony which overlooks the entire stretch of the Hauz Khas monument and its gardens.

As you enter the living room, you are accosted by a stuffed tiger on a built-in seat in the wall next to the door. Pass that and you run into a stuffed snake on the side table. Is that taking the animal-lover a bit too seriously? Tomar shrugs. "We keep getting these things as we deal in antiques and artefacts," he says.

The house has four floors and each floor has only one room. There is no space even for the bathroom which had to be fitted in on the mid-landing of the stairs.

The whole house has a sense of



unreality about it. It is like a beautiful toy-house: everything about it is small and dainty, including the staircase.

In fact, the staircase is so narrow and steep that it takes a while to get used to it. Since Tomar lives alone, the two-bedroom house suits him fine.

"In any case," he says, "I don't spend a lot of time here because my work requires me to travel very frequently."

Though Tomar admits that if he were to make another house it would not be like this, he says that the house has changed his life in many respects Because of its uniqueness, it was featured in a lot of magazines and TV programmes.

"When people start associating you with something unusual they expect you to make some kind of a statement," he says candidly. "But frankly, when I built this house I wasn't making any sort of a statement, for me it was born more out of necessity than anything else."

Shahnaz Husain ©

Scent of a house

You cannot miss Shahnaz Husain's house if you have a sharp nose. All you have to do is follow your nose like a sniffer dog and before you know you'd be outside the Princess' palace in New Delhi's Greater Kailash I The smell is



unmistakably Shahnaz's. A strong rose essence developed at her farmhouse on the outskirts of Delhi.

"I think my house is a reflection of my personality," says the queen of herbal cosmetics stating the obvious. "It also reflects my dreams, my career, my life and the very essence of my being." The moment you enter the place you are greeted by dozens of laminated photographs of Husain. Her's is the image that follows you wherever you go in the house.

This is one place where size does matter. As you enter the house there is a conference room on the right. A comfortably large room dwarfed by ornate furniture pieces, animal skins, fake trees, brightly coloured fake flowers, terracotta figurines of birds in bright colours bought from Saudi Arabia, three-dimensional stone paintings in gilded frames and blow ups of Husain and the members of her family. Everything in the room screams for attention. Then there are bowls of pot pourrie on the centre table. And if this is not enough, there is a Shahnaz Husain home video played by the obliging staff member as you await the princess.

Says Husain, "I visualised the house like this when I was building it, and I have done the rooms the way I always wanted to." She did not make use of the services of an interior designer because as she says, "I did the house according to my own ideas and creativity." The high point of the house, according to Husain, is the living room which is also called the white room. The room has two pillars in the middle to give it the period look. Everything, from the carpets to the upholstery to the walls is in pristine white.

Two rooms house her closets and dressing room. According to Husain they are important as she begins her day in these rooms. Another room which deserves mention is the Hollywood room. Huge posters of Hollywood stars adorn the walls thereby lending the

NO FRILLS
Raghu Rai's house may lack polish but it is not unkempt; only that it has a very much lived-in look about it. Rai wouldn't mind either if his children were to mess up the rooms by throwing cushions around

room its name. It is more like a recreational centre complete with a pool table and a popcorn vending machine.

Husain has divided her entire house into various sections, each with its name, like the green room, which is done entirely in green, the coffee room or the red room. Despite this, in Husain's hands all identities are merged. Whichever part of the house you go, her presence permeates through. Ironically, though she works with herbs and plants, her house has none of these. Instead, the entire house seems to have been appropriated by fake plants and creepers which can be quite unnerving. For her, nature seems to be for commerce only.

Raghu Rai

Less than picture perfect

When Raghu Rai, India's ace lensman, moved into a small '*sarkari ghar*' at New Delhi's Rabindra Nagar, all he brought with him was his image of India. The country he captured in his lens; the country he interpreted through his pictures; the country he carried with him wherever he went.

"*Mere ghar mein pure desh ki mitti hai* (My house has soil from every part of India)," he says proudly, explaining, "I have bought plants from wherever I have travelled. So, with the plants came the soil of that region. I planted them in my garden and the roots spread taking the soil with them."

What Raghu Rai calls his garden is actually an untamed jungle of sorts. It has been created more by an act of wind than anything else. Because Rai planted only a couple of trees, the rest was done by air pollination. Rai's contribution has been non-interference in the work of nature. The consequence: a wild array of trees and bushes with occasional signs of human touch by way of huge black Chinese pots which dot different parts of the garden.

What are conspicuous by their absence are flowers. "That's because there is no space for flowers," Rai says simply. Usually one comes across house-proud people, but Rai is garden proud. In fact, the moment one turns inside the colony from the main road one can make out Rai's house because of the jungle which he calls his garden. A narrow pathway leads inside to the main house which is literally camouflaged by trees.

Just opposite the entrance to his house is the pillar he bought from Gujarat. A straight vertical structure, it ends in a seat with a canopy where Rai has placed a Tibetan stone image of Buddha. "I stole it from Dharamshala as one cannot buy it," he says sheepishly. "I fell in love with it the moment I saw it, so I closed my eyes and told His Holiness that I am sorry but I must have it. In my mind's eye I saw His Holiness smile. I took it as a sign of affirmation."

Rai should not worry whether the Lord approves or not because he has placed it in the most beautiful setting and the Lord would definitely be feeling as much at home as you feel when you enter his house. The first thing that strikes you is the totally unpolished look of the house. That does not mean that it is unkempt, only that it is very much lived-in.

According to Rai, "The room where I spend most of my time is the living room. I read in this room, listen to music, attend to my calls and even conduct most of my work from this room. So it has to be appealing as well as comfortable. *Arre, yeh jeene ke liye hai* (after all, the house is for living). A spic and span house is like an exquisitely beautiful wife: you can admire her beauty but cannot touch her. Now who wants that?" he asks.

As if to illustrate Rai's point, his two young daughters bounced into the room, jumping all over the diwan, throwing cushions at each other, totally unmindful of the stranger in the room. Rai looked at them fondly and with the mildest of the rebukes said, "Now don't do that, you'll hurt yourself," before continuing with his description of the house.

"I like to change things in the house continuously, otherwise it gets boring, static," he says. "Imagine coming back to the same house every day of your life with everything looking the same."

Rai's house is full of huge Chinese and Burmese pots and artefacts collected over the years. One black Chinese pot with a plant sits pretty in a *jhoola* which was originally bought for his younger daughter. But when she outgrew it, the *jhoola* was assigned as the resting place for a pot.

One thing that strikes you about Rai's house are the bare walls. Even the curtains are minimalist. "I like it that way," he says. "If the walls are too crowded then they get busy with themselves, and you cannot talk with them."

Sounds strange. Well, that's Raghu Rai for you. A man who insists on visual integrity in his house. A man who believes that a picture speaks a thousand words.

So, he'd rather have the peace of an empty space. ■

OUT OF THE *Closet*



This up-and-coming actress has an eclectic style that is reflected in her wardrobe

RIYA SEN

DEV VARMA

My favourite colour is white. So, whenever I go shopping, I ask for white clothes, and if they don't have any, only then do I go for any other colour. I'm not too fond of bright colours anyway, but then again I've got quite a few red dresses that I love. I generally buy what suits my fancy, I suppose.

I'm perhaps the laziest person in the world, so I make a mess of my closet. I depend on my maid completely to keep it in order. We've just moved into this new flat and for the first time in my life, I have a room to myself and a cupboard too. All these years I shared one with my elder sister, Raima.

You'll find lots of Western outfits in my closet — hip huggers, tank tops, sleeveless shirts, mini skirts, body suits — everything that a 17-year-old is expected to wear. There is not too much denim though. Of course, when I'm at home, you'll find me in these old pair of jeans and T-shirt, but when I go out I prefer not to wear them.

A major problem with me is that I lose a lot of clothes, generally on film sets and shooting locations. And then I go shopping for the same things all over again. It's not only clothes that I lose. You won't believe it, but I've lost all my gold rings and also a pair of gorgeous gold *payals* that I bought in Hong Kong a few months back.

But the worst was losing a diamond pendant recently. It was soooo pretty! God, I want to cry when I think of it now. I guess I'm very unlucky with ornaments. I don't care much for silver or junk jewellery, so you won't find those in my closet.

Most of my shopping is done in Mumbai. I don't go for any particular label, anything that suits my fancy is good enough for me. There's a little shop called The Rolling Stone in Worli that stocks great clothes. Then there's another place called Oak Tree and sev-

eral little shops on Linking Road, and in Bandra and Lokhandvala.

I have shopped around a bit in Paris and Cannes and have brought back wonderful stuff from there. One of my favourites is a fabulous body suit that I bought in Cannes. Everyone had warned me about the incredible prices but I decided to go shopping anyway even if I had to starve. And then I saw it displayed at a shop window — pristine white and just my size. I wear it so often that I've managed to ruin it a little, but it's still my favourite.

Another favourite is a mauve *Benarasi* sari that I wore for the first time during the *mahurat* of Bharathi Raja's film *Taj Mahal*. Everyone expected to see me in one of the slinky outfits that I wore in the film, but I surprised them all. It's a beautiful material with *zari* work all over and looks very old and traditional.

It comes as a surprise to everyone when I say I'm very fond of wearing saris When I was in school, I used to wear a light green silk sari belonging to my grandma, Suchitra Sen, for every school function Needless to say, I tore it to shreds as I've done to many of her other saris. Nowadays, I wear some of my mom's saris and a few that I can call my own.

I have a crazy shoe fetish; wherever I go, I buy shoes. All of them have heels measuring at least six inches and come in various colours. There are a few black ones that are really cool and some white ones that go well with my white pants. Most of these are custom-made in a shop called Shoebiz in Mumbai.

A wooden block heel, one of my favourites, and a green and white high heel was bought in Cannes. I know this sounds mad but I'm quite capable of spending all day buying shoes!

There are not many designer labels in my closet. Some hipsters and tops are from Kookai, Paris and a few from Morgan in Bangkok. I don't possess any Indian designer labels but would love to own either a Rohit Bal or a J.J. Valaya creation. But then for me, any casual outfit will do. I just have to feel comfortable and look good.

AS TOLD TO GARGEE BHATTACHARJEE



KISHOR ROY CHOWDHURY

BODY BEAUTIFUL

One of my favourites is a fabulous body suit that I bought in Cannes. I saw it displayed at a shop window — pristine white and just my size. I wear it so often that I've managed to ruin it a little, but it's still my favourite



SHOE SAVVY

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SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

LONELY AND DEPRESSED

Q : I am a 13-year-old girl and terribly depressed. I often feel sad and lonely and it seems, I have no shoulder to cry on. I am the only daughter of my parents and have no friends to share my joys or sorrows with. This world seems to be full of false friends. I try to keep myself cheerful but it's all in vain. Please advise.

SRESHTHA GUWAHATI

The world is as good or as bad as you make it out to be I think you are indulging your feelings of being sad and lonely, although, of course, being an only child does not help The greatest friend that a lonely person can find is in the world of books Read Jane Austen, Isaac Asimov, Arundhati Roy read whatever strikes your fancy or is available to you This is completely different from television because reading is not a passive process, the characters, their motivations, their problems come alive in your mind, they are activated by your imagination
Reading will also train you in the necessary social skills to enable you to make friends as it will give you an insight into how other people think and respond, which is something you haven't had enough of, because of being an only child in a small family Do start reaching out to people, to classmates teachers, your parents and relatives Get yourself a puppy — it's difficult to feel lonely with a pet inside the house The world is a good place, you just have to be more receptive to it

BLEAKHOUSE

Q : I am an 18-year old student who has recently passed her Class XII examinations. I have secured second division whereas all my friends have done very well. Now my parents are harassing me mentally and making it difficult for me to live with them. I find my future to be very bleak and this is compelling me to think about suicide. Please help.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Academic results have nothing to do with joy, happiness or success in life Examinations are mechanical tests of memory, they cannot accurately assess your aptitude, charm or survival skills Turn a deaf ear to whatever discouraging things your family or friends may have to say The quality and worth of your life has nothing to do with learning by rote
Look at yourself and the world around you with fresh eyes What is it that you want to do, that you are good at doing? However difficult or impossible they seem, make your own set of goals and quietly, determinedly, stubbornly, work towards it It does not matter what the rest of the world thinks In the end, ever if you get half way there, it is good enough

AGE NO BAR

Can a girl marry a boy younger than her? What are the difficulties of marrying someone younger? I am a 22-year-old woman and my boyfriend is two years younger to me. Can we marry after some years?

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

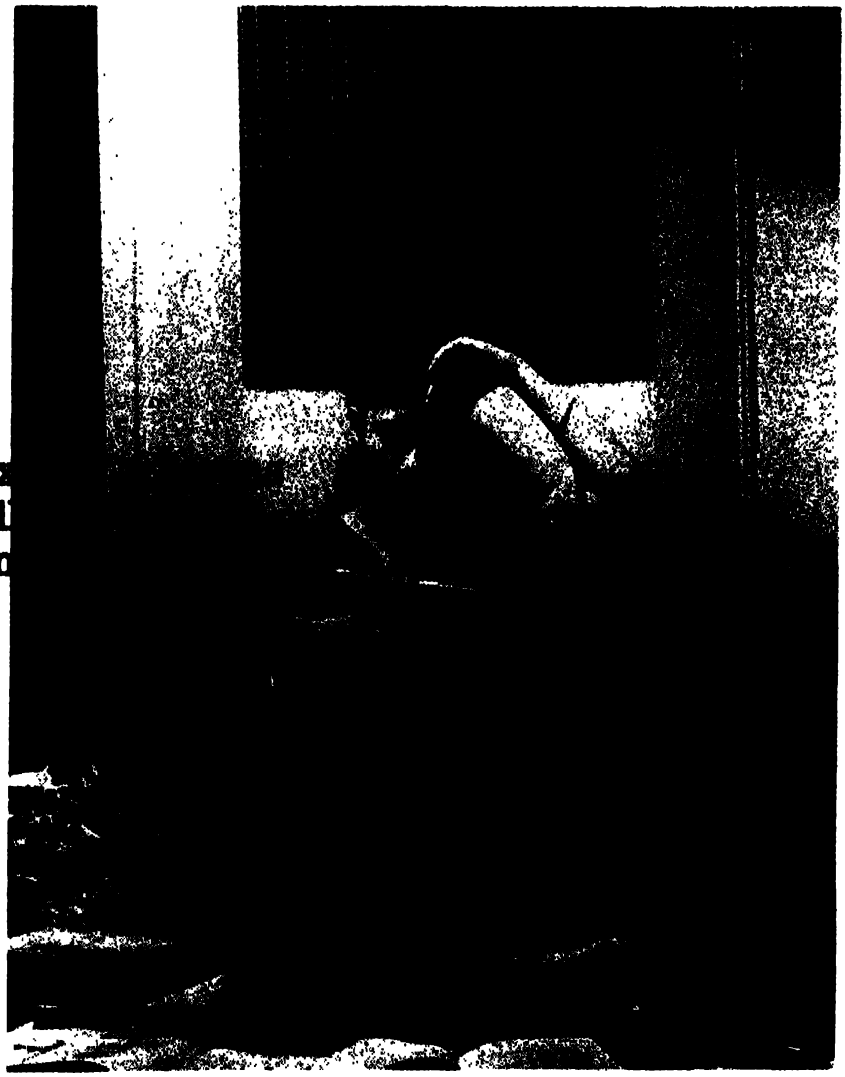
I don't think that a minor difference in age makes a difference in marriage, since the pattern of married life has changed and both the partners are increasingly engaged in sharing the struggle of life together. Things were different when the man was supposed to completely provide for his wife and demand complete obedience in return
Anyway, both of you are exceedingly young, keep your friendship going but do not tie yourself up in a commitment. Follow the flow of things and whenever you do plan to settle down together, make a realistic rather than a romantic assessment of your life together

YOUNG BLOOD

Q : I am an 18-year-old boy studying in Class XII. I don't regard myself to be a homosexual but I am deeply in love with a boy from Class VI. I love him very much and on my birthday, he gave me a beautiful gift. I am about to finish school and am feeling sad and depressed. I feel I cannot live without him. Should I express my feelings to him? Please advise.

DEBANJAN MAITRA, CALCUTTA

The feelings that you feel for this young boy are not necessarily sexual. Maybe, you just like him very much. On the other hand, it is a bit unrealistic to say that you cannot live without him. Please don't traumatise him by expressing your deep and passionate reactions — just move on in your life, with college, new friends, new interests. Of course, you can remain in contact with your young friend, but keep a sense of perspective about the whole thing. I think that your problem is that you are bored and do not have enough to do. As they say, 'an idle brain is a devil's workshop'. Get real. All the best!



TARAPADA BANERJEE

I fared poorly in my ex
all my friends did wel
are now harassing r

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Q : I am 24 years old and have an eight-month-old son. After his birth, I became disinterested in sex. Even before this, I was not really interested in it. My husband loves me very much. But recently, he has begun to find faults in whatever I do. I know it has something to do with my indifferent sexual response. Should I consult a doctor? Please help.

XYZ, CALCUTTA

It is not difficult to lose interest in sex when you have an eight-month-old child to look after. Perhaps, you are not highly sexed in any case. Yet, there is no denying that a satisfying sexual bond is a very important ingredient of a happy marriage.

There is no harm in consulting a doctor, but have a frank discussion with your husband first and tell him of your fears and inhibitions. Learn to relax, to switch off from domestic and household hassles. Physical and emotional trusts are very important in a physical relationship. Treat sex as a process of reaching out rather than a tiresome chore. Make your husband feel special. Perhaps, he is just the tiniest bit jealous of the love that you are lavishing on his son! I think things will fall into place themselves.

QUARRELSOME PARENTS

Q : I am a 14-year-old schoolgirl and have loving parents. But they often quarrel over trifle issues and as a result, I cannot concentrate on my studies. If I try to intervene, they tell me it's none of my business to talk on these matters. What should I do?Please give your valued suggestions.

DAMINI, DHANBAD

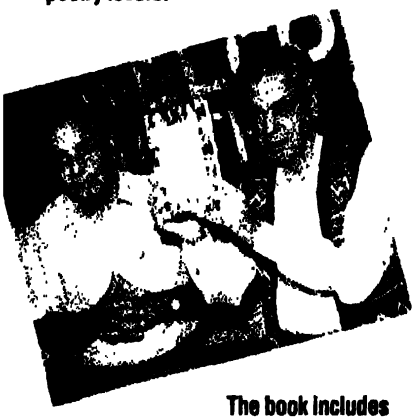
Parents do tend to quarrel, it is something that you have to put up with. Learn to switch off, listen to music, watch television, go for a walk, but remain neutral and unperturbed about the whole thing.

Frankly, I don't see why your concentration on your studies should get disturbed by what sounds like a recurrent 'kiss-and-make-up' scenario. Parents are human too, don't impose impossibly adult codes of behaviour on them. ■

MIXED Bag

● BETTER AND VERSE

Selected works of some 33 poets from India and Pakistan have been put together in *Masterpieces of Modern Urdu Poetry* by K. C. Kanda, who has many books on Urdu poetry to his credit. A compilation that holds a remarkable variety of themes and styles reflecting the salient trends of modern Urdu poetry. Some 94 *ghazals* and *nazms* penned by names such as Ali Sardar Jafri, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Kaifi Azmi, Sahir Ludhianvi, and Ahmed Faraz among others make for delightful reading for poetry lovers.



The book includes all-time favourites like *Ranjish hi Sahi* by Ahmed Faraz, *Intezaar* by Makhdoom Mohiuddin, *Mera Safar* by Ali Sardar Jafri and *Tasawwur* by Kaifi Azmi.

Putting together the collection of *nazms* and *ghazals* hasn't been easy given the constraints of capturing the finer nuances of the original works in their translations. Releasing the book, Jnanpith award winner, Ali Sardar Jafri, emphasised the fact that translating from one language to another was in fact a tightrope walk.

The book (Sterling, Rs 495) features the poems in Urdu calligraphics, their English translation, and the romanised version of the text.

The silver lining



It began as a small band of college students, with Barry John at the head. Today, 25 years later, the Theatre Action Group (TAG), the Capital's best-known theatre group, has a lot to look back on as it celebrates its silver jubilee.

TAG's long list of mainstream theatre productions, in English and Hindi, is impressive for its range and diversity; from musicals like *Jesus Christ Superstar* in the 70's to *Blood Bothers* in the 90's, to classics like *Oedipus* and *King Lear*, thrillers like *Wait Until Dark* and *Veronica's Room*, dramatic works like *Equus*, *Amadeus* and *Agnes of God* and comedies like *Cactus Flower* and *Baghdad Ka Ghulam*. Among its members who have made it big are such names as Shah Rukh Khan, Mira Nair, Divya Seth and Pamela Rooks.

And now that it is time to enjoy the fruits of its labour, TAG is doing it the grand way. They have planned a host of activities which include writers' workshops, theatre festivals, mime and dance acts, theatrical fashion shows, readings and children's workshops.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: This winter, wow them with kne



One for the soul

In this age of Cartoon Network and Disney World, are kids really interested in the *Ramlila* any longer? After all, it was written by Tulsidas in the Awadhi dialect which nobody understands today. But Shobha Deepak Singh of the Bharatiya Kala Kendra obviously thinks otherwise. For the last 42 years, she has been directing the *Ramlila*, without any compromise. According to her, the charisma of this evergreen production lies in the fact that it has attracted four generations. People who once saw it as children, now, bring their own kids to see it. But there's more to this *Ramlila* than mere mythology. To begin with, it has a lot of

THE FULL MONTI

So you thought slimming was all about starving yourself? Well, think again. According to Michel Montignac, the French food expert, who was at The Park, Delhi, to talk on 'How to eat yourself slim', the secret lies in changing one's eating habits.



He says that depriving oneself by counting calories leads to people becoming even fatter, as the less we eat the more our survival instinct drives us to lay down fat reserves. "Calorie-intake has nothing to do with fat storage," says Montignac, "because it is not the quantity of food which is important. What matters is the quality, in other words, the nutritional value of the food we eat."

The root of obesity, according to Montignac, is hyperinsulinism—the dysfunction of the pancreas caused by an excessive consumption of bad carbohydrates that are low in nutrients (like potatoes) and refined in nature (like sugar, white flour and white rice). Changing one's diet by eating carbohydrates with a low glycaemic index (unrefined cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables, fructose) to accompany meat, fish, eggs and cheese will result in a progressive reduction in hyperinsulinism and weight loss that will be permanent.

So, never mind the crash diet you were planning to go on next week (or the week after). Just concentrate on eating the right kind of food, and the kilos will melt away on their own.

h boots, paired with tight jeans or thigh-skimming skirts

dance: Chhau, Kathakali and something called creative reaction. "We have tried to keep in touch with the changing times by improvising and innovating every year," says Shobha. And there lies the challenge because the script and the music remains unchanged. Though from next year, they'll change the language to Hindi and have a new soundtrack.



Bharatiya Kala Kendra's *Ramlila* begins every year on the first of Navratri and ends two days before Diwali. Unlike other *Ramlilas* which show different episodes of Ram's life each day culminating with the burning of Ravana on the final day, the Kendra's *Ramlila* enacts the *Sampoorna Ramayana* each day.

• EXPOSING AJANTA

The paintings of Ajanta never cease to fascinate man. Those beautiful frescos representing Buddhist art at its peak in India still seem to be the subject of much wonder. And there are people like Benoy K. Behl for whom Ajanta is almost a passion. So much so that Behl, a photographer by his own right, has authored a book which showcases the paintings in their original colours and this he has been able to achieve with the use of natural light while shooting them. All earlier photographs of Ajanta were taken in artificial light which caused much destruction to the paintings and this also changed the original colours, giving them a reddish-brown highlight.



Says Behl, "Apart from being the most remarkable work of art, the paintings tell a lot about the society as it was then. People were conscious of fashion as is suggested by the dresses and ornaments worn by the figures."

Even the smallest details, according to the author, have historic significance. Like a patch of painting on the ceiling depicting the flora and fauna which shows the presence of chilli (otherwise believed to have been introduced by the Portuguese).

Another attraction of the book are the *Jataka* tales on which the paintings are based. Transcribed by Sangitika Nigam, the tales accompany the photographs making them more lucid. However, Behl's most remarkable achievement has been the reproduction of the paintings in their true form. The technique he has used involves the use of very low (natural) light and long exposures. A time-consuming task no doubt. But that's Behl's tribute to Ajanta!

RASOI

The food column



To Serve with Love

Jiggs Kalra on some delightful fish and vegetarian dishes

Dinesh Khanna's The Club has in, very short time, become the favourite watering hole of the elite in north Bomby. The Khannas have a tradition of serving excellent food. The recipes below are as likely to be served up at Holiday Inn as at The Club.

Kadhai ki Subziyaan

INGREDIENTS

- 4 **Potatoes (medium; cut into roundels with skin)**
- **Salt**
- 4 **Carrots (medium; cut into *dhoiki*/turn)**
- 2 ***Toral*** **or zucchini (cut into roundels)**
- 8 ***Baingan*****/eggplant (small; oblong; quarter)**
- **Cooking oil to deep fry eggplant**
- 16 **Button mushrooms (remove stalks and wash thoroughly)**
- 30ml/2 tbs **Cooking oil**
- **A generous pinch of *heeng*/asafoetida (reserve in** 30ml/2 tbs **of water)**
- 5g/2½ tsp ***Zeera*****/cumin seeds**
- 7.5g/3/4" piece **Ginger (finely chop)**
- 4 **Green chillies (seed and cut into 1" long strips)**
- 300g/11 oz **Yoghurt**
- 12g/4 tsp ***Dhania*****/coriander powder**
- 6g/2 tsp ***Aamchoor*****/mango powder**
- 3g/1 tsp ***Haldee*****/turmeric powder**
- 3g/1tsp **Red chilli powder**
- 3g/ 1 tsp **Black pepper (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)**
- 2 **Tomatoes (quarter, remove pulp and, cut into strips)**

The Garnish



KADHAI KI SUBZIYAAN

- 5g/1/2" piece **Ginger (cut into julliennes)**
- 3.25g/1tbs ***Taaza dhania*****/coriander (chop)**

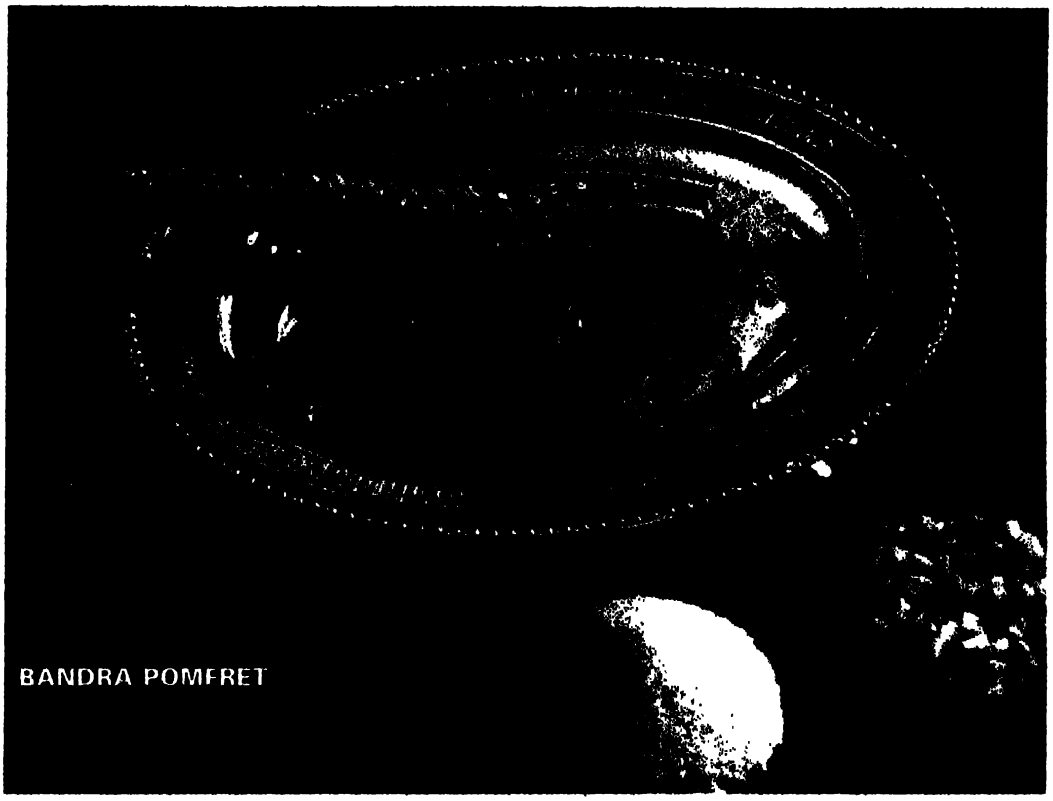
SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 30 minutes
COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

PREPARATION

- The Potatoes and carrots: Put in a pan , add salt, cover with enough water and boil until cooked but not mushy. Drain and keep aside.
- The Eggplant: Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok and deep fry over medium heat until lightly coloured. Remove to absorbent paper to drain excess fat.
- The Yoghurt: Put in a bowl, add coriander, *amchoor*, turmeric and red chillies.

COOKING

- Heat oil in a ***handi*****/pan, add asafoetida, stir over medium heat for a few seconds, add cumin seeds, stir until they begin to pop, add the ginger and green chillies, and stir for 30 seconds. Then add mushrooms, *bhunno*/stir-fry for a**


BANDRA POMFRET

minute, add *torai* and *bhunno*/stir-fry for a minute. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir-in yoghurt mixture, return *handi*/pan to heat and *bhunno*/stir-fry until specs of fat begin to appear on the surface. Now add the remaining vegetables, except tomatoes and salt, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates, add pepper and tomatoes, stir for a few seconds, remove and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

Remove to a serving dish, garnish with ginger and coriander, and serve with *poori*.

Bandra Pomfret

INGREDIENTS

- **4 Pearl pomfret (450g/1 lb each)**
- **4 Banana leaves**

The Marination

- **60ml/1/4 cup Lemon juice**
- **Salt**

The Masala

- **12 flakes Garlic (finely chop)**
- **15g/1½"piece Ginger (finely chop)**
- **100g/3 oz Onions (grate)**
- **60g/2 oz *Nariel*/coconut (remove brown skin and grate)**
- **15g/1/2 oz *kokum* (wash to remove salt and chop)**
- **27g/3 tbs Bottle masala***
- **60ml/1/4 cup Cooking oil**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR
COOKING TIME: 7-8 minutes

PREPARATION

- The Fish: Clean, wash and make 3 deep incisions across each side.
- The Marination: Mix lemon juice and salt, evenly rub the fish fillets with this marinade and reserve for 15 minutes.
- The Masala: Mix all the ingredients in a bowl, evenly smear the fish with this masala and reserve for 30 minutes.
- The Wrapping: Wrap a fish in each banana leaf, fold the sides and keep aside.

COOKING

- Heat the *tawa*/griddle, sprinkle water and clean thoroughly. Then spread a little oil on the *tawa*/griddle, arrange the wrapped fish fillets on top and grill for 5-7 minutes, turning two to three times, adding a little oil each time you turn the sides.

TO SERVE

Unwrap and arrange fish on a platter and serve as a starter.

***The Bottle Masala**

INGREDIENTS

- **200g/7 oz Dried red chillies**
- **150g/5 oz *Kashmiri deghi* mirch**
- **150g/5 oz *Dhania*/coriander seeds**
- **60g/2 oz *Haldee*/turmeric**
- **30g/1 oz *Khuskhus*/poppy seeds**
- **30g/1 oz *Til*/sesame seeds**
- **30g/1 oz *Sarsondaana*/yellow mustard seeds**
- **30g/1 oz *Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- **30g/1 oz Black peppercorns**
- **15g/1/2 oz *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom**
- **15g/1/2 oz *Daalcheeni*/cinnamon**
- **15g/1/2 oz *Lavang*/cloves**
- **15g/1/2 oz *Atta*/whole wheat**
- **15g/1 oz *Channa daal***
- **2 *Jaiphal*/nutmeg**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *Shahi zeera*/black cumin seeds**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *Tej patta*/bay leaf**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *Daalcheeni*/Cinnamon flowers**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *Til*/sesame flowers**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *Javitri*/mace**
- **7.5g/1/4 oz *kebab cheeni*/all spice powder**
- **5g/1/6 oz *Heeng*/asafoetida**

PREPARATION

- Put all the ingredients in a mortar and pound with a pestle to make a fine powder. (Alternately, put the spices in a grinder and grind in short spurts to make a fine powder). Sift and store in a sterilised, dry and airtight container. ■

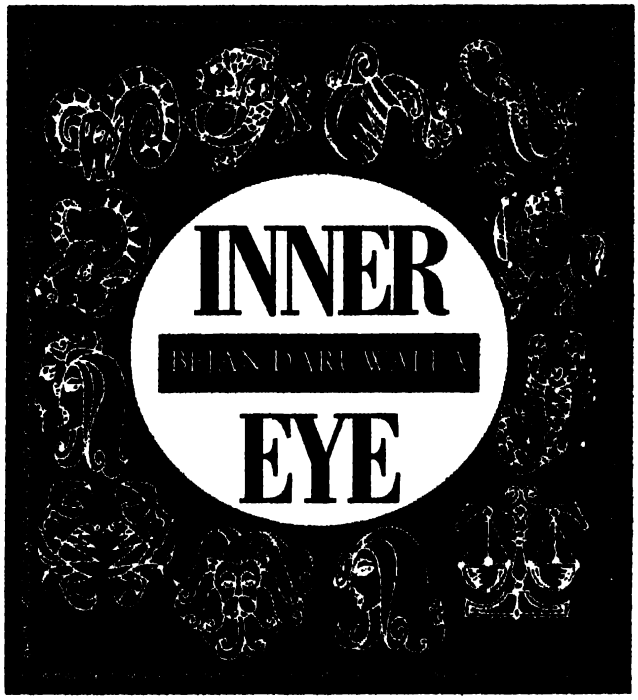
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) Ganesha says that concentration, heavy and total, on the work frontier is required for the first few days. After that, personal posers and relationships take precedence. You have to keep the momentum and the pace going, even when there is no one to push you. Thanks to Mars, energy will follow thought and you will be successful.

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) Mercury is in your seventh sign, according to Western astrology and this helps you achieve all tasks with smoothness. Journey, change, move, all come together now. Expenses will skyrocket and you can almost bet on that. Problems can be ironed out, given your persistence and dexterity. You have to be punctual and socially responsible.

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) Success is guaranteed through influence and charming behaviour. Your attitude should be one of concern and sympathy for others. If money is the issue, it should be with you shortly. Friendships will blossom. Mutually beneficial situations work out best, so create opportunities for many people. It is best to work in absolute privacy.

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) Love and work now really come together or clash, depending upon your attitude. You will have to socialise, work hard, wade through a little opposition and resistance in order to get what you want. You will have to share the cake, just to satisfy one and all. October 14,15 and 16 will be important in terms of good news. You will have to choose between several options.

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) The fascination and work possibilities of different places will impinge upon you. Those in information, media, heavy industries and chemicals, import-export, foreign affairs, leadership and management training and techniques do wonderfully well. It is certain that you will work yourself to the bone. Do, however, learn to relax.



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) The luck of the draw will be with you. It is a challenging week. You must be upbeat and put in lots of hard work. Fortunately, your creativity will be superb. Loans and funds, buying and selling will take your time and talent. Health safeguards towards the week's close is essential. It will save you a lot of bother. Go for a holiday, your nerves need to be soothed.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) You do get caught midstream between tradition and modernity. Relationships could go askew or amiss, causing pain and disruption. Time to change tracks completely, is the loud and clear message of Ganesha. That done, you should be on the high road to success. Learn not to vacillate continuously. Be firm of purpose.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Ganesha says a trip could be tied down with work, study or love. You can — and will — take up cudgels against injustice, and dirty politics. Jobwise, there could be certain changes. A little extra care of your health is advisable. Work secretively, so that neither clue nor information is given out. Marriage of self or a relative is in the offing.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) A risk-taking week for you where the common set of rules just do not apply. Children, grandchildren, education, new enterprise or developing a new hobby could excite you. The flow will come from sheer spontaneous joy of doing. You will probably meet an old friend who could bring back nostalgic memories.

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) Attention to details, a sense of perfection, a growing annoyance with things as they are, will grip you. You will have to move quickly and efficiently without ruffling too many feathers, and that could be difficult. Sparks are bound to fly. Home conditions may also not be all that you asked for.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) You will have to communicate real fast and with exceptional clarity to get your message across. While you will get assistance from others, you will have to do your own follow-ups. There is plenty of movement this week, not in terms of journey merely, but in terms of mental and emotional stimulation. A fast-paced week.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Those with a tainted or disrupted past can now hope to build bridges for the future. This is the time for healing, but it will take time. Do have your eyes set on your goals. Money transactions can be made more creative and simple. Group efforts and back-ups will be needed. The trick is to contact those who matter or count, by all available means. You have been worrying over situations which you cannot control. Relax.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Why is the Hindi film industry in such a bad way, asks **Seema Goswami**

The talking point is:
The flop of Mani Ratnam's first Hindi film, *Dil Se*. Despite his track record — *Roja, Bombay* — and the fact that he had such stars as Manisha Koirala and Shah Rukh Khan in the lead, Ratnam came a cropper at the box-office.

While the critics cribbed about the fact that the film didn't reflect the situation in Assam with any degree of accuracy, the masses didn't seem to appreciate the fact that the lead pair detonated themselves to oblivion in the end.Strangely enough, the movie did amazingly well in the overseas territory, climbing into the top ten charts in the UK. But that was small consolation for Mani, who had hoped for another box-office bonanza *a la Bombay*.

But his disappointment:
Was nothing compared to the heartbreak endured by the producer of *Jeans*, who spent over 10 crores to shoot Aishwarya Rai at the seven wonders of the world, only to see his film go down the tubes. And this despite the fact that viewers had the prospect of feasting their eyes on the beautiful Ms Rai, and on such way-out locales as Australia and Egypt, which they would find impossible to visit in real life. But even that was not inducement enough to bring them into the theatres.

This was part of a trend:
In which even movies regarded as sure-fire hits fared disastrously at the hands of the audience. Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *Kareeb*, for instance, which was launched with such fanfare, with much being made about the new heroine, Neha, who was kept in *purdah* till the release of the movie to whet the curiosity of the audiences. But despite such gimmicks, *Kareeb* remained miles away from the prospect of box-office success.

Also in the same boat:
Were such movies as *Gharwali Baharwali*, which failed despite having hits songs, and such stars as Anil Kapoor and Raveena Tandon. And even Pooja Bhatt's *Dushman* did disappointingly despite powerful performances by Kajol and Ashutosh Rana. But then, what hope was there for ordinary mortals, when even Amitabh Bachchan had lost his magic, as *Mrityudata* and *Major Saab* proved conclusively.

A ray of hope:
Was provided by such films as *Ghulam* and *Dulhe Raja*, which did roaring business, as did the off-beat *Satya*. While the first two releases had very successful soundtracks (*Aati kya Khandala* and *Akhiyon se goli mare*), music is no longer a magic formula given that such movies as *Dil Se* and *Mrityudata* didn't gain from the fact that their songs were at the top of the countdown charts. Nor is having a high-powered star cast any gaurantee of success, or else Amitabh Bachchan and Anil Kapoor wouldn't have delivered so many flops.

Even some sensitively-made movies like *Dushman* do much worse than such execrable rubbish as *Hero Number One*. And just when you think that the audience has no taste worth speaking of, they come in droves to see *Satya*, proving that they recognise a good film when they see it.

So, how does the film industry cope?:
By accepting that there is no such thing as a formula for commercial success. In earlier days, you could put together a couple of big stars, a few catchy numbers, and a dance number by Raveena or Karisma, and be sure of making an impact at the box-office. But audiences are far more savvy now, and much more demanding. And it's time that producers — and directors — woke up and smelt the coffee. ■



Even movies regarded as sure-fire hits fared disastrously at the hands of the audience... who are far more demanding now●

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 23 years old. My problem is that the region around my mouth is very dry and seems to be cracking. The creams and lotions that I have used have not really helped. Even my lips are chapped and the skin peels. Please help.
A.K. CALCUTTA

Very often, there are some parts of the face that require more nourishment than others, especially in the case of combination skin types. Make a thick paste of two tsp of cream and some lemon juice. Massage this on the area and leave on for 10 minutes and then wash off. This should be done at least three times a week for 15 days for results.

I am a 30-year-old woman. My nails are blue and break very easily. Even my lips are blue in the morning. I have been to the doctor and he thinks that I do not have a calcium deficiency. I am not anaemic and eat healthy food. What do you think is wrong with me?
S.B. HOWRAH

You need to change your doctor and have a complete medical examination done. Unless I see the extent of discolouring, it is very difficult to diagnose the problem. I would come to the conclusion that it is the lack of a particular vitamin in the body that is creating the problem.

I am a 26-year-old woman. During my pregnancy, I noticed that my hair was growing luxuriously. However, after child birth, I have started losing hair and this is really depressing me. Please tell me what to do.
SEEMA GHOSH, KALYANI

The body undergoes a lot of hormonal changes during pregnancy and very often, as you have seen, one has a better looking skin as well as a healthier growth of hair. Also, after delivery, the woman's body becomes weaker and it is then that she must not only take a healthy balanced diet but also vitamin supplements and most importantly, spend time on herself. I have seen many women become so overstressed after the baby, that she has no time for herself. Go for a warm body and head massage. Pamper yourself to become a beautiful woman.

I am a 21-year-old woman. I have regular bouts of migraine which make me feel miserable. My face looks pale and puffy and I look 10 years older. Medicines are of no help. How

To get that festive look, make your skin glow with a rich dry fruit pack made from almonds, pistachios and dry figs. Grind all the ingredients, add one egg and apply as a mask on the face. Leave on for fifteen minutes and scrub off. This is great for dry skin types and will make your skin glow



do I regain my lost beauty and make my skin young and soft.
R.S., CALCUTTA

Migraines can be really terrible. Try to take homoeopathic medicines for this and lie in a dark room. It is important to consume lots of liquids and I personally feel warmer liquids like hot lemon water, milk etc, taste and make you feel much better. A warm, gentle coconut oil head massage will work wonders and make your face muscles relax. Massage the skin at home, or better still go in for a professional facial. One of the secrets to lessen the pain in the head is to immerse the feet in hot water for at least half an hour. Why not go in for a pedicure followed by a relaxing massage?

I am a 19-year-old girl with an oily skin. I keep my skin scrupulously clean all the time by using scrubs, astringents and face washes. However, I still have blackheads on the T-zone. Please tell me what to do
SUJATA DEY, CALCUTTA

The best remedy for this is to get the blackheads removed professionally in two sittings. Many times, the blackheads are so deep that the scrubs and washes are just not enough. Once the skin has been cleaned out completely, you can continue a follow-up programme and prevent anymore blackheads or whiteheads from rising. Also, besides all the hard work you are doing on the surface of the skin, it is better that you follow an oil-free diet that will reduce the oiliness of the skin and prevent blackheads.

I love wearing all kinds of jewellery—natural and artificial. But the problem is that I develop rashes and the skin feels itchy. Please tell me how I can tackle the problem.
RANI MUKHERJEE, BURDWAN

I am afraid that if you are naturally allergic to something, I will not have a solution to your problem. Your skin may be so sensitive that the rashes will appear wherever you wear some sort of metal. Avoid it. A good looking skin is better than an adorned but rashy one.

I am a regular user of bleach and only use imported brands. But recently I have developed burn marks on my face and they really look ugly. Please suggest a remedy.
NAINA AGGARWAL

Always remember, never ever use a strong bleach without hand testing it first. Now don't meddle around with the marks too much and avoid going out in the sun for at least 10 days. You can apply some sweet almond oil on the marks. Do not vigorously rub it in but apply it gently with your fingers, morning and evening, for the next one week, for about half an hour each time. Then press a cotton pad dipped in ice-cold rose water on the marks. Next time, when you are using a bleach, always go in for a mild one which may be slow but will last longer. Also, instead of washing your face with water, wash with ice-cold milk as this will sooth the burn marks and will have a lightening effect on the scars. And be very careful until the next layer of tissue appears.

I am a 29-year-old woman and have a fair and dry skin. I usually apply warm oil to my hair a few hours before I shampoo it. But everytime I apply oil, there is a lot of hair loss. Oil seems to make it fall faster. What should I do?
SREELA BASU, ASANSOL

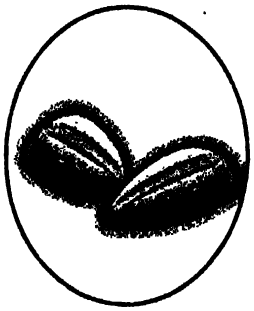
First and foremost, stop worrying too much about your hair loss.
Secondly, change the manner in which you apply oil. I have encountered many women who apply oil to their hair as if they are doing some vigorous aerobics workouts. I would suggest that you use warm coconut oil and massage the scalp in gentle circular movements. This will prevent hair breakage and thus you will lose less hair. It is also important to steam the hair after oiling so that the pores soak up the excess oil and the scalp is nourished.

I am a 21-year-old woman. I am very dark to the point of being 'lovingly' addressed as 'charcoal/dark lady' by my friends. Is there any way I can make my skin look a little fair? I have tried a couple of fairness creams but to no avail. Please advise.
RATNA C., CALCUTTA

Do you realise that a dark, healthy, glowing skin is far more attractive than a fair and marked or pimpled one? If your 'friends' are teasing you about your complexion, are they really your friends?You can use some natural ways to get a cleaner and clearer skin. Make a scrub of the following ingredients: sandalwood powder, lemon juice,*multani mitti*, milk, grated potato and 10 ground almonds and a teaspoon of breadcrumbs. Apply and let it dry. Then dab with milk and scrub it off in circular movements. Use the pack for at least a month. But do not have any misconception about changing the colour of your skin completely. ■

FOR DARK CIRCLES

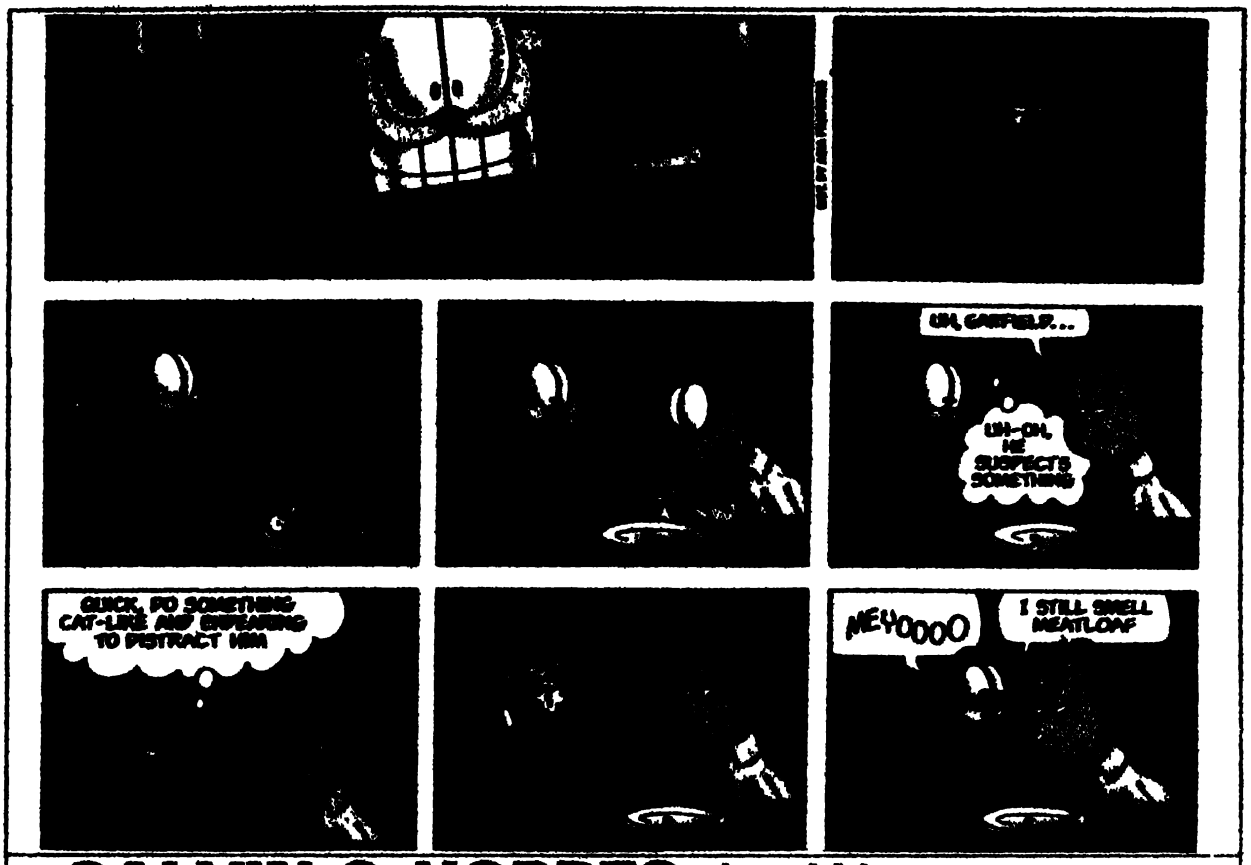
Apply ground almonds and cream around the eyes. Leave it on for 15 minutes. Wipe with cotton pads dipped in cold milk and then wash off with water



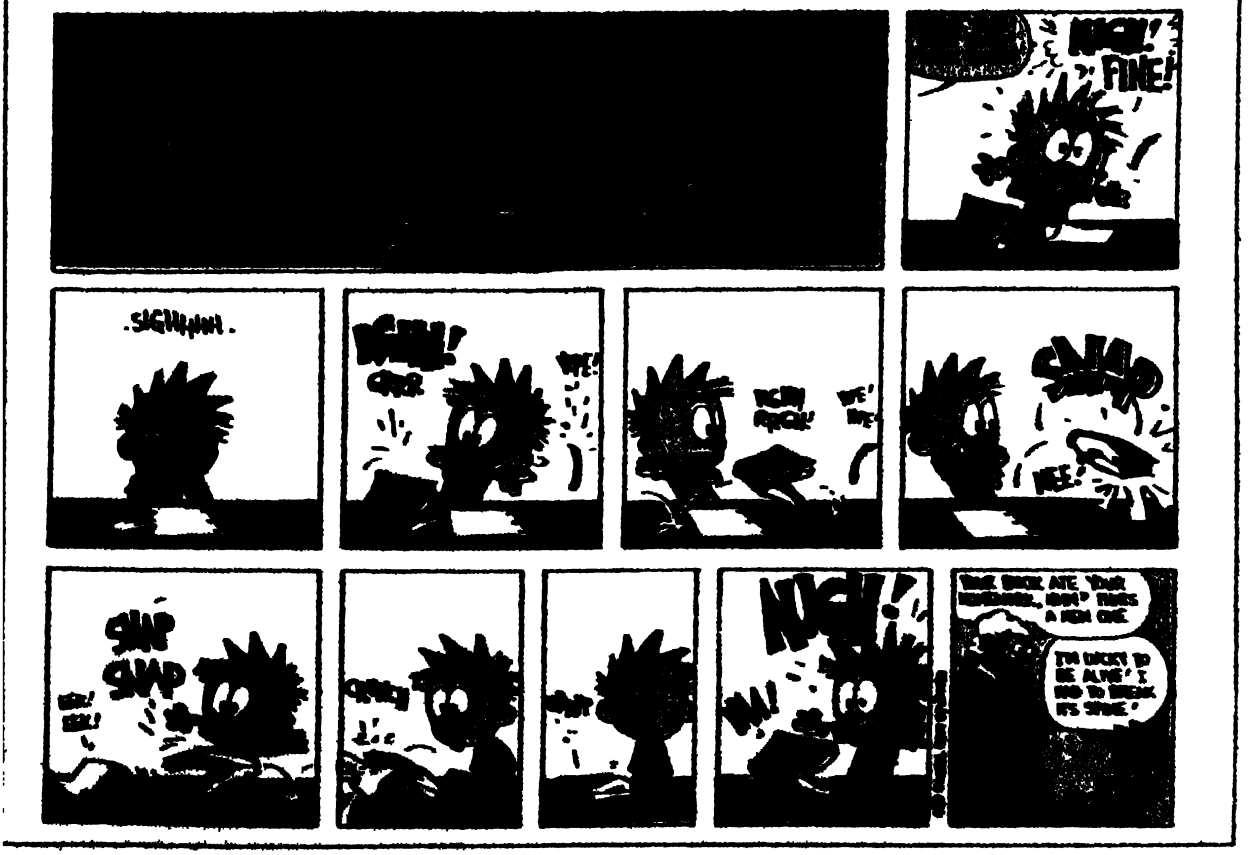
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun

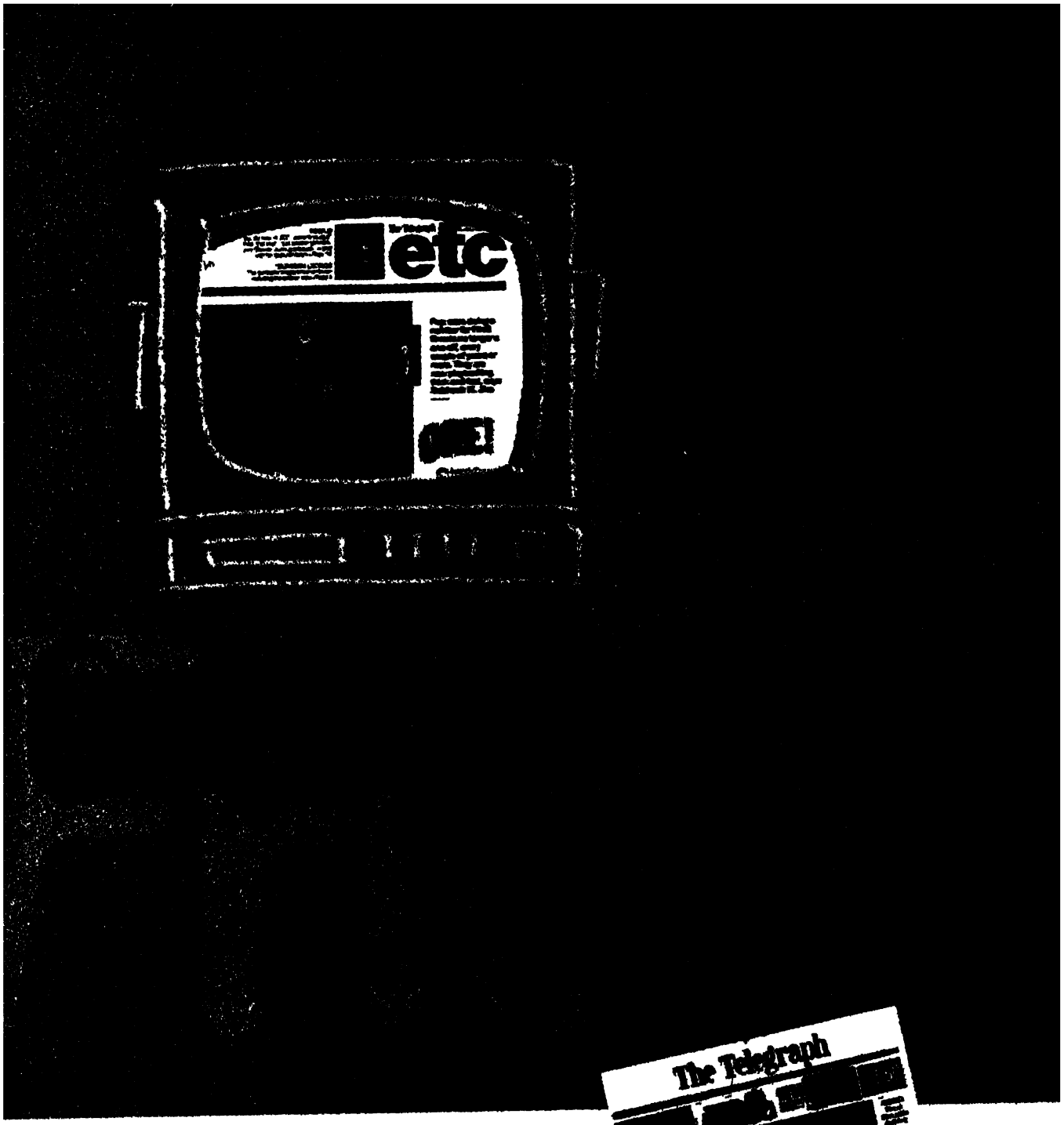


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Diamonds may be forever, but there are several other gems worth collecting, says **Samita Bhatia**

THE FIRE WITHIN

COLOURED ROCKS
Gemstones are beautiful, durable and desirable, and the bigger the stone, the more attractive it is



Every royal family has its treasured gems. Most families have one, if not more, precious heirlooms while museums the world over boast of priceless collections. A majority of us exchange marriage vows with precious stones set in rings; we carry gems as lucky stones and believe they have special powers. Then, we grow up on catchphrases like 'diamonds are forever' or that they are 'a girl's best friend'. Says fashion designer Anju Modi, "Gems have been used as a critical fashion accessory from times immemorial."

Gems are, in fact, rocks with much difference. They are beautiful, desirable and durable. And the bigger the stone, the more seductive it is. Gemstones include the very familiar diamonds, emeralds, rubies, sapphires and pearls (collectively known as royal gems) as well as the less expensive options like amethysts, opals, garnets and topaz (mostly referred to as semi-precious stones). Then there are the lesser known alexandrite, tsavorite (a green garnet), tourmaline and the tanzanite, which are slowly but surely finding buyers.

However, the distinction between semi-precious and precious stones is fast fading. For one, poor examples of the precious variety can be bought for as little as a few hundred rupees per carat while fine specimens of semi-precious stones can command several thousand rupees per carat. "Today," says Chand Mehra of Enchante, "we divide gems into two categories — diamonds and coloured stones."

What makes one stone better than the other, you ask him. "Generally the more clear and vivid the colour, the more valuable the stone. If the colour of the stone is light or pastel the stone must be flawless otherwise the blemish will show. While deeply coloured gems are highly prized compared to subdued colours, truly colourless diamonds are more valuable than coloured ones. Larger stones, too, are more expensive." The cut of the stone is of primary importance, as a good cut will reflect light evenly across the face of the stone.

PRITI PAUL

Jewellery designer

I'm having fun designing jewellery in steel, but I like jewellery that looks refined, well crafted and elegant. As far as gems are concerned, I like sapphires above other coloured stones. It's the richness of their colour that gives them an edge over other stones. I also have a soft spot for pearls and I have a bit of a collection



ROHINI KHOSLA

Jewellery designer

My favourite gem is a topaz pendant that weighs 200 carats and is set in 18 carat gold. It's a warm golden colour and makes a definite fashion statement. Set in an art deco design, it has something of the old look. But I continue to be relevant in the contemporary style

"Stones allow jewellery manufacturers to get creative, as designers have more raw material to play with in designing jewellery. When they design gold ornaments, they just have one raw material to work with," says Mehra. He observes that there is a distinct preference for emeralds, rubies and pearls while most people are wary about the flaming blue sapphire and its supposed dangerous side-effects.

"The younger generation likes to experiment with the cheaper alternatives available. The tsavorite replaces the emerald, and the tourmaline (a pink stone) substitutes the ruby," says Mehra.

Did you know that sapphires also come in every shade except red? However, shades like yellow, orange, lavender and some pastel shades are affordable. The most valuable colour, however, is an orange-pink like the lotus blossom.

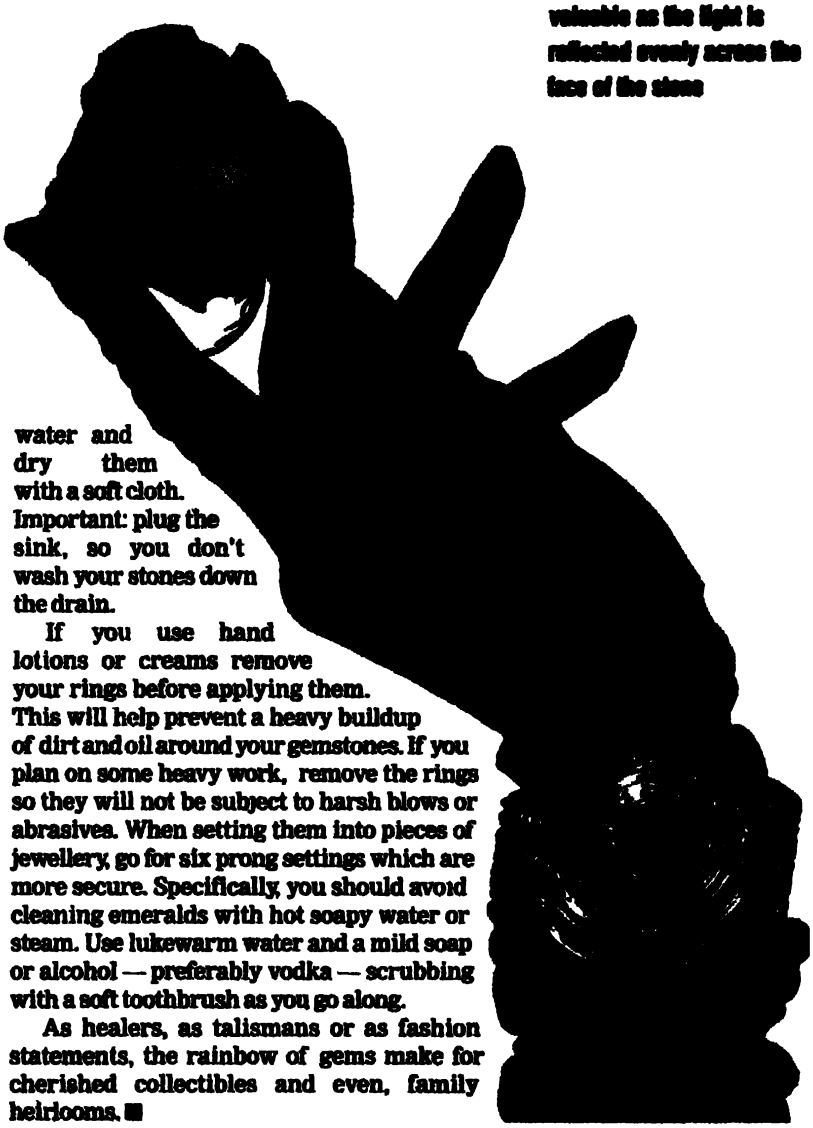
Emeralds for their part can cost even more than diamonds. The timeless appeal of the stone, scientists tell us, stems from the fact that the human eye is more sensitive to the colour green than any other colour. The price of the stone could vary from as little as Rs 1,000 a carat to scale to Rs 1 lakh a carat.

Definite collectibles are 'star stones'. That is, star rubies and sapphires that show bright six-legged stars in their domes. The value of star rubies and sapphires are influenced by the intensity of their colour and the sharpness and strength of the star. "The star sapphires and rubies are fast becoming rare as most rough stones are hewn into faceted stones after heating instead of being cut into cabochons (domes) to display the star," explains gemologist Vinay Jain.

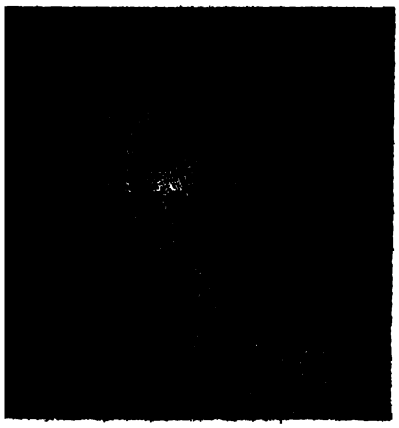
At the bottom of the barrel lie the opal and aquamarine. Of the opal it has been said that in them they arrest the soft fire of the ruby, the brilliant purple of the amethyst and the sea green of the emerald that all sparkle in union. History has it that the stone was highly valued by the Romans and more recently blondes have worn it to protect their hair from losing its colour! The opal's touch is meant to soothe away sadness and envy. Looking after these gems is an important part of treasuring them. Jewellers advise that jewellery encrusted with gems must be stored in separate padded compartments or wrapped in soft lint free cloth to prevent scratching, chipping or entanglements. Rinse them with clean water and dry them with a soft cloth. Important: plug the sink, so you don't wash your stones down the drain.

If you use hand lotions or creams remove your rings before applying them. This will help prevent a heavy buildup of dirt and oil around your gemstones. If you plan on some heavy work, remove the rings so they will not be subject to harsh blows or abrasives. When setting them into pieces of jewellery, go for six prong settings which are more secure. Specifically, you should avoid cleaning emeralds with hot soapy water or steam. Use lukewarm water and a mild soap or alcohol — preferably vodka — scrubbing with a soft toothbrush as you go along.

As healers, as talismans or as fashion statements, the rainbow of gems make for cherished collectibles and even, family heirlooms. ■



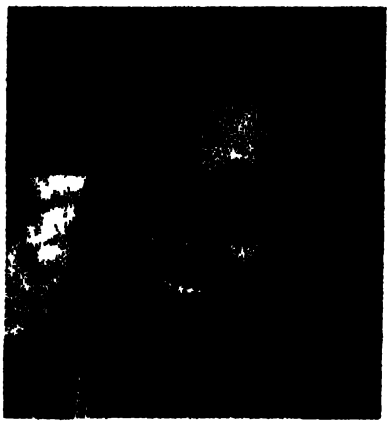
DIAMONDS 'N' ROSES
A colourless diamond is more precious than its coloured counterpart. A well cut diamond is more valuable as the light is reflected evenly across the face of the stone



ANJU MODI

Fashion designer

My favourite stones are blood red rubies for I feel that they sparkle with a life of their own and add a beautiful glow to the face. My favourite piece of jewellery is a ruby pendant which I wear with all my red and black outfits. I have been wanting to buy strings of deep red rubies but since they're so expensive, I guess I'll have to wait sometime more



MY PERSONAL *Style*

LIVING IN THE PAST

Period furniture, especially of the Tagorean era, fascinates Bikash Bhattacharjee

A room should always reflect the tastes and preferences of its owner. The moment you step into a room it should make you feel relaxed and comfortable, and not as if you have stepped into a museum.

When deciding on the decor of a room, I study books on interior decoration. I also consult my friends and seek their opinion. This interaction helps me create new concepts. I have a typical Bengali mentality when it comes to using furniture and accessories, and this is reflected in the well-lived look of my rooms.

I am extremely fond of period furniture, especially the 19th century ones. Thakur*bari* furniture makes me very nostalgic. Their intricate carvings and solid frames impart a royal touch to any room — be it the drawing room, the bedroom or just a study, so I have made it a point to have a few pieces in my house.

I have had eminent designer, B.H. Smith, design a set of ornate furniture for me. It's one of my favourite sets because of the perfect finish and excellent polish. I shop for furnishing material and upholstery from Times Furnishings on Park Street.

I also possess some lovely stained glass lamp shades made by Katayul Saklat, a good friend of mine. He has also designed my stained glass doors and windows. The coloured glass pieces add a touch of brightness to the rooms.

When it comes to the walls, I like pastel shades. But I hate wall hangings — an accessory that interior designers are so fond of. Since painting is my passion, the walls of my house are adorned with my works.

I have another flat in Salt Lake City and had great pleasure in decorating it. An Assamese friend, Pradip Mahanto, helped me design the furniture for this flat based on the style of furniture used in Ratan Kuthi in Santiniketan — low Japanese-style furniture. The sunk-in chairs and the low dining table are quite unique. To complete the set, I also designed an equally low and sunk-in bed.

My house in Calcutta is actually a combination of three flats. I have converted one of them into my studio. It's rather large, about 900 sq ft in area and has black and white panels on all the four walls. My easel has a gear which helps me to move it around. In fact, I borrowed this idea from Winsor Newton.

I love to live in a sprawling mansion. The space gives a lot of freedom and room for imagination.

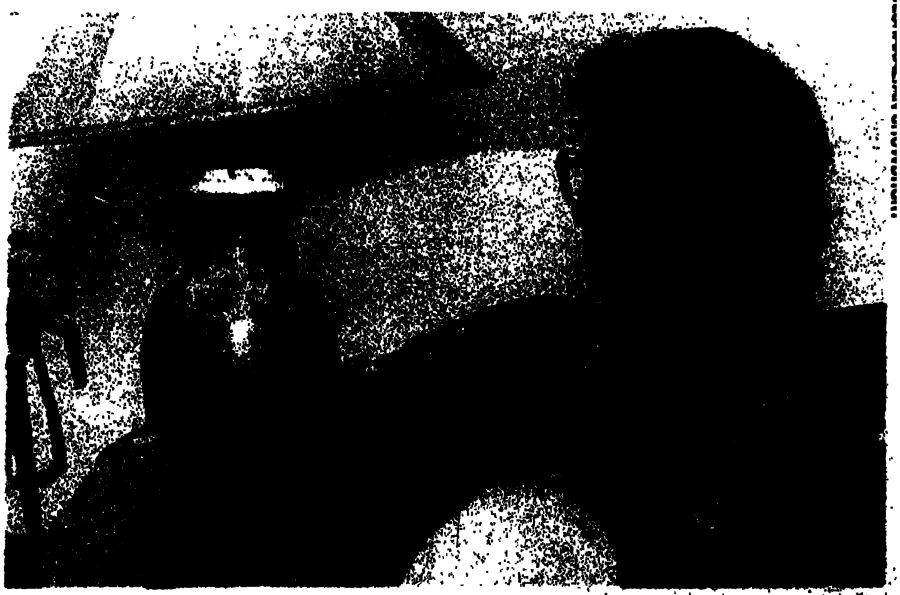
AS TOLD TO PAULA RAY



DESHAKALYAN CHOWDHURY

TOUCH OF GLASS

I possess some lovely stained glass lamp shades made by a friend of mine. He has also designed my stained glass doors and windows. The glass pieces add a touch of brightness to my rooms





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WRITE IN



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KING OF HEARTS

The cover story on Vishwanathan Anand was immensely enlightening ('Check Mate', September 4). The fact that he is all set to conquer the world certainly makes him the king of hearts. Success has not gone to his head and he is probably the only Indian sportsman who is courteous, friendly and unassuming. It's said that he hasn't been given as much adulation as the Indian cricketers are showered with.

ASHOK AIYAR, CALCUTTA

WISHFUL THINKING

The profile on Vishwanathan Anand made for very interesting reading. This chess genius has certainly managed to carve out a niche for himself. He has his wits about him. His strong will, determination and immense concentration are the key to his success. One wishes him lots of luck in all his future endeavours.

Adrija Majumder, Burdwan

THE KING AND I

Vishy and Aruna are certainly made for each other. I am so glad that they have been able to hit it off real well. The key to a happy marriage lies in the fact that both partners are able to relate to each other. Just proves that arranged marriages can and do work as well as any other relationships. As an ardent reader of *Graphiti*, I'd like more such stories. Kudos to *Graphiti*. Keep it up!

Akhil Kumar, Calcutta

GRAPHIC IDEAS

When is the *Graphiti* going all-gloss? Sunday mornings are never the same without the colour magazine. It would be all the more attractive if you were to devote a few more pages to snippets and articles with a local flavour.Can you please include Lockhorns and Wizard of Id in your comics section? They make comic reading accessible to all ages. One used to enjoy the book extracts that used to be published regularly earlier. Could we have more of those?

Kartik Mani, Calcutta

NEW LOOK

I love the new look colour magazine. Even the name *Graphiti* is very apt considering the variety of articles appearing in it.

S. Rajkumar, Calcutta

COVER COURTESY:
Magna Publications

graphiti ★ 18 October 1998

4 DIRECTOR'S CHOICE Shekhar Kapur goes from success to success; and from controversy to controversy **10** DESIGN CORNER A garden is not the only place a fountain can grace **13** SMALL TALK Why are males the second sex of modelling? **14** SURVIVAL STRATEGIES **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE Daler Mehndi prefers an informal ambience when it comes to entertaining

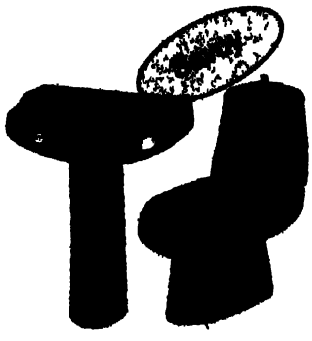
The idea behind exclusive bathrooms



Fascinating Hindware

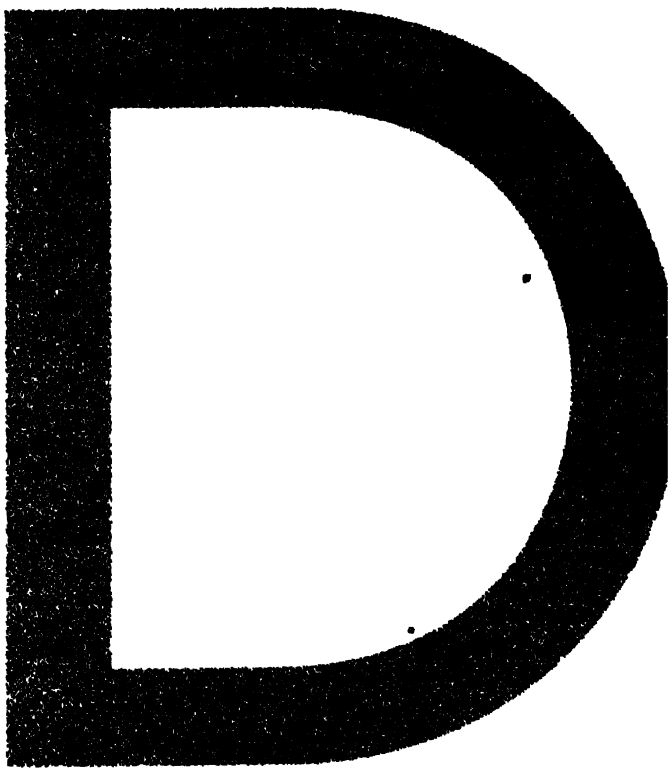
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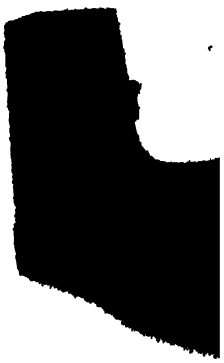
Shekhar Kapur goes from success to success; and from controversy to controversy. Manisha Pande gets him talking about his movies and more



The voice is smooth, balanced and rich, with just a hint of a smile to it. "Sorry, but I am leaving for South Africa today. Why don't you come there, and then we can talk."

The man really plays his role of a dream merchant to the hilt. Of course, such dreams are out of the reach of most journalists. But then, he suggests, "Can't we talk over the phone?" Before you can respond, he says, with an authoritative ring in his voice, "Call me back after half-an-hour".





SMITTEN BY BOLLYWOOD
Shekhar Kapur, a devout filmmaker now, was once a suave London-based chartered accountant who first tried his luck in Mumbai as an actor but failed

irector's choice



COURTESY MAGNA PUBLICATIONS



STAR CROSSED
Though Shekhar Kapur would prefer to work without stars in his films, his greatest blockbuster was a Sridevi-Anil Kapoor starrer, *Mr India*

That's Shekhar Kapur for you: suave, flirtatious, authoritative and controversial. And, of course, a name to contend with in the field of international cinema, after the super-success of his film on Phoolan Devi, *Bandit Queen*.

Kapur has moved on since then, though, and after completing yet another controversial movie on Queen Elizabeth I, which will be releasing shortly, he is now headed for South Africa to put President Mandela's life on celluloid.

From Phoolan Devi to Queen Elizabeth to Nelson Mandela: Kapur has clearly come a long way, even if it is by way of personalities. But while the first two had stories that were interesting enough, Mandela may be a little more difficult to handle. After all, his life has been an open book, and his recently-released autobiography — *The Long Walk to Freedom* — made most details of his private life public.

At 80, there is nothing about the man that is hidden from the world. A film on him will not be a revelation of any sorts. Why then has it got Shekhar Kapur so excited?

"Why I took up this project....umm.," the voice trails off. for a few seconds the man seems lost for words, then suddenly launches into a monologue, "...For me Nelson Mandela is the most important man of this century. I was planning to make a science fiction or a comedy after completing *Elizabeth I* when this came along. To make a film on him, I consider it the biggest honour. What's more, the honour was bestowed upon me by the people of South Africa.

"Initially, I refused. I thought a South African should be doing the film because they know about the man and what he stands for much better than I do. I went to South Africa and met several people. I asked them how they felt about an Indian coming to make a film on their leader. I wanted to know their reactions. And believe it or not, they were quite happy about it. They said they had seen my *Bandit Queen* and

"The system of stars is non-creative....Stars have too many mistresses. They treat my film, too, as a mistress"

thus had full faith in me. Even President Mandela has welcomed the idea."

The first step towards the making of the film has already been taken. "I have bought the rights of President Mandela's autobiography," says Kapur. With the formalities all worked out he is now readying himself for a year-long stay in South Africa.

Though Kapur is today regarded as one of the most talented Indian directors, that wasn't the reputation he set out to achieve. A nephew of veteran actor, Dev Anand, Shekhar was a prosperous chartered accountant based in London, when the movie bug bit him, and he decided to come to Mumbai to try his luck in Hindi films.

By all accounts, he should have succeeded. He was good-looking, charming, a competent enough actor, and he had the necessary pedigree to make it in Bollywood. What's more, he also had a well-connected girlfriend in Shabana Azmi (though this affair never culminated in marriage).

But despite these obvious advantages, Kapur never really made it as an actor. The audience didn't accept his slightly unconventional good looks, and producers soon lost interest in signing on a flop hero. With the benefit of hindsight, however, that proved to be a bit of luck, because Shekhar then decided to try his luck behind the camera.

His first effort in this field was *Masoom*, the Hindi re-make of *Man Woman and Child*. With Naseeruddin Shah and former girlfriend Shabana Azmi in the lead, this was the movie that made Shekhar's reputation as a whiz-kid director. He followed this up with the Sridevi-Anil Kapoor starrer, *Mr India*, which went on to become a super-hit.

After that, however, Kapur hit something of a wet patch. He started several projects — including one called *Champion* which was supposed to launch Bobby Deol — but gave up on them after interminable delays. This earned him the reputation of being a difficult man to work with, and it looked as if Kapur would fizzle out after the initial spark as producers began shying away from signing him.







DACOIT, QUEEN AND THE LEADER
From the Bandit Queen, Phoolan Devi (top), to the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth I, to the great South African head, Nelson Mandela, Shekhar Kapur has come a long way, by way of portraying personalities

It was Phoolan Devi, the *Bandit Queen*, who saved Shekhar from a fate worse than death. The film created a fiery controversy in India — with liberal critics like Arundhati Roy complaining that Kapur was exploiting Phoolan and invading her privacy by re-enacting her rape on camera — but proved to be a brilliant success on the international circuit.

The director still smarts from the rejection at home. But he doesn't blame the Indian people for it. "For me, making a film is not just imposing an idea on people. I decide which market I am targetting. I made *Mr India* for the Indian masses and they enjoyed it and I believe they would have appreciated *Bandit Queen* too. I think Indians are quite mature. It's that elite class, the so-called keepers of people's morality, who are so far removed from reality. Why, until it got banned, *Bandit Queen* was threatening to become the biggest hit. It ran for seven weeks and secured 96 per cent profits."

This, despite the fact that the film shocked most sensibilities. The crude language, the nude scenes and the violence were necessary to make it realistic. But the emphasis overall was not to make a heroine out of Phoolan.

"I made what I felt strongly about. I make films that relate to me. I was emotionally attracted to Phoolan's life and felt guilty about what happened to her. I made the film to expunge my own guilt. After all, as a man I was one of the oppressors. I never wanted to make her a heroic figure, my intention was only to tackle the fundamental issues," he says.

Kapur insists that it has never been his intention to attract controversy. That his very next venture, *Elizabeth I*, also kicked up a storm is mere coincidence, he says. "When I am making a film, I am totally involved with the subject. I make what I feel about. At that moment, I don't think whether it will be controversial or not. I address the basic issues. When you cut


THE OUTSIDER

through the basic issues they always generate reactions among the masses and lead to controversies. There will be no controversy if you make superficial films."

Despite his profound statements, Shekhar Kapur sounds a little unsure about people's reactions to *Elizabeth I*. The film, which examines the private life of Queen Elizabeth, created an uproar in Britain. But the director remained firm, even on the fact that she wasn't — as was widely believed — a virgin.

"Just as they say that she was a virgin, I say she was not. It's pure assumption. She was the most powerful woman in history. She had had three affairs; how do you know she never went the whole way, especially when she was in a position to get what she wanted?" Kapur maintains that the concept of virginity was purely a political statement and not a physical one.

This is the first time an Indian has made a film on a British royal. And for Kapur it has been a first as well, in that he has directed Western actors. But Shekhar insists that there was nothing at all different about this experience. "Actors are actors," he says. "They are not bothered about such things. They were prepared. They had seen *Bandit Queen* and were aware of my calibre as a director."

Despite his international success, at home Shekhar Kapur is still seen as a man who can never complete a project. The observation is based on the fact that most of his dream projects have remained in the pipeline, be it the Indianised version of the Donahue show called *Manthan* or the *West Side Story* which could never be told.

Critics call him slow, nit-picking and undisciplined. Kapur views it differently. "I can't work with regular stars. Whenever I have worked with a star, I've left the film. Maybe I am too arrogant. The problem lies in expectations I guess. For me, work is religion and I expect everybody on the sets to feel that way. When I was shooting in England there was no talk of any other film. When I work I am totally committed to what I am doing. I can't expect the same commitment from stars here."

"I address the basic issues. When you cut through the basic issues, they generate reactions among the masses and lead to controversies"

That, he says, is the reason why he works with non-stars. Not that he had any problems directing Anil Kapoor and Sridevi for *Mr India*, which took just about a year to reach the theatres. But then that was also the last film when he worked with stars.

"The system of stars is non-creative. There is a lot of talent in the film industry. However, because of this system it doesn't get exploited. Stars have too many mistresses. They treat my film, too, as a mistress which is not acceptable to me."

Working with non-stars, however, has never been a problem for Kapur. For him a non-star is a better performer than a star, the proof being *Bandit Queen*. The art lies in defining the characters and making the actors live through them.

Kapur, however, has a different take on this. "I don't define, I discover. Characters are defined by other people and the atmosphere. There are so many contradictions inside a person... it's impossible to define his or her character. All I do is try to approach the character from inside... to think with the point of view of that character."

But how does he get his actors to do the same?

"By discouraging them. I discourage my actors a lot. They must confront moments of truths about themselves. A kind of discovery of the self. And yes, no mimicking."

With two international films under his belt, is Shekhar Kapur headed for Hollywood? No, the director has other plans. "I had about a dozen offers, including one on making a film on Mao Zedong, after I finished *Elizabeth I*. But I declined. After Nelson Mandela is completed, I will be back in India to work on *Tara Ram Pam Pam*, which has been in the pipeline for quite sometime. I also have plans to make a comedy or a science fiction movie."

So, it isn't the end of the road for Shekhar Kapur as far as India is concerned. He's got an entry into Hollywood, he's got an international fan club, and he's got a happy home with pop singer wife, Suchitra. Now all he needs to make his happiness complete is a Hindi movie that can pull in the punters. After that, Shekhar Kapur will have nothing left to prove. ■

INSIDE STORY

Shekhar Kapur has his own way of defining characters—he tries to think with the point of view of the character. He also goads his actors into a painstaking process of self-discovery

DESIGN Corner

They can add beauty, colour and tranquillity to any surroundings, says **Geeta Sharma**

FOUNTAIN HEADS

People have always wandered the world looking for water. This search has led them to build villages near rivers and seas, and the process has witnessed the birth of ancient cultures and civilisations.

Of the many different materials found in nature, water is perhaps the most flexible and changes shape according to the object holding it. It is this quality of water that makes it much easier to handle than such materials as stone and trees. Landscape architects too have taken advantage of water's natural characteristics and incorporated them in their designs.

The shape water takes most often in landscape design is that of fountains. Traditionally used as a beauty prop in gardens and parks, fountains of late — have become an integral part of interiors.

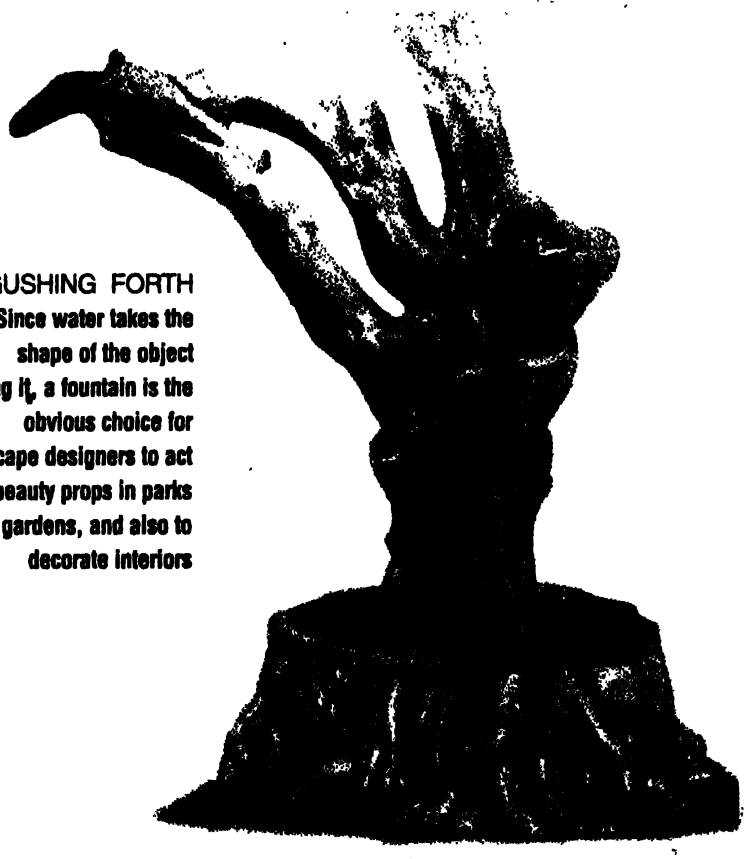
Archana Sultania, an interior designer, maintains that the need for fountains has developed alongside the urge to move closer to nature within the cold confines of the concrete jungle that most cities have turned into.

"There is, for instance, a discernible move towards developing parks and gardens. The local administrations are doing so, residential colonies are doing so and so are the big business houses. And with this effort, water is becoming sought after," says Sultania, who does interiors for hotels and homes.

"People like the soothing, calming sound of water and now want it in their *mandirs*, living rooms and even bedrooms," adds Asha Raina, who along with her husband, Anil Raina, has pioneered the concept of indoor fountains through their company, Ripples.

Many designers feel that water is an invigorating force, and try and incorporate its playfulness into their designs more often. So, besides horticulture departments, gardens, parks, hotels and office establishments, even homes have become a core market for fountains.

Ripples has created designs and shapes of fountains that can, for instance, be hung on the walls. Then there are pedestal fountains in the shape of a stallion, tree falls, lady with light, figurines and centre-piece fountains in all shapes — cascades, flowers, crowns, bamboo



GUSHING FORTH
Since water takes the shape of the object holding it, a fountain is the obvious choice for landscape designers to act as beauty props in parks and gardens, and also to decorate interiors



trees and lagoon fountains.

To increase the practicality of fountains, the Rainas have recently designed fountains that can be used as tables and lamps. "The concept is very simple," says Asha Raina. Just create a shape, say of a boulder or a waterfall, place a glass table atop it and attach a lamp to it and you have a functional three-in-one lamp, table and fountain.

When they first came up with these designs, however, bewildered people would ask them how they could use something that has water flowing in it as a lamp. "We had a tough time explaining to them that the water falling in the fountain piece was extremely safe as the only electrical gadget it contained was a tiny Italian submersible pump, that was sealed and perfectly safe," says Raina.

Often they would have to dip their hand in the fountain to show their clients that it was safe from electric shocks and currents. And contrary to the general perception, Asha says a small three-by-four foot fountain needs only a mug full of water.

There is, for instance, an assortment of shapes and looks that can be obtained with the plain simple fibre glass by moulding it into any desired form. Buoyed by the success of their designs, the Rainas now plan to launch a range of fountains for children — be it teddy bears, turtles and little toy homes.

Premier Irrigation Equipment limited (PIEL), a Calcutta-based company for outdoor fountains has an R&D division that has developed a whole range of fountains that have been installed in hotels, parks, offices and farmhouses. There is for instance the 'anytime, anywhere fountain' — the miniature musical fountain that dances to the sound of music and creates a heady, exciting atmosphere.

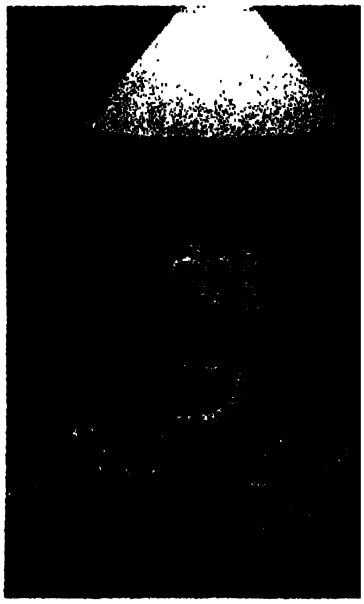


"So if one is dancing to the pulsating beat of the latest chartbusters, to keep one company one can have the fountain, whose water imitates the music, jumping and twisting with foot-tapping notes," says Suman Shankar Dass of PIEL.

These fountains, Dass says, come with a classic shaped octagonal pool just 1.70 meters across and can be set up anywhere — on lawns, in gardens, foyers, lobbies, shopping malls and discotheques. In fact, solitude seekers can even install them in their drawing rooms with the minimum of fuss.

These fountains, Dass explains, come with 16 water effects, lit with an array of multi-coloured lights and have the capacity to perform with any type of music. The pumps, valves and concealed controls are enclosed below the pool. The electronic controller and sound system are free-standing and can be placed in any position.

Then there is the Riviera fountain range that provides a varied fare of engineered effects. According to Dass, a Riviera fountain needs no foundation or civil works. The fountain uses a 1 horse power pump that is connected to a 230v power point. Since it is submersible, there is no problem keeping it dry or leak-proof and maintenance can be easily taken care of by a concealed stainless steel mesh filter. Making the electrical connection only takes minutes and the fountain can be run as soon as one wants it.



THREE-IN-ONE
Some fountains can also be used as tables and lamps. All one has to do is to create a shape, say of a waterfall, place a glass table atop and attach a lamp to it. It's neat and quite safe

In recent years, water structures controlled by computers have become more popular. Unfortunately, water is controlled and structured in such a way that its appeal does not last too long. Although the viewer is surprised and fascinated at first, this feeling quickly changes to a sense of familiarity, and finally to boredom. The initial excitement disappears after several of the cycles have been repeated.

The latest addition to fountains, however, is the laser. Dass, who has pioneered the concept in India, says laser fountains are actually water screens over which laser beams are projected. These can be in the shape of figures and even narrate a story. Such fountains are already part of sound and light shows and are becoming staple starters at fashion shows.

So be it a *mandir*, a plush hotel lobby, the sophisticated interiors of an office or the vibrant environs of a park, fountains have come to be ubiquitous entities that stand out for their aesthetic appeal. ■

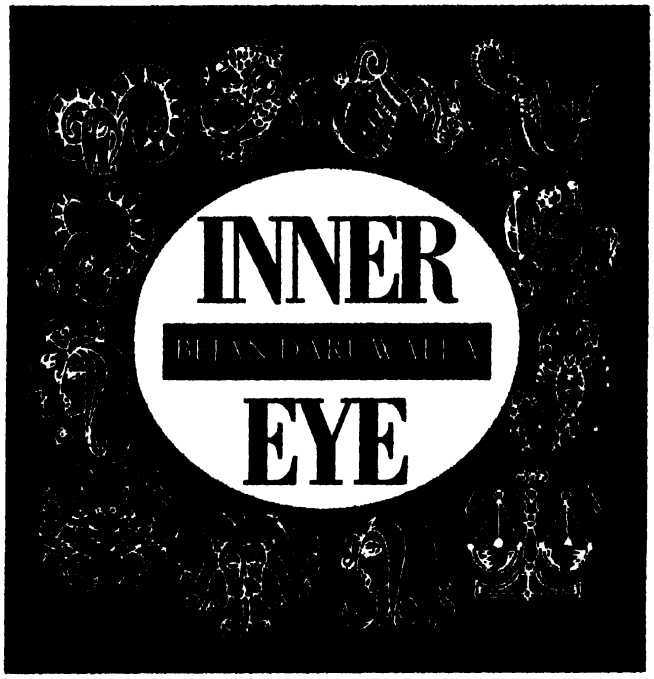
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) Ganesha says the week will prove excellent for travel—which will be successful and pleasurable, for the most part. Partnerships—even marriage—success at interviews and participation in rituals and ceremonies of a religious nature are likely, and the last named will be a source of joy and self-purification.

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) Health and diet considerations will assume paramount importance as you work and play equally hard; one might even say with equal dedication. Despite your enthusiasm for play, recreation, even sport, you are likely to be keenly concerned about, and involved in social welfare issues, even ecological and environmental concerns.

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) The new moon ushers in a truly "high" phase for you. You will win public acclaim, earn a good name for yourself, and most importantly, feel good about yourself. There are likely to be, once again, ceremonies and gatherings and you also deal with matters concerning your dependents, children, even pets and also colleagues.

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) Your own self-image concerns you greatly and try to bootstrap it to the heights you'd like it to be at. In the process, your public image gets a round of spit and polish as do your home, environment and even your wardrobe. You like everything spick and span and that includes your health and physique, which you want and try to get into shape by the right food and exercise.

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) Moon trine Neptune finds you focussing on your home, your house or your property—an extension of your own personality and self. You'll be indulging in a fair amount of buying and selling (either assets, shares or commodities) and will express and feel care and concern about elders. Do improve relations with family and parents.



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) The moon in your birth sign strengthens your innate affinity with achieving and getting things done. This will necessarily create tremendous pressures at work but not only do you cope, you have the time and inclination to go out, gallivant, enjoy yourself—and you do it. There may be upheavals in the domestic scene but this week also sees the resolution of some matters.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) October, for the most part, would be a month when you will work hard and go places. A lowering of pressures is now experienced—a breathing space so that you get your batteries recharged, your stamina restored, as you relax, unwind, enjoy yourself—entertain and are entertained, wined and dined. Outings are foretold.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Having got your second wind, you feel ready to take on the world, or at least the slice of it that concerns you. Family ties remain at the forefront, but there is a great necessity to deal with investments, capital raising, funding and finances in general. This will pertain to both the home front, and as either foundations for new projects or for existing ones.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) The new moon gives you a rare delight in being alive, an opportunity to be both successful and happy. This is something that most of us, in fact, the best of us, seldom achieve, if ever. In addition, there is plenty of entertainment, amusement and relaxation for you along with equal joy in your relationships.

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) Strange encounters, fabulous interviews, rubbing shoulders with the elite, meetings with the eccentric and interestingly different people come your way this week and you grow and learn from them, in addition to deriving enjoyment from them. This is also because you are in the right frame of mind—receptive and tolerant.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) The new moon ushers in a happier and more mellow phase of your life. Relationships with family members, relatives, parents and loved ones are all much warmer and more cordial, and that's a lot to be grateful for in itself, says Ganesha. Expenses will mount though, and you will have to make efforts to meet them.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Collaborations, compromises and negotiations will call up all your reserves of tact, diplomacy, management skills and bargaining power. Much will be expected of you. There may be some settlements to be made, a marriage (even your own) to be arranged. This maybe a kind of collaboration, too. As I see it, all things are possible. A fair amount of travel is also likely, and these trends will prevail through the year.

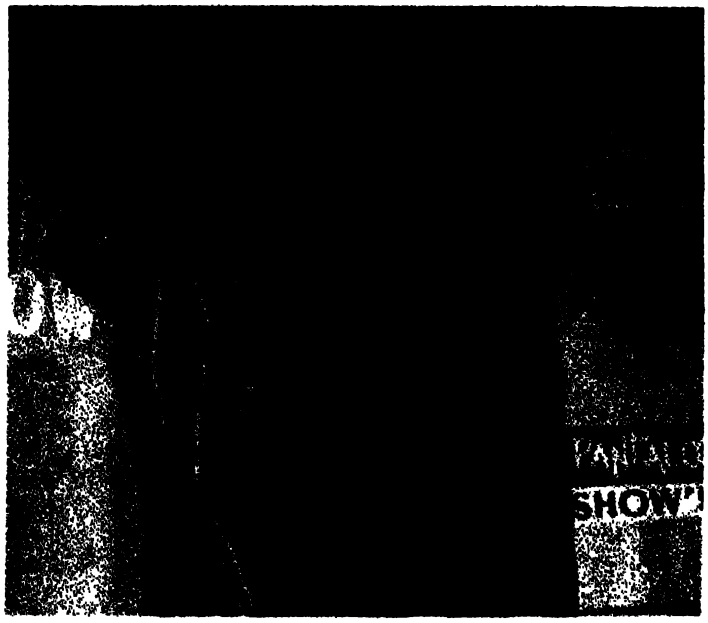
BIRTHDAYS

SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Are males the second sex of modelling, asks Seema Goswami

The talking point is : The sudden appearance of male models on the fashion ramp. Earlier, just a couple of men did the honours at every fashion show, which basically consisted of escorting the bride down the ramp, while clad in garish ethnicwear (kurtas were optional at Rohit Bal's, where bare chests were considered the epitome of manhood). And while the ladies — Shymolie Verma, Mehr Jesia, Anne Bredmeyer, to name just a few — achieved superstar status, their male counterparts languished in anonymity.



The women still get to wear the better clothes....And what's more, they get paid far more than their male counterparts●

These days, however: The men are as visible as the girls. One reason for this is that more and more designers are diversifying into menswear. Earlier, most of them restricted themselves to women's clothing on the grounds that this was where the money and the volumes were. Indian men, they said, were too staid and unadventurous to even think of experimenting with designerwear, so there was no profit in making clothes for them.

Now, however, nearly every designer of note — prominent exceptions are Tarun Tahiliani and Suneet Varma — makes menswear as well. So, of course, they need men to model it.

Enter: The Male Models. They have style, they have muscle, and they have loads of attitude. Not all of them are good-looking, though — in fact, it is one of the enduring mysteries of our times as to how Rahul Dev managed to get past his first audition — but they make up for it in terms of height, build and brawn.

Yet others have sheer chutzpah going for them. Take Marc Robinson, for instance, who has become more and more insufferable with every show. He struts around like a peacock in heat, eyeing the front rows as if he's checking them out for anything (or anyone) who can translate into action later that evening.

And then, there's Jas Arora who has made a few guest appearances at recent fashion shows. His fame as a music video star clearly precedes him, hence the tendency of most choreographers to make him do a dance step or two on the catwalk.

So, are these the new stars of the fashion firmament?: Yes, some of them certainly are, but it still takes a Bipasha Basu or a Malaika Arora, or even a Jessae Randhawa, to set the ramp aflame. The women still get to wear the better clothes, monopolise the showstoppers and get the most applause. And what's more, they get paid far more than their male counterparts, a welcome reversal of the gender divide that characterises most other workplaces.

Why this discrimination?: It's simple really. The girls are simply worth more in terms of both window-dressing and the amount of work they do. For every one outfit that Marc Robinson struggles into, Noyonika Chatterjee has three (if not four) changes to her credit. And let's face it: Sonalika Oberoi is far easier on the eye than Himanshu Malik.

So, why do the guys stand for it?: They don't have much of an option really. And for most of them, modelling is just a rite of passage, anyway. Once they are through preening themselves in public for a couple of years, they will go on to proper grown-up careers. And no, by that we don't mean the movies.■

SURVIVAL
Strategies



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Q : I am a 17-year-old girl. I have a group of friends comprising both girls and boys. We are very close to each other. But in school, our teacher misinterprets our relationship. We, the girls have been humiliated many times on this account. We do not want to break our group but we would also like to stay in the good books of our teachers. But how?

DIYA, CALCUTTA

Follow your instincts on what you feel is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Friendships are one of the most important ingredients of a happy adolescence. It is possible for teachers to be wrong, and when you start compromising on things where you know you are right, it becomes a habit and a way of life.

Stay in the good books of teachers by being conscientious and attentive in class and punctual in your assignments. If you get an appropriate opportunity, do explain to whoever is the most receptive of them that your friendships are 'innocent' and you are doing nothing 'wrong', whatever that means. Soon, you will have outgrown the constraints and strictures of your teachers and become truly responsible for yourselves. I am sure you will continue to behave honourably and responsibly. In the meantime, continue to have fun.

ORTHODOX UPBRINGING

Q : I am a 24-year-old girl. My parents and brother have started groom-hunting for me. My problem is that I have had a very orthodox upbringing. The person they have chosen as my future husband is not upto my expectations in any way, monetarily or even looks-wise. I have tried to broach the topic with my parents but they tell me to adjust as it is very difficult to find a groom these days. I am in a quandary. Please tell me what to do.

SHREYA, CALCUTTA

You say that you have had a very orthodox upbringing. You have not been trained to stand up to your individuality, only to submit to the family mandate. In such a situation, it is not very realistic to advise you to simply assert yourself, as you may not have the emotional resources to do so.

The thing to do is to build up your internal resources and consolidate your self-esteem. Remember that your life is important, you must have a say in how it proceeds. Insist that you meet your groom-to-be once or twice, or several times, if necessary, before you consent to the marriage. Remember, first impressions can be deceptive, and the young man may be a worthy and good person. In case you continue to feel that you are incompatible, gather up the courage to tell your parents so. Insist on your right to determine your own life,

AT SIX'S AND SEVEN'S

I am a 23-year-old man. I was involved in a relationship with a young woman. The problem was that she was very immature and there were things and feelings that I just could not share with her. In between, she went to America and I met a woman who I found to be extremely compatible. She has grown to be a very good friend of mine and I have started thinking of her romantically. I also am fond of my girlfriend but I know that she can never give me the companionship that my friend gives me. Please tell me what to do?

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

I think the answer to your problem is clear even to you. Your earlier girlfriend was not the life companion you need, although I appreciate that you still have a deep affection for her. If you are worried about her feeling, well, it's quite likely that she has also found new friends and interests in America. Of course, her ego may be wounded by your defection but not for long! So good luck to both of you!

but keep in mind that this right carries an equal responsibility. You are not a commodity to be married off but you are not a cow or an animal to be maintained. Think of some form of economic activity, be it stitching, pickle-making, or even a computer course. Just aim to get your life in your own hands and have courage. Good luck.

FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Q : I am a graduate and since I am the only child of my parents, I am expected to do a lot of work as payment of bills, etc. I try to do these to the best of my ability as both my parents are busy. What I did not

My wife is disp… to the long hou…



AMIT DATTA

bargain for are the instances when they tell me that I am making money by producing false money bills and using their money unscrupulously for other purposes. I have tried explaining to them but to no avail. I have also tried to shirk responsibilities after this, but have not been able to. What do you think is the best solution for my problem?

XYZ, BIHAR

Parents categorically do not have the right to bully and abuse their children after they have grown-up. Resentments always build up and then there comes a day when their children will not take it any more. Therefore, in the long term, it is better to be frank, even at the cost of sounding harsh, and express your displeasure at their unreasonable conduct, rather than let the situation escalate.
Make it clear to your family members that you will gladly run any errands for them, but at your convenience and on your terms. You should plan to move out of your parental home at the first opportunity, without breaking off family ties and responsibilities. As they say, absence makes the heart grow fonder!

SERVICE BEFORE SELF?

Q : I am a 30-year-old man working as an executive in a multinational company. I keep very long hours and, therefore, my wife is very displeased with me. I try to do whatever is possible to keep her happy but apparently, it is just not enough because she feels I am neglecting the family (which, to an extent, I admit I have been forced to do). As a result of this, my work suffers and nor do I find peace at home. Please tell me how I should go about coping with this problem.

RAHUL MEHRA, NEW DELHI

Your dilemma is not an uncommon one, most socially mobile people have to deal with a clash between work obligations and demands of family and personal situations. The key to balancing these two aspects of your life is prioritising these conflicting demands and devoting quality time. All the success in the world is not worth it if you are to enjoy it alone, alienated from family and friends. While I am not suggesting that you neglect your work, it may actually happen that your performance improves if you periodically de-stress yourself with a dose of family life. Films, sports, weekends out, any excuse for joint activity will suffice. But do most emphatically make it clear to your long-suffering wife that these holidays should not deteriorate into nagging sessions, or their very purpose is defeated. Another suggestion is that she take up some rewarding and creative activity of her own, which will keep her occupied rather than fretting about your absence.

TAKING CONTROL

Q5: I am a 23-year-old graduate who has had a fairly good academic record. My problem is that due to some unfortunate incidents in the past, I have had to change my subject. Presently, the only way that I can have a good career is by opting for an MBA course. This would however cost a lot of money and I am not in a good financial position. I feel very depressed and don't quite know what to do. Please help.

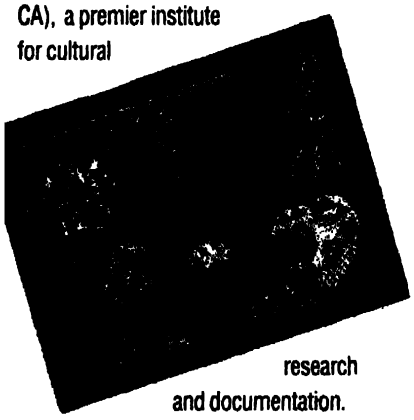
A. BHATTACHARYYA, CALCUTTA

Competence and determination manage to make a virtue out of necessity. That is what survival strategies are all about. So stop being so negative and look for a job, any job, which will give you work experience and practical skill.
In the meantime, apply for an MBA degree from Indira Gandhi Open University, which is an excellent course and recognised every where. You could also make sure that you are computer literate by doing a course or learning on the job or on a friend's computer. In life, degrees are not everything, but grit and determination are. ■

MIXED Bag

• PANCHATANTRA GOES HI-TECH

All of us have grown up on stories and fables from the *Panchatantra* that were churned out in AD 500 by the learned *rishi* Visnu Sarman for the three dull and ignorant sons of King Amara Sakti. So whether it was the tale of the hare and the tortoise, the monkey and the crocodile, or the lion of the hare — each of them taught one how to think rather than what to think. It's not surprising, therefore, that these stories have been narrated, researched, painted and danced to, the world over. And as if that was not enough, the *Panchatantra* has now been presented in the form of an exhibition by the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), a premier institute for cultural



research and documentation.

The exhibition brings together books, paintings and multi-media presentations on the ancient fables. The paintings section of the exhibition, for instance, has illustrations of some of the more popular fables. Each scene is arduously painted and the text written by the artists of Andhra Pradesh.

There are also papier-mâché models and CD-Roms which contain illustrated and animated stories from the *Panchatantra*. The stories are intended to stimulate children's participation while enhancing their reading and interactive skills.

SCENT OUT



the cosmetic market in India should no longer feel wanting in perfumes. For flooding the shops are enchanting bottles from all corners of the globe, including that mecca of the perfume industry, Paris. Recently, Claude Montana of Paris launched their couture brands, Montana Parfum de Peau and Montana Parfum d'Homme, in Mumbai.

While Parfum de Peau captures all of Claude Montana's creative themes as a designer, the frosted spiralling glass of the bottle conjures up images of a woman's frame in motion.

During the formal launch, designer Hemant Trivedi payed tributes to Claude Montana by creating an evening ensemble inspired by the guru's signature fragrance.

Made for men, Montana Parfum d'Homme is a blend of spice and musk. The falcon is a visual shock — the spiral of enthusiasm and conquered time, aspiring to scale the heights of greater knowledge and infinity.

Peau is available in 100, 50 and 30 ml bottles, priced at Rs 3,200, Rs 2,300 and Rs 1,300 respectively, while d'Homme is available in 125, 50 and 30 mls priced at Rs 2,600, Rs 1,600 and Rs 950, respectively.

Shopper's Stop, Vama and Eternia in Mumbai; Big Jos, Ebony and Jainson in Delhi and Little Woods in Bangalore will be stocking both brands.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Add a bit of glitter to your chee

Breaking the Ice



Good hope

Oasis India, which is part of Oasis International, organised a fashion show, Fair Funk, at St Andrews Auditorium in Bandra, Mumbai, recently. The show was part of Oasis International's focus on the poor and the underprivileged ensuring fair wages, fair working conditions and fair opportunities for them.



Some of the most popular models of Mumbai strutted down the ramp displaying 29 of the country's best-known fashion designers' collections. Works of students from the National Institute of Fashion Technology were also featured.

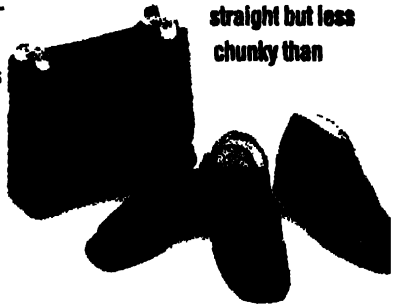
The event was basically a fund-raiser, the proceeds of which would go towards Jacobs Well, a vocational training project managed by Oasis India, for the benefit of marginalised women.

"Some part of the money will be used to set up a company where underprivileged women can be employed to manufacture a range of high fashion clothing. A part of the proceeds will also go towards Just Prospects, another Oasis project, which offers training and employment to men in Mumbai slums," informed Luke Raskino, project director, Fair Funk.

At Jacobs Well, women with some education can opt for a one-year tailoring course, while those not literate can avail a six-months machining course along with their literacy classes. "These courses equip women to become entrepreneurs," said Raskino. Oasis has recently tied up with "and Albert", a chain of nine high-street stores in the UK, for the sale of garments designed at Jacobs. Some good news indeed, for those less fortunate souls.

● PUT YOUR BEST FOOT FORWARD

Ashley shoes recently unveiled its Fall-Winter '98 collection with some spanking new styles for your feet. While the brand gives you a choice of loafers, sporty shoes, boots, platforms and leather-soled sandals, the brand designer insists that boots are the in thing for your feet this winter. Deepika Mehra of Ashley advises women to go for low ankle boots for that sporty look or alternatively settle for the knee-high variety. Calf and suede too will be big this winter, Mehra predicts. "The look is currently inclined towards a rounded square, while heels are both flared and straight but less chunky than



before," says Mehra. A new feature for the season will be the dimpled heel.

Ashley's collection indicates a trend that veers towards loafers in soft sheep skin and suede leather with gold and silver metallic embellishments. The platform collection is casual in both calf leather and woven kid leather with all soles fully padded to ensure pure comfort. This season Ashley also introduces a new luxury product — the leather soled line of footwear. In a nutshell, the emphasis this winter is on softness, with a liberal use of sheep leather and lining material. The strong colours are hues of blacks, browns, navys, tans, pearlised colours and dull metallics.

es for a glamorous look in the evening



With autumn on its way out, can winter be far behind? Keeping that in mind, The Oberoi Group of hotels have taken the cue to launch their special winter packages at select Oberoi and Trident hotels. The attractively priced packages offer guests exciting holiday options and weekend breaks.

From Sri Lanka to Delhi, Simla to the golden beaches of Gopalpur-on-sea, as well as ıeritage destinations like Bhubaneshwar and Khajuraho, the winter specials at Oberoi ıotels offer guests a wide choice of holiday destinations.

For instance, a couple can spend a one night/two days stay at Delhi for Rs 5,500 and ıisit Simla for a three nights/three days trip for Rs 18,650. Zip off to Gopalpur and you will ıever regret their three nights/three days package for Rs 14,380. If you happen to be at ıhubaneshwar, the same package will be available at an affordable Rs 5,795. The offer ıasts till March 31, should you want to take it up.

Winter specials are also valid at Trident hotels, the Oberoi group's first class internaonal hotels located in the culturally vibrant cities of Agra, Jaipur and Udaipur. For a ılaxed holiday, these hotels offer travellers excellent facilities and efficient service.

RASOI

The food column



Wrapping It Up

Jiggs Kalra on the easy-to-make roll

This column was weaned on the Nizam's Kathee Roll. The *Alma Mater,* St Xavier's, served a strange concoction — how we wished it was good Anglo-Indian food. So meals were those wonderful wraps: 8 annas for kid, 11 annas for chicken, a little more if we wanted egg on the paratha. Nizam's just isn't the same anymore. So we wrought a roll with a difference — and it's easy to make. Try it.

Kathee Roll

INGREDIENTS

The *Varqi Paratha*

- 500g/1 1oz **Flour**
- 45g/1½oz **Cashewnut paste**
- 240ml/1cup **Milk**
- 10g/2 tsp **Sugar**
- 5g/1tsp **Salt**
- 4.5g/1½ tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 125g/10 tbs ***Desi Ghee*/clarified butter**
- ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter for layering dough and shallow fry**

THE VEGETARIAN FILLING

- 600g/1lb 5oz **Paneer (1/2" cubes)**
- 30ml/2tbs **Cooking oil**
- 2g/1tsp ***Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- 10g/1"piece **Ginger (finely chop)**
- 4 **Green chillies (seed and finely chop)**
- 250g/9 oz **Tomatoes (chop)**
- 4.5g/1½tsp **Black pepper (freshly roasted and coarsely ground)**
- **Salt**
- 2 ***Harri shimla mirch*/green bell peppers (1/8"thick strips)**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Motti elaichi*/black cardamom powder**
- .375g/1/8 tsp ***Daalchini*/cinnamon powder**
- .375g/1/8 tsp ***Lavang*/clove powder**
- **A generous pinch of *kasoori methi*/dried fenugreek leaves**

THE NON-VEGETARIAN FILLING

- 600g/1lb 5oz **Chicken *tikka* (1/2" cubes)**

The Marination

- 45ml/3tbs **Lemon juice**
- 25g/4tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 15g/2½ tsp **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 8g/2tsp **Black peppercorns (crush)**
- **Salt**

The *Masala*

- 45ml/3tbs **Cooking oil**
- 250g/9 oz **Onions (chop)**
- 15g/2½ tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 10g/1¾ tsp **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 200g/7oz **Tomatoes (chop)**
- 4g/2 tsp ***Dhania*/coriander seeds (crush)**
- 3g/1 tsp **Red chilli powder**
- **Salt**
- 2 ***Harri shimla mirch*/green bell peppers(1/8" thick strips)**
- 0.5g/1tsp ***Kasoori methi* (crush between palms before sprinkling)**
- **A generous pinch Black pepper powder (coarsely ground)**
- **A pinch *daalchini*/cinnamon powder**
- **A pinch *Lavang*/clove powder**
- **A pinch *Motti elaichi*/Black cardamom powder powder**
- **A pinch *Javitri*/mace**

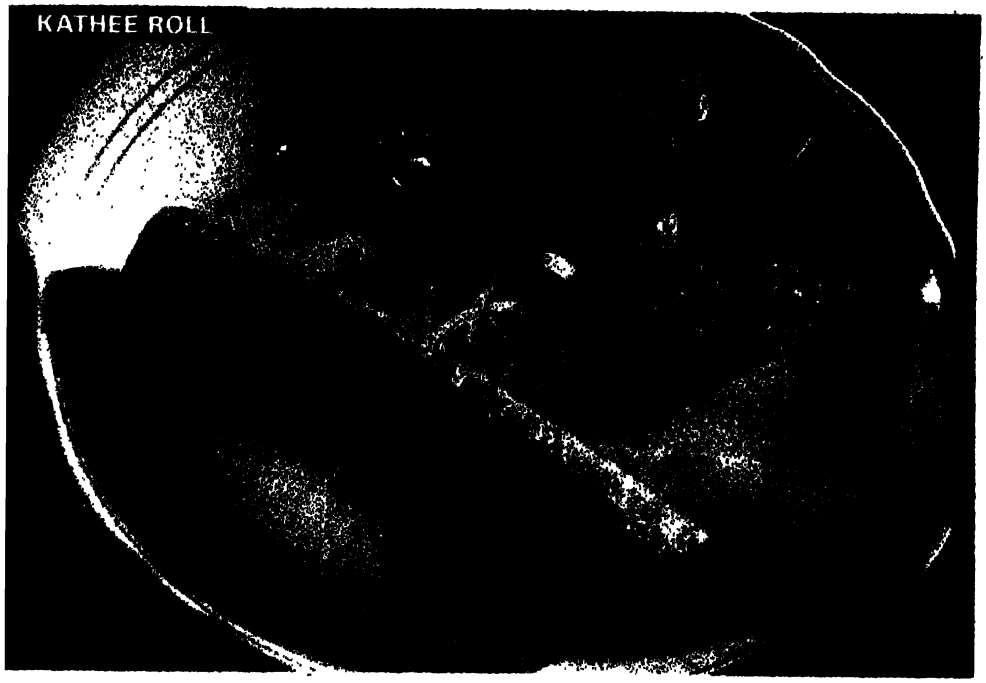
The Garnishes

- 125g/1/2 cup ***Chakka dahi*/Yoghurt cheese/hung yoghurt**
- 3.25g/1 tbs ***Taaza dhania*/coriander**
- ***Kachumbar***

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1:45 Hours
COOKING TIME: 3-4 minutes/roll

PREPARATION

- The Dough: Sift flour into a *paraat,* make a bay in the sieved flour, add milk, cashewnut paste, sugar, salt and cardamom, and knead gently until fully incorporated. Cover with moist cloth and reserve in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Then make little depressions with your fingertips, pour small quantities of *ghee* every 2-3 minutes and knead gently to make a soft dough. Cover with moist cloth and and reserve in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Remove, divide into 8 equal portions, make balls and cover with moist cloth.
- The *Pedha*: Lightly dust the work surface with flour, place a ball on top and roll out with a rolling pin into discs of 8" diameter. Apply a little *ghee* evenly on the disc, make a cut with a knife — starting from the centre to the rim (like you would make the first cut while


KATHEE ROLL

:utting a cake). Start with one end of he cut, roll the discs firmly into coni- :al shapes. Hold each cone between humb and forefinger, half an inch ıbove the base, and making spiral novements to compress the rest of he cone to make a *pedha*. Cover with ı moist cloth and refrigerate.

● The Vegetarian Filling: Heat oil in a :*adhai*/pan, add cumin, stir over nedium heat until it begins to pop, ıdd ginger and green chillies, and ›hun*no*/stir-fry for a few seconds. Then add tomatoes, *bhunno*/stir-fry ıntil soft. Add pepper and salt, and ›*hunno*/stir-fry until specks of fat begin to appear on the surface. Add bell peppers, black cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, *kasoori methi*, and *bhunno*/stir-fry to mix well. Now add *paneer* and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the *masala* nappes the cubes. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

THE NON-VEGETARIAN FILLING

● The Marination: Mix all the ingredients in a bowl, add the chicken, mix well and reserve for 15 minutes.

● The Chicken: Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok, add onions, saute over medium heat until translucent and glossy, add the garlic and ginger pastes, saute until the onions are light golden, add tomatoes and *bhunno*/stir-fry until soft. Add coriander seeds, red chillies and salt, *bhunno*/stir-fry until specks of fat begin to appear on the surface. Then add the marinated chicken, increase to high heat, *bhunno*/stir-fry for a minute, add bell peppers, *kasoori methi*, pepper, cinnamon, clove, black cardamom and mace, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the *masala* nappes the chicken. Remove, adjust the seasoning and keep warm.

● The Garnish: Put yoghurt cheese in a bowl, add coriander and mix well.

COOKING

● Melt a little *ghee* on a *tawa*/griddle.Lightly dust the work surface with flour, place a *pedha* on top and roll out with a rolling pin into discs of 8" diameter and shallow fry both sides over low heat — one side light golden and the other golden.

FINISHING

Spread 1/8th of the filling along the middle, spread 1/8th of the herbed yoghurt cheese on the chicken, garnish with *kachumbar*,roll and serve with chutney. ■

AN OPPORTUNITY TO WIN TICKETS

LOOK AT THE INSIDE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS

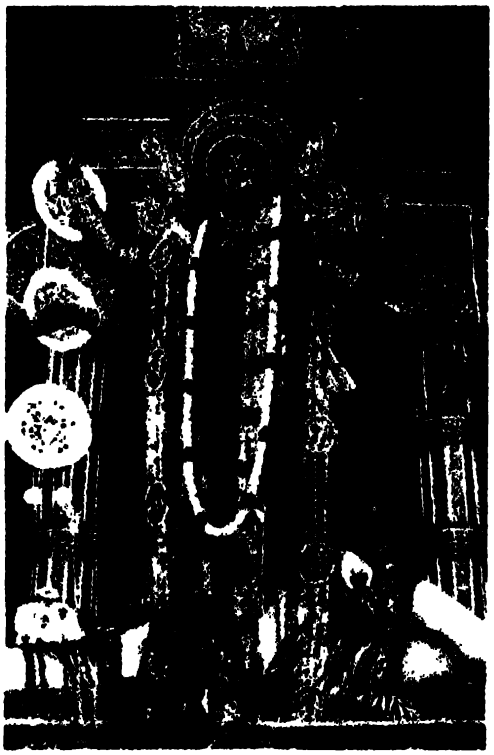
CYBERIA

THE POWER OF KALI

Is unleased on the Net as Diwali approaches. **Samita Bhatia** reports

'Diwali may be the corrupted form of Deepavali which stands for rows of *deeyas* (earthen lamps), but it remains the main festival of India.' So says the Internet which is also poised to live it up this festive season. While sites in cyberspace proliferated during Durga Puja, new ones have sprung up that update you on the subsequent festivals to be celebrated throughout the country. On the net you'll learn that 'the national festival of the Bengalis, Durga Puja, ends on a somber tone. But soon this melancholy disappears with the arrival of Lakshmi Puja. Close at its heels comes the trio of festivals for the Bengalis — Kali Puja, Diwali and *bhai phota*. Kali Puja is held on the night of the new moon in the Bengali month of Kartik and, besides being ritualistic, has today become a major social occasion.'

Diwali is a festival of *gyan* (knowledge), *karma* (action), *upasana* (worship) and much more. There are a smattering of Websites on the stories and ideologies connected with the festivals which, though Indian, have acquired an international appeal, 'which people of myriad nationalities, races and creeds celebrate in their own way'. You can access such information on any of the following sites:



http://web653ca.ntx.net/puja/puja96/diwali/ (from westbengal.com)

@The site goes in-depth into the worship of Kali by Bengalis. The site informs you: 'The Bengali has visualised a superpower in the form of a mother goddess since times immemorial. All our frights and fears, uncertainties and bewilderment get condensed in the icon of Goddess Kali. Man has tried to discover the enigmatic, the occult and the unknown through the musing of Goddess Kali.'

The site goes into detailed discriptions of Kali Puja, Diwali and *bhai phota* or brother's day. The rituals and some images associated with them are there for browsing. And the site goes, 'thus with prayers of prosperity for one's brothers, ends Bengal's greatest national festivals.'

http://www.visittnt.com/ToDo/events/diwali/ div all_Origin.html

@The site takes an in-depth view of the origin and significance of Diwali, quoting from a treatise of Professor H.S. Adesh of Bharatiya Vidya Sansthhaan, Trinidad & Tobago. The site explains the symbolism surrounding Lakshmi and other Hindu deities. The article explains common perceptions of Maha Lakshmi and also includes pictures of the goddess.

http://www.indianexpress.com/rangoli/dihistory.html

@Log on for a complete lowdown on the history of Diwali. Few of us realise that the festival spans four days. 'It commences on *Aswayuja Bahula Chaturdasi* and concludes on *Kartik Shudda Vijiya*.' Rites, rituals and deities — at a glance.

http://toco/ToDo/Events/Diwali/toc.html

@The site informs you that according to the Indian calendar, Diwali always falls on *amavasya*, the 15th day of the dark fortnight, in the month of Kartik. 'The *amavasya* of the Kartik is the darkest of the year,' you are told.

wyshwyg://70/http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/1228/laksh.htm

@The site contains the transcript of a lecture on Lakshmi puja given by D.N. Persaud which goes into the details of the origin of the festival, the tradition which surrounds it and the manner in which it is celebrated. The true significance of Lakshmi puja, says Persaud, is to bring home to us the lessons of chivalry and gallantry. "The women of our society are veritable incarnations of Lakshmi and it is the duty of every Hindu man to regard them as such."

He concludes with a warning: "It is no use for us to go to the goddess of good fortune and prosperity to try and bribe her with offerings and prayers if her incarnations are neglected and made to suffer." ■

LALOO YADAV & RABRI DEVI

Seema Goswami examines the dynamics of their relationship



Okay, let me come right out and say it. I think that Rabri Devi gets a raw deal. Everybody professes 'shock! horror!' at the thought that a rustic housewife like her could be running the Bihar government. Her critics go on television to complain that she is an illiterate woman who can barely understand official business, let alone conduct affairs of state. For heaven's sake, the woman doesn't even speak English, they say, the tone of outrage reaching a near-hysterical pitch.

My response to that is: so what? Any woman who has managed to run a household comprising nine children and an overgrown baby for a husband has more governance skills than the average man. She has probably arbitrated more disputes than any industrial tribunal, administered the rule of law in a manner which most courts would be hard-pressed to emulate, and balanced a budget which would have most economists — not to mention finance ministers — throwing their hands up in despair.



So, she doesn't speak English. Big deal. She owes her present position solely to the fact that she is her husband's wife. Sure; but so does Sonia Gandhi, and nobody goes on about how her presence at the head of the Congress is a travesty of the political process. So, why pick on Rabri just because she ties her sari with a *seedha pallav*, and speaks Hindi with a rural twang?

Not that playing the rustic buffoon has harmed her husband's political prospects in the slightest. Even though Laloo has brushed up his English of late, and insists on bantering with Prannoy Roy in that language on the Star News channel (to the bemusement of both Roy and his viewers), his USP remains his earthy humour delivered in an accent that comes direct from Patna. And why not, given that this is the only language his fellow Yadavs and OBCs understand. After all, politics is — at the end of the day — nothing more than effective communication between the ruler and the ruled.

Of course, the dynamics becomes a little more complicated when the ruler is forced out of power and has to hand over charge to his favoured lieutenant: in Laloo's case, his loyal, long-suffering wife, Rabri.

For one thing, this changes the balance of power in their marriage somewhat. Whereas earlier it was Laloo who took all the major decisions (you tell me: which woman in her right mind would volunteer to have nine children? And then suffer the indignity of having them given such names as Misa — after the Maintenance of Internal Security Act?), now he has to share at least some of the responsibility with his wife.

But who actually runs Bihar these days? Does Laloo run the state by remote control (as Shiv Sena chief Bal Thackeray once famously boasted of doing in Maharashtra) or does he play househusband to Rabri's chief minister?

It is difficult to judge the power equations in a marriage from the outside — or even know for a fact who decides what should be served for dinner — but it is clear that Laloo does behave like *de facto* chief minister, while Rabri contents herself with waving to the crowds and making the odd speech.

But there's no denying that this is the most power that Rabri Devi has ever wielded in her life. Yes, of course, it is power by proxy, and Rabri knows that as well as you and I do. But for the first time in her life, she is in a position where her husband is dependent on her, and not the other way round. And you can't blame the woman if she makes the most of it.■

Any woman who has managed to run a household comprising nine children and an over-grown baby for a husband has considerable governance skills ●

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 20 years old. My problem is that whenever I take a bath or sweat, I get an itchy sensation on my skin. As my skin is quite dry, it is probably allergic to water. I have consulted a skin specialist but the ointment prescribed by him did not help. Please suggest a safe and natural remedy.

MANDIRA BASU, BERHAMPUR

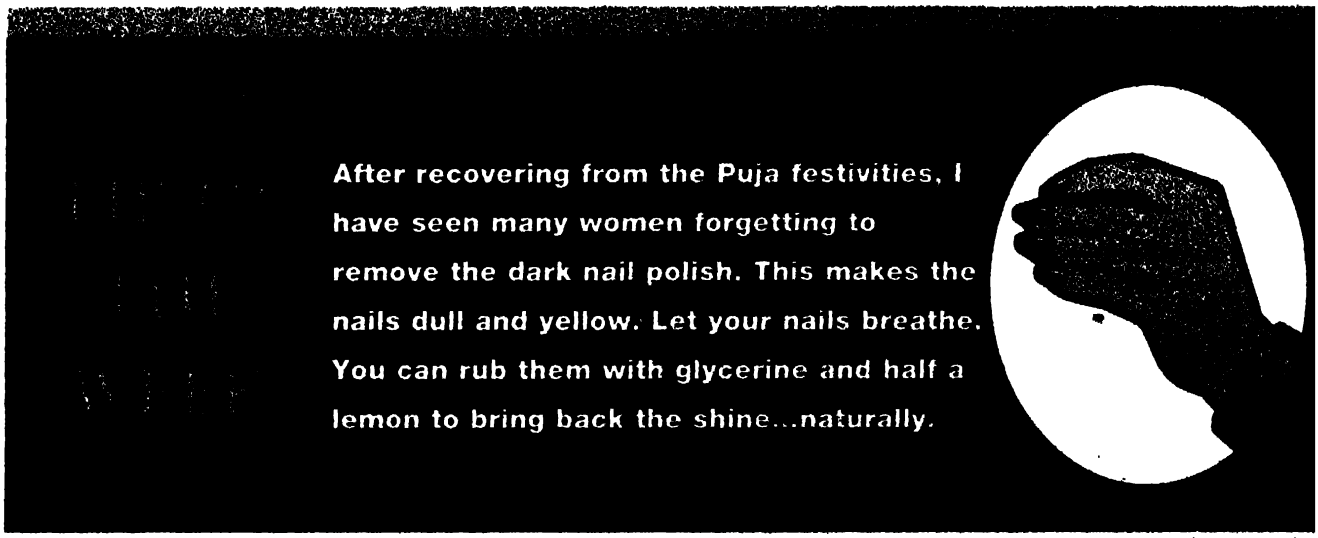
I find it difficult to believe that you could be allergic to water. If you feel your skin is dry and the water is drying it out more, why not give it external nourishment with a warm sesame seed oil massage. Add one tsp of powdered alum to your bath water. This should make a difference. I would suggest that you take a high-protein diet that will help nourish the body internally. Lots of dairy products like butter, cheese, milk and yoghurt should be consumed. Somehow, I find that the younger generation of today say an absolute 'no' to pure cow *ghee*, but a little in your lentils or on your rice is excellent. Our older generations never used refined oils nor did they take so many eating precautions but they were much healthier and did not suffer from so many different illnesses. I would also advise you to consult an immunologist who will be able to tell you exactly what you are allergic to and why you are having this problem. Once that's done, you can be treated accordingly.

I am a 18-year-old girl and have thick, lustrous hair but the problem is that I would like to keep my hair open. I have medium, straight hair and I would like it to curl like that of model, Noyonika Chatterjee's. Can I do it naturally without using chemicals or do I have to perm it?

I. HALDER, CALCUTTA

The grass is always greener on the other side; some crave for straight, lustrous hair and others, like you, fo curly hair. At least, you had the sense to realise that you should not use chemicals; most people do not hesitate to do so. After shampooing your hair, rinse it out with half a glass of beer and half water. When the hair is still damp, take small sections of the hair and make tight, thin, plaits. This shoulc preferably be done and left overnight. You should be able to make at least 20 to 30 plaits. Open them out in the morning and you will find your hair beautiful and curly. This will last until the next shampoo.

I am a regular reader of your column. I find that you suggest warm coconut oil massage for dandruff. But dermatologists say that coconut oil is harmful



In such cases. I am confused whether I should use coconut oil or not. Please explain.
SUSHMITA G. CALCUTTA

I always recommend warm coconut oil massage followed with the application of lemon juice on the scalp. This should be steamed and left on for not more than two hours and then shampooed. If you are being treated by your dermatologist for dandruff, please do not mix both the treatments as you will never know which one has worked for sure. Coconut oil left on for hours is harmful as it makes the scalp sticky and also attracts dust and grime which is dangerous for dandruff.

Also, I would like to suggest that it is not only what you are putting on your scalp but also what you are taking internally—10 glasses of water, lots of raw food i.e. fruits and vegetables and a clean stomach—would make a difference.

I have an acute problem of dry hair. Earlier, I used to have lustrous hair but our bathing water has a high iron content and is affecting my hair. Please help.
K. NASKAR, CALCUTTA

Nourish your hair internally as well as externally. I would suggest that you oil your hair with either almond oil or *bhringraj* herbal oil.This is excellent for the hair. Also start to use an extremely mild shampoo. The best would be to use a concoction made of *amla*, *shikakai* and *reetha*. Boil 100 gms of each of these herbs in three litres of water until it reduces to half and use the brew to shampoo your hair. Not only will the hair fall cease but the dryness will also reduce. Also, when you have shampooed your hair, take a litre of water and add 10 drops of honey, use this as a last rinse to your hair and feel it becomes like silk.

This should be done regularly for best results. I would suggest that you have a general check-up with your doctor to check for any internal illness.

I am a 32-year-old woman. My problem is that I have a lot of hair on my fingers. Yes, on my fingers like that of a man. I have tried to shave it off but it only became thicker. Please suggest a natural way of hair removal.
K. RATAN, PATNA

You have already done enough damage by shaving the hair. I often wonder how sensible women like you make such silly mistakes. For God's sake, wax the area, it is natural and the safest method of hair removal. You hair will also become softer and not feel like a stubble. Always moisturise the area after you have waxed it. I would suggest that you get it done professionally, the first few times and then you can do it at home with either cold wax or a mixture of sugar and lemon.

I am a 29-year-old woman. I am not very fat and have a slightly dry skin. But I have an ugly double chin which makes me look much older. Is there any exercise that I can do to get rid of it? Please help.
GAYATRI DEB, BHUBANESHWAR

Massage your neck in upward strokes with any moisturiser or a light oil. Almond oil is the best. Along with this, do neck stretching exercises by taking the neck as far back as you can. Also, when you have stretched your head back, make 'ooh' and 'aah' shape with your lips. You will be able to feel the stretch in your neck muscles. This done everyday, will show results within one month. It is important to look after this neglected area just as one would look after the face as it is prone to lines and sagging. Always use a face mask on this area and leave on till completely dry. Always wash off with cold water...never warm or hot water. These little tips—if regularly done—will go a long way in making your neck graceful and swan-like.

I am a regular reader of your column and find them very useful. But can you please explain terms like *chokker* and fuller's earth in Hindi?
VEDIKA SHUKLA, CALCUTTA

I have already explained them earlier and in case you have missed them, fuller's earth, in Hindi, is *multani mitti* and *chokker* is already the Hindi version. When you sift whole flour, the granular substance that is left over the sieve is known as *chokker*.

I am a 32-year-old man. I had chicken pox three years ago. This has left deep marks on my face. Please suggest a way to get rid of these marks.
KRISHNA PRASAD, JAMSHEDPUR

I do hope you had not scratched the chicken pox boils because that will only worsen matters. You need to take up a daily skin care programme. Grind *masoor daal* and rice, and add the juice of two lemons, milk, *chokker* and fuller's earth. Apply all over face and leave on to dry. Later, scrub off with cold milk and then wash face with cold water. Also keep a cup of milk separately in the fridge to which you have added cotton wool. Whenever you have time, just use this as a cold compression on your face. You will definitely see the difference within a month. Remember, natural remedies take time but are long lasting. ■

TO HAVE NATURALLY CURLY HAIR:

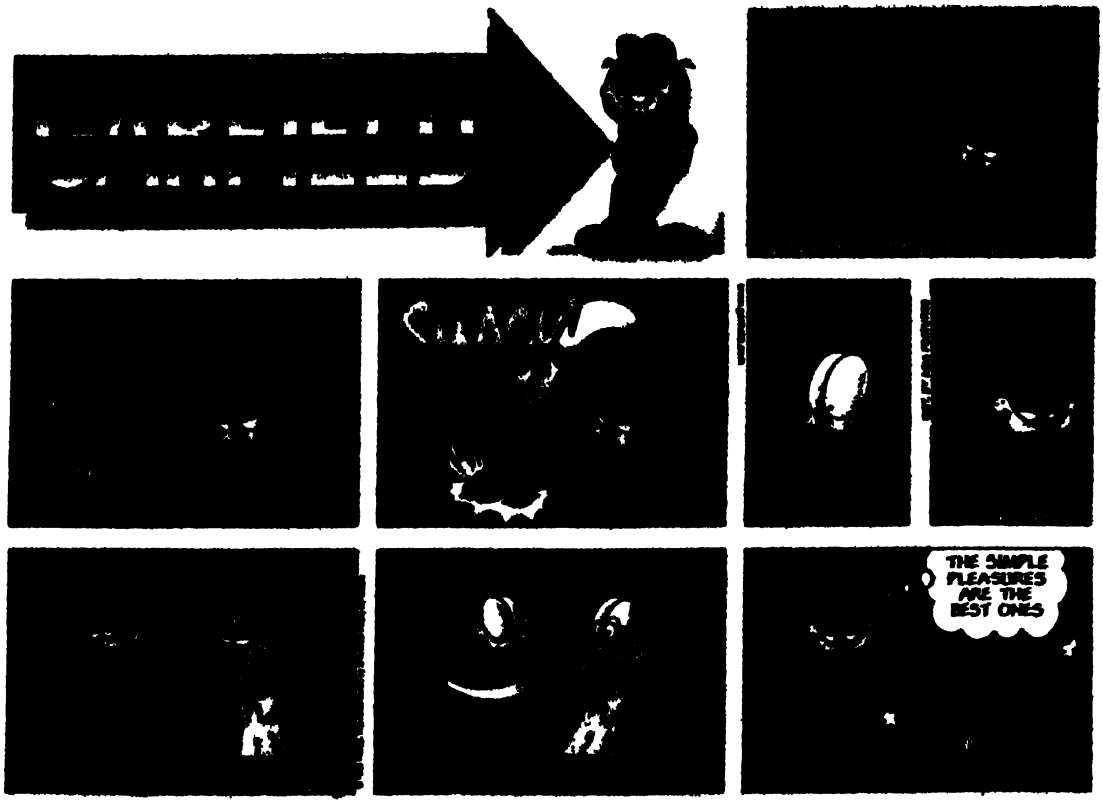
Rinse hair with beer and water after shampooing it and tie several thin, tight plaits while the hair is still damp



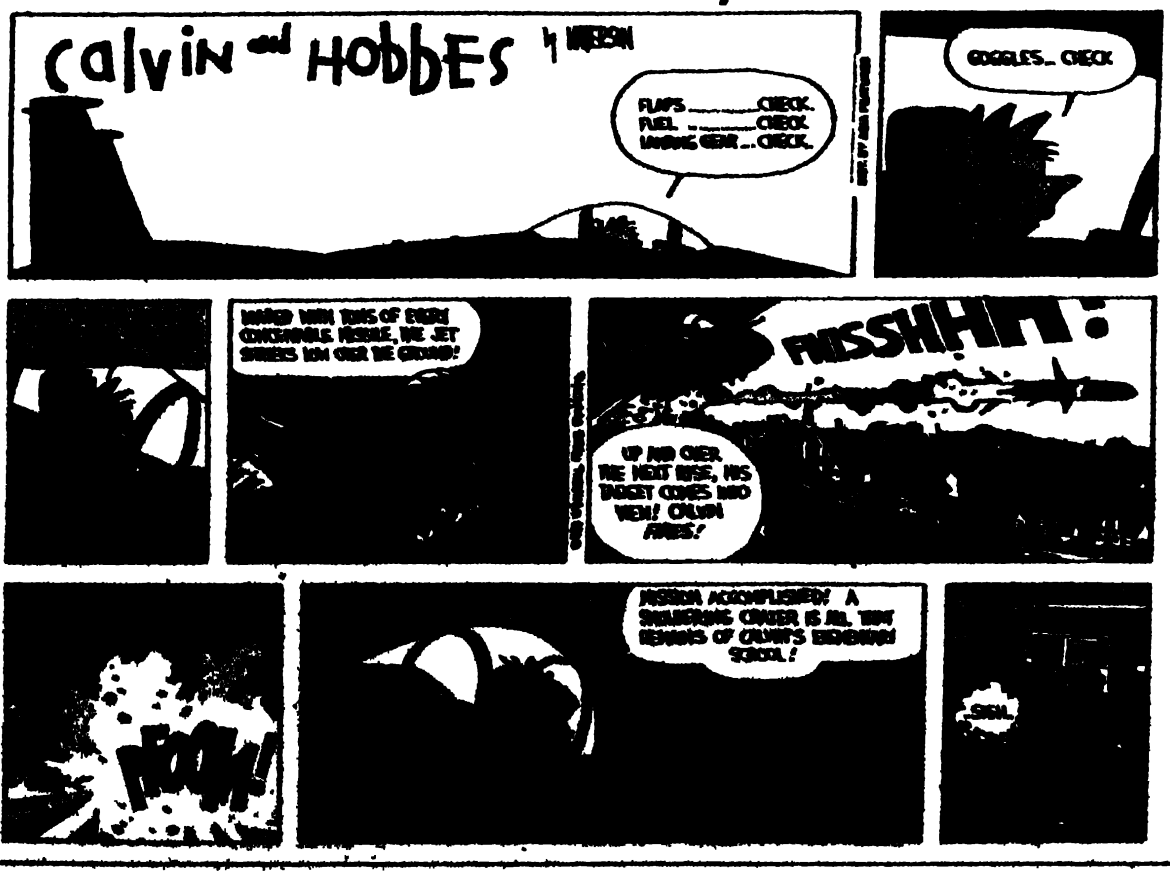
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	1 5 7	IC 742	1110	2 4 6
IC 41	240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1 3 5 6	IC 744	1220	1 3 5 6
IC 44	1410	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4 7	IC 744	1620	4
AHMEDABAD					
CD 257	1620	2 4 6	CD 258	2135	2 4 6
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 5	IC 22	1625	1 2 3 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1345	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1[illegible]5	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 777	1[illegible]1	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1[illegible]	2 4 7	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 65	801	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 763	0[illegible]	daily	9W 501	0815	daily
9W 50	1[illegible]0	daily	AI-681	0925	1
499	740	daily	* IC 855	1755	2 6
* C-856	1545	6	IC-401	1855	daily
9W 917	2000	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 764	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD-411	1[illegible]0	1 3 5 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3 7	IC 702	1440	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 257	455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	3 5 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
9W 511	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	9W 512	1240	1 2 4 6 7
IC 729	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
9W 611	0950	1 2 4 6 7	IC 714	1430	4 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 51[illegible]	1345	daily	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1 3 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0930	1 3 5	CD 256	1000	1 3 5
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
IC-713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
9W-621	0950	3 5	9W-622	1305	3 5
CD-257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD-411	2120	1 3 5 7
MUMBAI (SEMMAR)					
9W 202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W 201	0910	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	9W 211	1905	daily
AI 679	0010	7	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD-411	2120	1 3 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2 4 6 7	CD 286	1010	2 4 6 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0550	2 4 6	CD-254	0820	2 4 6
CD-256	0550	1 3 5	CD-256	1020	1 3 5
TRIVANDRUM					
CD 215	1100	1 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 476	0325	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB 105	1025	2 6	KB-106	0815	2 3 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC 731	1015	4 7	TG-013	1235	1 3 6
IC-855	0835	2 6	IC-732	1010	4 7
TG-314	1350	1 3 6	IC-856	1500	2 6
AI-308	1950	5	AI-305	1605	3
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	1250	2 5	[illegible]	1210	2 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-082	0815	1	BG-081	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-081	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-084	1645	2	BG-083	1545	2
BG-086	2105	daily	BG-085	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
SU-538	1100	4	SU-537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
KB 106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC 727	1450	2, 6	IC 728	1080	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC 727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Howrah

Departure

Delhi-Kalka Mail
Amritsar Mail
Mumbai Mail via Allahabad
Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi
Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun.
Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.
Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna
Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat.
Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.
Rajdhani Express via Gaya
Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat.
Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.
Rajdhani Express via Patna
Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.
Jodhpur Express
Steelbird (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday
Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Weekly
Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.
Guwahati Sunlight Express
Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.
Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday
Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express
Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.
Doon Express via Grand Chord
Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line
Delhi Janata Express
Amritsar Express
Kalkapuram Express
Mithila (Raxaul) Express
Kamrup (Guwahati) Express
Black Diamond Express
Coalfield Express
Asansol Express
Danapur Express
Jamalpur Express
Saktidham Express
Rampurhat Express
Chanakya (Rajgir) Express
Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.
Sitagni (Sahara) Express
Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.
Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express
Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.

Sealdah

Tarak-Tirna Express
Darjeeling Mail
Lal Dalia Express via Main Line
Kanchenjunga Express
Ganga Express
Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express
Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.
Kalimpong Express
Jayanta-Tirtal Express
Kalyani Simul Express via SBG Loop
Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express
Ganga Sagar (Kakdwip) Express
Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.

Arrival

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Howrah

Departure

Madras Mail
Mumbai Mail via Nagpur
Gitanjali (Bombay) Express
Shalimar (Howrah) Express
Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday
Ahmedabad Express
Kanta Express via Nagpur
Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack
Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express
Tata Steel Express
Agni (Bhubaneswar) Express
Bhubaneswar-Rajgangpur Express
Ranchi Hatia Express
Puri Express via Cuttack
Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express
Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express
East Coast (Hyderabad) Express
Purulia Express
Dep: Except Saturday
Arr: Except Sunday
Tirupati Express
Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express
Dep. & Arr.: Tuesday & Sunday
Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only
New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only
Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only
Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only
Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only
Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only
Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express
Dep. & Arr. Friday & Monday
Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only
Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only

Arrival

ENQUIRIES: For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2208045-54 for in-coming trains; 2208041-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2208040-2208 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1391 (for general information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train enquiry at Sealdah: 3505507.
Information Voice Response System (8 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 135 (computerised); Dial 2208400 (manual enquiry).

THE Best

Mineral water may be flooding the market, but are people willing to pay for it? Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya finds out

H_2Oh!

Ever since Suparna Sen moved to Delhi, she has had to make frequent visits to the doctor. The reason was not hard to guess. The water at both her flat and workplace was polluted. This meant she had to either survive on boiled water, or drink mineral water, if she wanted a disease-free life.

Mineral water may make for better health, but it has now also become something of a lifestyle statement. Be it at a media conference or a socialite's lavish party, the guests are always served mineral water. Earlier it was only non-resident Indians who insisted on "mineral water, please" during their annual visits to the country. But these days, almost everybody who eats – or drinks – out insists on mineral water.

In fact, such is the increased concern for safe drinking water that the demand for mineral water has gone up from 95 million litres in 1992 to 424 million litres in 1998.

The mineral water market was monopolised by Bisleri in the Seventies till Parle Agro launched Bailley in 1993. But Bailley is still struggling with only 20 per cent of the market share. One reason for the popularity of mineral water is that "mothers prefer to give their children clean drinking water rather than aerated water," says Ramesh Chauhan, the man behind Bisleri's phenomenal success.

Players like Godrej Foods launched Golden Valley, claiming they bottled spring water from Kerala. Even liquor manufacturers, Mohan Meakins and SKN Breweries, realised the viability of selling water by launching their

OPERATION FLOOD
There is a deluge of mineral water brands in the market

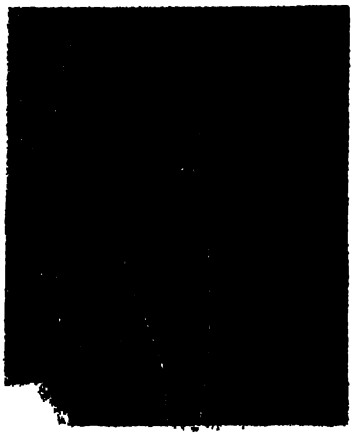


KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

SUMAN KUNDRA

Astrologer

I think almost all of them (mineral water brands) taste the same, with some exceptions. I feel Ganga and Penguin mineral water have excellent taste



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

NALINI SINGH

TV personality

My vote is for the New Delhi Municipal Committee water on which I have survived for the last 25 years. I have never relied on Aquaguards, tablets (for water purification), distilled or mineral water. I am in better health without them

brand, Golden Eagle in the early Nineties.

The concept of buying water is relatively new and the manufacturers of mineral water are using every trick in the trade to improve consumption. Not just the corporate giants, but even the small-time players are plunging into the business. Right now, there is nothing short of a deluge in the mineral water market.

Nearly 80 per cent of the human body consists of water, leading to the high incidence of water-borne diseases. There are three types of impurities which are the root of all water-borne diseases—microbiological, dissolved impurities and imbalance of mineral content.

When the consumer first became aware of the problems caused by water pollution, ceramic filters made their appearance in the market. While they may have succeeded in filtering dust and suspended particles, dissolved and microbiological impurities remained. The late Eighties witnessed the introduction of the ultra-violet based purifier which filtered dust and de-activated bacteria to a great extent.

The common man never really took to mineral water. One litre of mineral water costs about Rs 10-12 per bottle. With an average human consuming two litres of water per day, this would involve an expenditure of Rs 24 per day, which is beyond the reach of the average man.

To make mineral water a healthy drinking habit, Hello Mineral Water has introduced India's first Triple Sterilised Mineral Water at the rate of Rs 2.50 a litre per day. "Our focus is on consumers looking for water purity and safety," says Dinesh Nambiar, general manager, Hello. He adds that they are trying to change consumer perception. "Mineral water should no longer be regarded as a luxury item," he says.

Hello has slashed down the price of mineral water from Rs 12 per litre to Rs 2 per litre by doing away with the system of bottle packaging. What they have, instead, are polycarbonate containers which can hold up to 24 litres of water.

Polycarbonate as a material is used to make feeding bottles for babies owing to its excellent hygienic properties. The company has two models — a hot and cold dispensing system that dispenses hot and cold water simultaneously from an inverted 24 litre bottle, and a thermo jug. A family of four would have to spend a meagre Rs 350 per month for clean drinking water. "To cope with the demands of the floating consumer," says Nambiar, "we have launched the one litre, 1.5 litres, two litres, 10 litres and 330 ml mineral water bottles."

While the market is today awash with several lesser-known brands which claim to provide 'pure' mineral water, some of these have been known to fill their bottles with tap water that contain a variety of impurities. It is thus a surprise that most of us are alive today. According to an analytical study done by the Delhi-based Sriram Institute for Research, 65 per cent of the mineral water industry does not conform to the drinking water specifications. Offering water in convenient bottle sizes is another tactic followed by mineral water companies to lure prospective consumers. Bailley was the first to introduce the 500ml bottle aimed at the corporate executive who would rather drink mineral water than a soft drink.

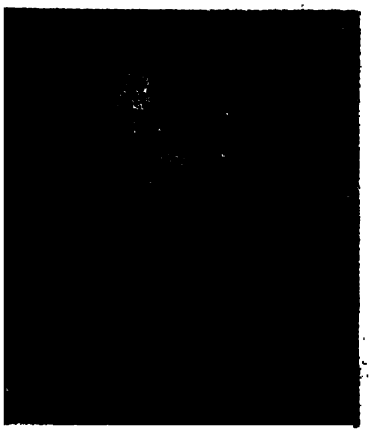
Foreseeing the growing demand for pure drinking water in India, AusWater, an Australian company, launched bottles of three sizes — 500ml, one litre and 1.5 litres — incorporating the Rainpure Water Purification System technology in India. "In this process," says Faheem Aahmed, marketing manager of AusWater, "source water is connected to the system, boiled at low temperatures in a vacuum to form ultra pure vapour." Since the vapour is too thin to support the weight of molecules, it crystallises into clear water leaving behind all contaminants as residue.

Clear water has several brand names in today's market. But the question of its survival will depend on its ability to build consumer confidence. Should any brand fail to adhere to strict quality control measures, the consumer will lose no time in tapping other sources. ■



WASHOUT

65 per cent of the mineral water industry does not conform to the drinking water specifications. However, today, companies are coming up with cheap and hygienic options like polycarbonate containers and thermo jugs



JATIN KOCHHAR

Fashion designer

I like Aqua mineral water with regard to the taste and packaging. Whenever I have friends coming over from abroad, that is the preferred drink



PARAMJIT CHAWLA



But how is Shapers different?

New Shapers, is a scientifically designed sanitary napkin which gives me complete comfort, freedom and total protection.

How Shapers isn't uncomfortable?

Shapers is shaped for a perfect fit. Its side sealing plastic back cover ensures **no side staining. No bunching.**

You doesn't a thicker & longer sanitary napkin absorb better?"

No, not anymore. Shapers is a slim & compact sanitary napkin. Because its specially compressed absorbent material, **absorbs more.** Giving you the freedom which a thicker napkin will never allow.

" Don't all sanitary napkins get lumps in the centre? Never evenly absorb?"

No, not with Shapers, its unique **Absorb Protection Technology** Channels pull the wetness down, spreading it evenly throughout the length of the pad leaving the surface comfortably **drier** and **longer lasting.**

Go ahead, get confidence when you need it most. Get Shapers.

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WRITE IN

Address your letters to Write In, Graphiti, The Telegraph, 6 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Calcutta 1

POLITICALLY CORRECT

The cover story on Jayanthi Natarajan was immensely readable ('Substance & Style', September 13). The fact that Indian women are forging ahead in many areas today is revealed by the presence of diligent, honest and intelligent women like Jayanthi Natarajan. She is definitely a welcome break from the rest of her tribe — uncouth, corrupt and illiterate as they are. May there be more women like her to guide the nation.

SHYAMOLI SEN, CALCUTTA

WOMAN OF STEEL

The profile of Jayanthi Natarajan was enjoyable. Jayanthi speaks straight from the heart. She does not think it necessary to deny her femininity in order to be considered a politician of substance. After a while, it is one's work that counts above everything also and if one is able to prove oneself, people stop looking at merely the appearance and other such inconsequential matters.Sad as this may sound, women do have to prove themselves twice as much as men. Thus, if a woman has risen to the top as Jayanthi Natarajan has, there certainly is more to it than luck.

P. Majumdar, Barasat

FOOD CORNER

The *Rasoi* column has begun to lose its novelty. While gourmet cooking obviously involves a lot of time and energy, the recipes given here have ceased to interest the readers any more save for the photographs of delicious looking food. Ingredients such as *zarragoosh* powder and *chail chabila* powder (by the way, what exactly are these?) are not easily available in the market. Could you instead feature various chefs from all over the country and their specialities (with ingredients that are more available)?

M. Sinha, Calcutta

NOT THAT NEAT

Richard Neat did not make that good a guest to take out for luncheon ('Out to Lunch,' September 13). He revealed himself to be quite cynical and suspicious. When one is a master chef and is known to be a connoisseur of food, it is but expected that he be sufficiently adventurous about different kinds of cuisines and people. Not so our Mr Neat! We definitely could do with a more amiable personality for the 'Out to Lunch ' column.

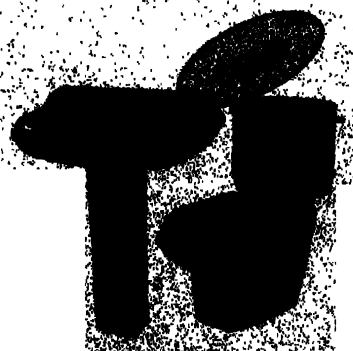
S.Pal, Calcutta

COVER PHOTOGRAPH : Mustafa Quraishi

graphiti ★ 25 October 1998

4 HOW GREEN IS THE VALLEY? Is Kashmir limping back to normalcy? 13 SMALL TALK Examining the craze for designer labels 14 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES 16 MIXED BAG 18 RASOI 22 DESIGN CORNER Carpets can brighten up every room in the house 28 THE BEST Lotions can protect your skin from its worst enemy : the sun 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE

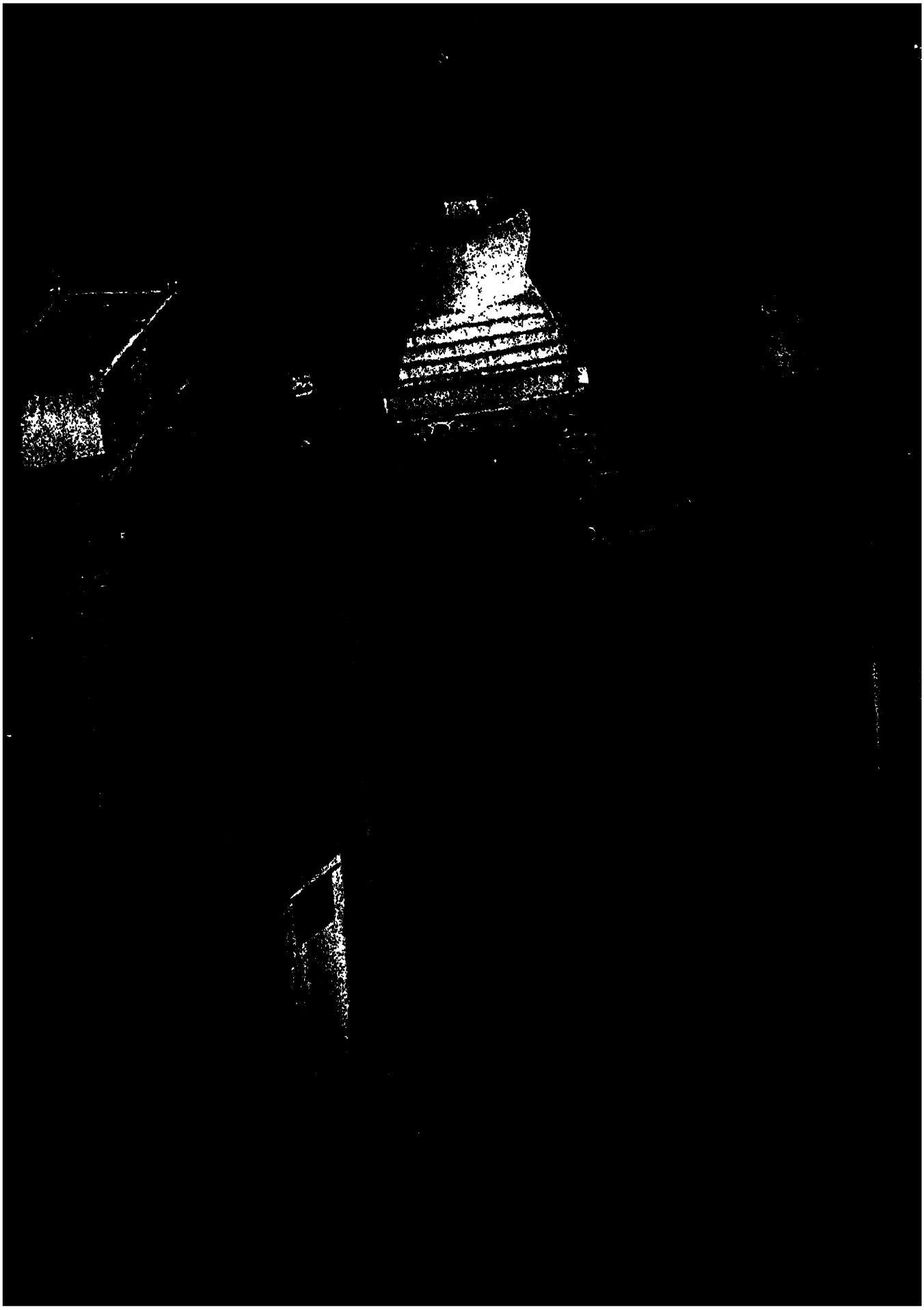
The idea behind exclusive bathrooms



Fascinating Hindware



HINDWARE



how Green is the Valley?

Srinagar may be limping back to normalcy, but is it safe for tourists to venture into Kashmir? Ghazala Wahab finds out

The first impressions of Kashmir are far from heavenly. As one drives from Avantipur airport which is about 56 km south of Srinagar to the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir all that one sees are sad, denuded mountain ranges. This is no act of God, but of the militants and the army.

In fact, the moment you land at the army airfields of Avantipur you realise that you are in a war zone. Srinagar airport is shut for repairs. Rumours have it that it was bombed and the runway is badly damaged but some say that they are building an international airport here. If this is true, then it is an act of unparalleled optimism.

A few kilometres on the highway and one sees fleeting glimpses of the Kashmir immortalised by the Hindi film industry. Stretches of rice fields flanking the highway try their best to make up for bare mountains. Occasional bursts of cedar and poplar trees add to the scenery. Quaint little wooden houses with tin and wood roofs in vibrant colours vie for attention. But before your imagination can run wild in the rice fields an army convoy appears to break the spell.

This may be Paradise, but it is a fettered one. Yet, fetters have done nothing to destroy the beauty of the place. Srinagar remains what it was, only there are as many army personnel on the road as there are civilians. It is a city under siege; enough to worry anyone not used to seeing the army in action. Conspicuous by its absence is the police. Except for an occasional traffic policeman, one doesn't see them around.



MUSTAFA QURAISHI

PARADISE UNDER SIEGE
The picturesque Valley now gets to see perhaps more army personnel than civilians and (left) an aerial view of Ladakh

But the tourism department believes that this is not reason enough to worry. And they are right to an extent. One night in Srinagar and you get used to the presence of the army. Particularly, when you are woken up in the morning by the sound of Border Security Force men exercising next door.

If you hope to sight some terrorists then you are likely to be disappointed. Terrorists have receded to

the rural areas and strikes in the city are very rare. But that doesn't mean their word is not law any longer The city still abides by the unofficial curfew hour of 9 pm. Of the 300-odd hotels in Srinagar only 10-15 have started operations Despite this, people, particularly those who depend on tourism for their livelihood, are optimistic - perhaps because of the successful Amarnath *yatra* this year which passed off without any mishap

Srinagar is trying to limp back to normalcy, as is evident to any casual observer. The Mughal gardens are open to the public, except Chashm-e-Shahi, which one needs special permission to visit as it lies close to the Raj Bhavan But the best part of Srinagar remains the boulevard, the road adjacent to Dal Lake Nothing, not even the CRPF pickets on the Dal lake, can beat the pleasure of walks down the boulevard, despite the potholes.

travel



Well, maybe the shikara rides can But the fun you can have in Kashmir i directly related to the amount o courage you have. The bravehearts wil find enough to amuse themselves bu the meek might have to wait a whil before venturing anywhere near th Valley

But coming back to the shikaras nobody remembers exactly how th shikara rides originated. One school o thought believes that the idea wa Parisian but die-hard Kashmiris swea that it is indigenous. Anyway, despit the fact that the Dal is half its origina size, courtesy weeds, encroachmen and reclamation, and there aren' many takers for the rides, it is still on of the most romantic things you can d in Srinagar.

For the religiously inclined, there i the Shankaracharya temple and Charar-e-Sharif. Though the market Lal Bazar, is not even a shadow of wha it was, it still has all the charm of yore More than charm, it has people desper ate to get back into business, so even an unmitiated shopper can get a good bar gain. In fact, bargains are aplenty in Kashmir these days. The shikara rides which cost Rs 100 an hour about 12 years ago still cost the same.

The best way to enjoy a Kashmir holiday is to make Srinagar the base and drive to neighbouring places like Pahalgam, Gulmarg and Sonamarg. But on these day-trips one has to make concessions for close encounters with the army personnel. Security checks on the highway are a common occurrence. Gulmarg was badly hit by militants as it falls in the Baramula district. Even now, driving to Gulmarg involves a security check by army posts at least twice on the way.

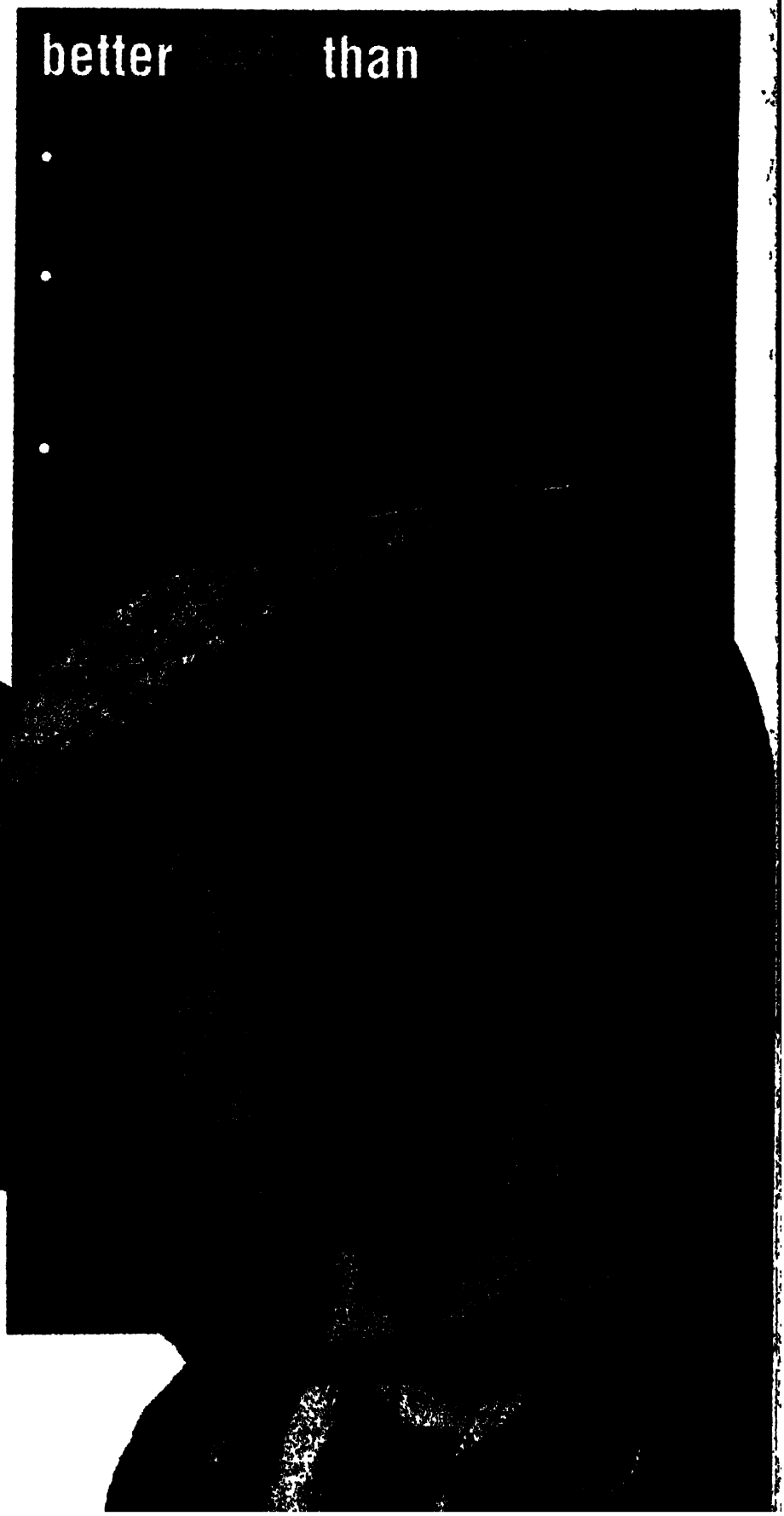
But the trip is worth the pain. If the denuded mountains on the Avantipur-Srinagar highway were shattering then the Srinagar-Gulmarg highway more than makes up. There are occasional patches of nudity but for the most part the mountains are lovely, green, inviting, and dangerous too. They provide ample cover for the militants to enter the Valley This explains the occasional

nudity as army often had to clear away the patches of green when combing for militants.

Northeast of Srinagar is Sonamarg. Situated at the height of 9,000 ft, it is truly a golden meadow. It lies cradled by carpet green mountains which turn grey or at times white towards the peak as they melt into the clouds. A fresh water stream which culminates into the Suru river runs parallel to the highway adding to the beauty.

The only hitch is the road which is non-existent in parts as it remains under snow for almost eight months and for the rest of the year is under army control. Sonamarg is the first place to receive snowfall in the Valley and it gets almost 40 ft in a year which makes inhabitation impossible. It has a population of only 15-20 families, who move downhill during winters.

Sonamarg has something for everyone. The adventurous can trek, or take ponies to the Thajiwas glacier which has melted quite a bit this year, much to the dismay of the local people. For the romantic there are sun-baked slopes to laze around. They can also slip under the bridge to reach the stream of ice-cold water. But it would be foolhardy to venture too far into the wilderness. This paradise could be enticing but one never knows when it will turn deceptive.



But the surprise of this trip — organised by the Jammu and Kashmir tourism department to show that all is quiet on the battlefront — was Ladakh. Unlike the Valley, which is delectably beautiful, the greenery lending it a feminine charm, Ladakh is raw and powerful. Its landscape, devoid of the greenbelt, is harsh yet mind-blowing.

As you drive through the Suru Valley passing Daojilla pass, the scene of the famous Indo-Pak battle in 1948, to enter Ladakh the landscape changes

completely. The mountains become bare, with vegetation visible only at the base of the valley next to the Suru river, around 250-300 metres below the road.

The first Ladakhi village is Dras in Kargil district. It is isolated, cold and barren with a population of only a few hundred. To the credit of J&K tourism, they have built a tourist bungalow even here. The state tourism department has built alpine cottages, guest houses and sometimes dormitories even in the remotest villages charging a nominal Rs 75-100 a night. Sometimes, one finds a solitary cottage at the base of a peak with no village in sight.

Throughout Ladakh, whether it is Kargil, Trespone, Panikhar, Rangdum, Padum, Karsha or even Leh, a traditional tourist used to the Kashmir Valley would find nothing that would interest him. There are no gardens, no boat rides, no cable cars, no markets. Yes, you have monasteries. Each with a story of their own, mysterious and enchanting. But, some of the places don't even have electricity or a telephone. Yet the department wants to develop tourism here. And the local people are more than accommodating because they realise the economic advantages of attracting tourists.

Ladakh is raw and powerful. Its landscape, devoid of the greenbelt, is harsh yet mind-blowing

And this hope is not without reason. Because in Ladakh one doesn't need destinations. The journey, albeit bumpy, is an end in itself. The way from Dras to Kargil, which is incessantly shelled by the Pakistanis, is also a revelation of sorts, because alongside the stream a few hundred metres below the highway, is the silk route. Though occasional patches of barley and maize fields have appropriated the route it is a moving experience nevertheless to be one with history.

Trespone is a half-day journey from Kargil. Even the illusion of green disappears from the mountains. In fact, there are no mountains either. They are just huge piles of rocks, sometimes rising as high as 500 ft. Even though the



KARMA chameleons

Life inside a Buddhist nunnery

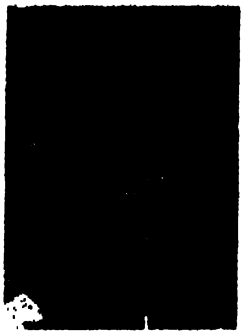
Chomo Lubzang Dolma was 12 when she joined a *gompa* (Buddhist nunnery). At an age when most girls were trying to sew dresses out of discarded clothes for their dolls, Lubzang was memorising verses. One of the five children, Lubzang says she always wanted to be a nun. "I wanted to improve my *karma* so that I could attain salvation," she says shyly with the help of an interpreter.

She must have been a very precocious child if at age 12 she wanted to improve her *karma* and not her doll collection. At this she giggles. So does her companion, another chomo. In their late 20s, they do not come across as usual nuns. They behave more like giggly teenagers on their rare day out.

The interpreter, who is a tourist officer, does not like this comparison. "You have to understand that they are uneducated and have spent all their life at the *gompa*," he says explaining their shyness. But he does concede that in most cases, families encouraged one of their offspring to join the monastery for reasons other than religion.

Lubzang lives at a *gompa* at Karsha, a monastic village in Zanskar valley. Her parents live in the village nearby but rarely come to visit her. "They don't have time," she whispers. "I go and see them once a year." The rest of her time is spent in the *gompa* with occasional interaction with people outside. Chomos live a segregated life and their encounters with lamas are always of the religious kind.

Yet, despite the segregation, accidents of the sexual kinds are not unheard of. Lubzang giggles uncontrollably at this question. The interpreter answers on her behalf. "In earlier times such indiscretions were not tolerated at all. There were instances of chomos being stoned to death also. But now they can beg the head lama for forgiveness, quit the *gompa* and lead an ordinary life with husband and child," he says.



GHAZALA WAHAB

But under no circumstances can she resume her life at the *gompa* after the child is born. The interpreter adds with a wink, "But all this happens if people find out about the 'accident.' Most go unnoticed as the chomos manage things within the *gompa*."

tourism department insists that this area is not earthquake prone, the fact that landslides are a common occurrence can't do much to reassure visitors.

On the way to Panikhar from Trespone, the Suru river, which faithfully accompanies you throughout the trip becomes more unruly. So the department has marked areas here where one can stop for whitewater river-rafting.

Rafting is an exhilarating experience in most conditions, but on a moonlit night it is heavenly. As professional rafters struggle to tame the rapids, the uninitiated tourists gaze unblinkingly at this silvery miracle in the sky.

BEYOND THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

There is little to arouse tourist interest in Ladakh unlike in Kashmir. There are many monasteries, but no gardens or boat rides

You don't need a guide to tell you that you have entered the Zanskar valley. A series of *chorten*, the Buddhist shrine, and Manewal, the wishing wall, on the roadside greet you long before you reach Rangdum, the first village. Even the occasional patch of green alongside the river disappears. This is a desert country. The air is dry and sandy. The lips start chapping, the hands appear dusty and unfamiliar.

Zanskar is perhaps the cruellest part of Ladakh, irrespective of its mystique which has only recently been unravelled to the outside world. Till a few years ago Zanskar was a protected area. In fact, this tourism trip was organised less for the festival and more to familiarise people with the region. But despite all state efforts, Zanskar is a difficult place to reach.

One option is to drive from Srinagar enjoying the scenery and facing shelling from the Pakistan army around Kargil, or you can drive from Leh avoiding Kargil altogether. But the problem with the latter is that you would not be able to appreciate the topographical difference. Besides, the only way to travel cheaply is by state transport buses. Otherwise, a Kashmiri or a Ladakhi holiday, despite subsidised lodgings, can be expensive because travel by taxi is quite a rip-off. Another disadvantage is that there is only one link route between Srinagar and Leh which passes through Kargil the danger zone.

So, people intending to do all of Jammu and Kashmir in one trip will have to either fly to Srinagar and do the nearby places by road, then fly to Leh and do the rest by road. Or they'll have to do Ladakh and the Valley separately.

That could be a somewhat tiresome exercise. But when it comes to visiting paradise, a little effort goes a long way.■

MASQUERADE

Ghazala Wahab finds a new job: placement agent for the day

ON THE HUNT

A placement agent's job is never done. But I didn't know that when I was told to report for work at 10 am, I had signed up to play head-hunter for a day, and this seemed like a decent hour to begin a new job. What I didn't realise was what time the work would end.

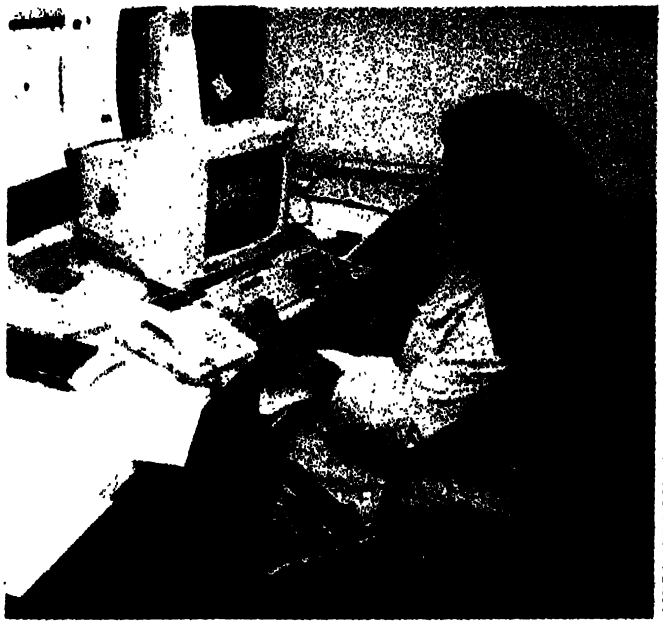
It began with my brother regaling me with stories of how his company, Omam Consultants Private Limited, head-hunts suitable candidates whom they then place in their client corporations. For example, Company X wants someone to head its marketing division in North India for product Y. They give their specifications to Omam which then begins searching for a suitable candidate.

A list of various companies is drawn, and every trick in the book is employed to find out the name and particulars of the marketing in-charge of other companies in that sector. But even if you acquire their numbers, getting the telephone operator to transfer the call is an exercise in itself. Most companies are aware of these head-hunters out to steal their employees and have given express instructions to their operators to screen all calls. So what do you do? Simple. Pretend to be a niece calling from America.

After the ground work is complete, the chosen one is called at an appropriate hour (close to midnight, to ensure secrecy). He is told why his present job is not good for him and why it is absolutely necessary for his professional, economic and physical well-being that he uproot himself and his family and relocate to a different city with a different company. And apparently, most candidates allow themselves to be persuaded thus.

HEAD-HUNTING

A placement agent's work is a bit like this sans the primitive weapon, of course. The main device, here, is a furtive telephone call (usually around midnight) whereby the agent contacts the prospective candidate to brief him/her about the job offer

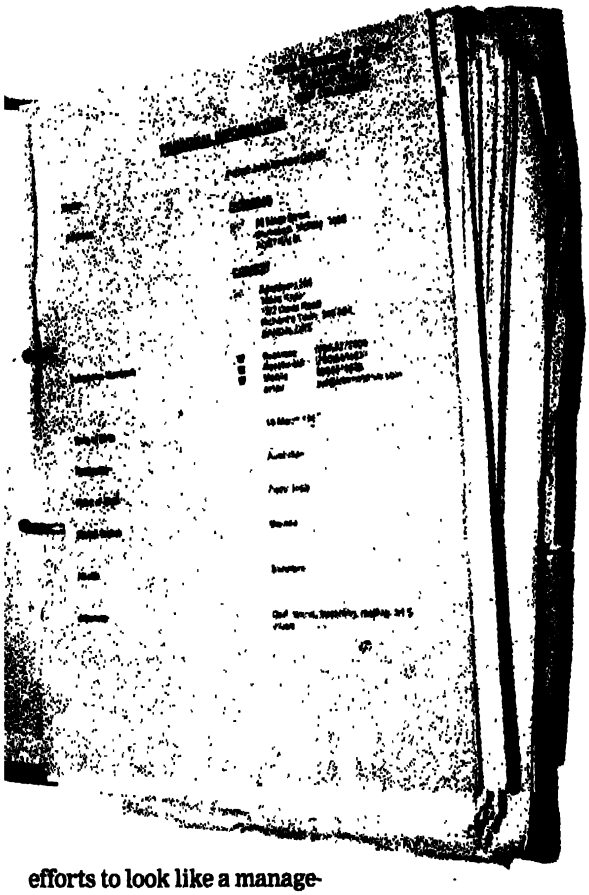


KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

I decided to put my persuasive skills to the test—even if it was only for a day. I put in a word to that effect to my brother. He, in turn, spoke to his director, who — surprised at my interest — directed me to their regional office. "They might find some work for you there," said Mr Kapahi, director, Omam.

So, I arrived at the regional office armed with nothing but my enthusiasm. The day had begun early. Since the office was located at the other end of Delhi, I left the house at an hour when I normally wake up. But despite my best

"What my brother had forgotten to mention was that actual head-hunting is an advanced stage of job placement, so a beginner has to go through the drill of sifting through millions of bio-data"



efforts to look like a management type, I still looked like a humble journalist.

I reached the office on time and was greeted by an incredulous head of that division who just couldn't get over the fact that I found head-hunting so fascinating. (To keep up the facade I denied vehemently that I was related to my brother.)

Before I started, this gentleman explained the nature of the job to me. "There are no fixed hours," he said. "Sometimes a candidate may call you at six in morning and you have to entertain the call." It requires everything from patience to tact to persistence. I nodded at all the right words (I think!) and he immediately put me to work, directing me to a pile of files.

Then I understood his bewilderment. What my brother had forgotten to mention was that actual head-hunting is an advanced stage of job placement, so a beginner has to go through the drill of sifting through millions and millions of bio-data, a boring task at best. The idea is to find a bio-data which matches the requirement you have in mind. As far as I was concerned none seemed impressive, because I was cheerfully skipping the job experience portion which ran into a couple of pages.

A couple of hours went by and I had still not found a suitable candidate. I was bored, hungry and sleepy. As I tried to stifle the nth yawn somebody pushed a cup of tea in my hand. Slightly rejuvenated, I tried to take stock of the situation and discovered much to my joy that a couple of hopefuls were waiting with their bio-datas. The usual practice is to conduct a casual interview with them and keep their bio-data for future reference.

Looking for some diversion, I decided to tackle one hopeful myself. After a 10-minute exercise wherein I asked the girl everything that was already in her bio-data I found myself back at the desk, none the wiser. No sooner had I settled down, than a 'colleague' informed me that there were more bio-data in the computer, if I was interested.

A day had never seemed longer in my life, not even when I used to study for a physics exam. Lunch was a brief affair and I was back behind the files looking sadly at the papers in front of me. Oh God, will this ever end?

Towards the evening the boss called me and gave me a name and a number. "He is manager, rural marketing. Call him up and find out if he is interested in a change. Don't give any details. In case, he is interested ask him to send in his bio."

I blinked gleefully at the slip of the paper with a Pune number. As I dashed for the phone, the boss stopped me in my tracks. "You can't call him in his office. He won't talk. Call him around midnight," he said, then sensing my bewilderment added, "Make the call from an STD booth and bill it to the office."

This meant two things. One, I was finally getting a chance to speak to a real candidate. Two, I needed to find a PCO booth which remains open after 11 pm. I rushed through dinner. I just could not waste time eating when someone was waiting for the break of his life.

I blackmailed my brother into accompanying me to the telephone booth at the ordained hour. Controlling my excitement I dialled the number. "Hello. Is this Mr So And So? I am sorry to call you at this late hour," I began, "I am sure you must be sleeping, but you know..." My brother kicked me. He is not interested in all this, come to the point, he mouthed.

"Ah well, I am calling from Omam Consultants. No, I am not calling from the office right now," my brother rolled his eyes in total exasperation. Confused, I just rushed in with my next sentences. "Mr So And So, we have an assignment for you. I cannot reveal the details right now but are you interested in a change?"

But Mr So And So wanted details. Nature of the work, location and finally the name of our client. "As I said," I said, regaining some of my composure, "I cannot reveal anything as yet. But I can assure you that this company is among the leaders in the field of agro-products. The job will require extensive travelling and it will be fulfilling in more ways than one..," I blabbered some more. Mr So And So was finally convinced and agreed to send his stuff. My brother was impressed.

So was another person sitting next to me waiting to make a call. "Excuse me ma'am," he began hesitantly. "My name is _____. You see, I am working as a marketing executive. I am also looking for a change. Can I drop by and leave my CV?" he asked. But before I could respond, my brother coughed in the background.

"I am sorry," I said, almost mournfully. "But today was my last day at work. I'll give you the number of this organisation and why don't you get in touch with Mr Rizwan Wahab there."

Why do people have to quit just when they've hit their stride? Any answers? ■

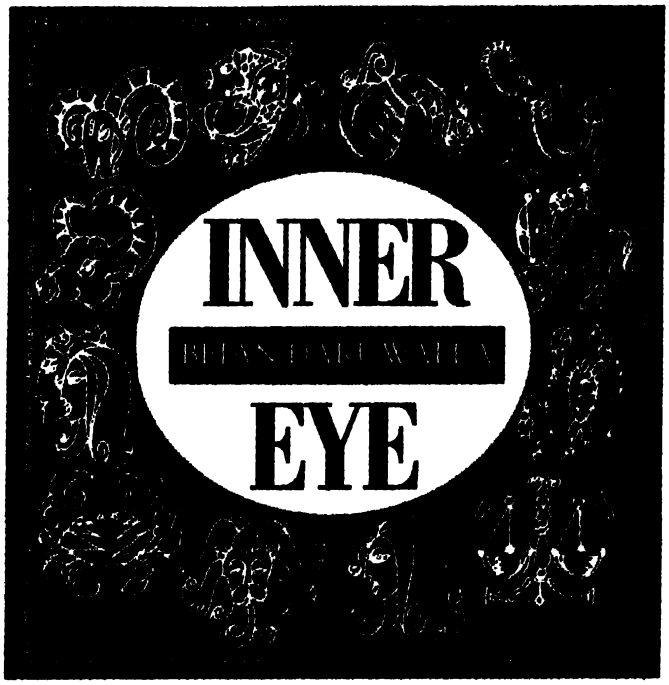
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) The sun-Venus conjunction boosts finances and makes for romance—a rare mix! Your contacts will definitely help you. It would be best to go all out in your work, as did Tendulkar who met the great Don Bradman. If you encounter some opposition to your plans, take it in your stride. Pets and projects give satisfaction.

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) The reaching out trend now comes to be the main one. Trips and ties are on the cards. Business partnerships and ventures are indicated and they could turn out lucky. Unfortunately, legal issues are also in evidence. And yes, the loan and funding direction to the rest of the year starts from October 29.

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) This week helps you in funds, joint-finance, loans, taxes, insurance, journey, *tantra* and *mantra*, moving house-office-shop, unless you have already done so. Strange encounters and bizarre meetings and even love affairs are not ruled out. Your sources of income do multiply and that's important. An eventful week ahead.

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) A time to study, improve your mind, be receptive to ideas and opinions different from yours, travel, to be of some use to relatives, parents and in-laws. By the way, their health is suspect. A good week for contemplation and meditation, says Ganesha. Collaborations and long-distance connections are possible. If things don't work out immediately, try again.

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) Forward march, soldiers of fortune! Your work and goals will keep you busy. The sun - Venus conjunction or happy placing, and the sun is the 'ruler' of your sign, suggest that you will outshine your rivals, steal their thunder and win the day! Issues of prestige, power and pelf will take top priority. Renovation/decoration/buying is a possibility.



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) The whirligig of social rounds, the laughter of friends and sweethearts should please you. If, after a time, you find it a bit boring or even irksome, just think, you are God's gift to humanity and continue! From November 10, though work will claim you, as Saturn retrogrades (apparent backward movement) in your angle of energy and effort.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) Time to look inwards but circumstances will compel you to be outgoing. Expenses will hit the ceiling. There could be a few posers if travelling, moving house, buying/selling but the end result will be positive. Your work will be done. The health of parents and elders and in-laws will cause anxiety. A topsy-turvy week for sure.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) The luck of the draw will be with you and that's half the battle won! There will still be plenty of behind-the-scene activities, and you will be moving fast, indeed, and that too, in all directions. That could tire you out, unless you learn to relax and leave your worries a million miles away. Like a three-stage rocket, you will project your personality forcefully and effectively.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) The week finds you pursuing your goals very aggressively and confidently. Mars gives you just that energy and enthusiasm to conquer all obstacles, and obstacles there will be. Financially and familywise, this is a good week. Accept invitations and social commitments. Eat well, drink well and live well.

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) The food, family and finance trend continues unabated, just as the rains do, or summer does! October will also be noteworthy for contacts, contracts, communication and hi-tech computerisation and faxing. There could be a bonding on the personal level as well. Partnerships receive a boost. You may even make a fast buck.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) House, home, property, land, building, construction, moving, shifting, a home-away-from-home, will be highlighted. In addition, financial avenues will open out, and buying/selling could well provide it. Children, hobbies, games or dance, holidaying, do delight and captivate you this month. Money will come and go.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) There is plenty of excitement! Ganesha adds, you will show exceptional creativity and endeavour in all that you do, and the artists among you will scintillate. But take care that the money crunch/squeeze does not become too tight; go slow on the spending. You could tire yourself out, though you have the stamina. Yes, it is time for a holiday. So get your travelling kit ready and put your shoes on.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Seema Goswami on the flood of counterfeit designer products

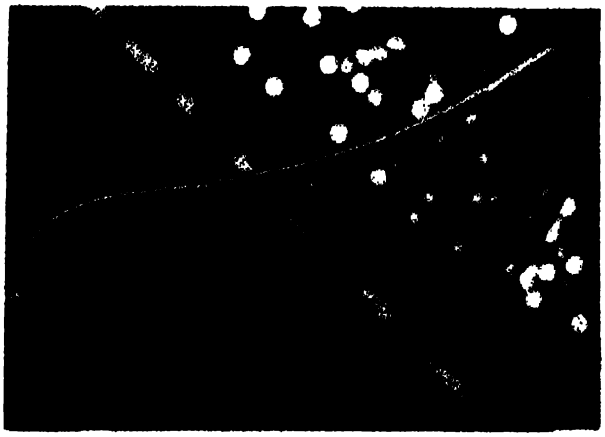
What is a bootleg?: Essentially any 'luxury' item with a famous brand name that is not made by the original manufacturer. While there are pirate video cassettes, pirate record albums and pirate computer programmes, our concern here is with the world of design.

In terms of fashion, counterfeits fall into two categories. There are the relatively convincing copies of expensive luxury goods: Loewe handbags, Louis Vuitton suitcases, Prada accessories and the like. And then, there are the cheapo knock-offs of Chanel T-shirts, Ray Ban sunglasses, Ralph Lauren shirts and Calvin Klein jeans.

What do we get in India?: Both. Go to any restaurant in Mumbai and the women will carry handbags with the distinctive Loewe logo or in the trade-marked Louis Vuitton leather-like plastic. Their belts will say 'Moschino'. And many of them will wear 'Cartier' watches. On most days, seven out of ten of these branded items will be fakes.

You can buy 'Loewe' and 'Louis Vuitton' luggage and handbags at most leather shops in Mumbai. They are not necessarily cheap — between Rs 750 to Rs 2,500 for a bag — but they are still much, much cheaper than the real thing. A Loewe bag that costs Rs 1,000 in Colaba will cost $ 250 (Rs 18,000) in London. Gucci and Chanel bags are cheaper because they are made from fabric. Prada plastic is easy to knock off. And the Cartier watch has probably been smuggled in from Hong Kong or Taiwan. It usually costs Rs 500 on the street as distinct from $ 750 (Rs 52,500) for a tank (the basic Cartier) in stainless steel in London.

Isn't there an even cheaper set of bootlegs?: Yes. New Market is full of them. Buy a Poloshirt, Calvin Klein clothes, Ray Ban sunglasses, or even Levi's jeans from a little shop and 99.9 times out of hundred you will be buying a cheap knock-off manufactured in Bangkok. But the label will push up the prices. The Polo T-shirt probably cost Rs 60 to manufacture. If you bought it at Wearhouse or somewhere, you would expect to pay around Rs 100 or so. But with the Polo label, the price shoots up to Rs 300, a profit of more than 100 per cent for the merchant.



Such is the insecurity of the1990s shopper that any label, even a fake one, is better than no label at all for him●



How can you tell a counterfeit from the real thing?: Simple rule of thumb: if you bought it in India, it is probably a fake. Oh yes, you can get Levi's jeans at a Levi's shop for Rs 1,000. But if you bought them in New Market for Rs 600, they are fake. Genuine Chanel T-shirts retail for $ 100 and Chanel does not distribute them through Colaba, Janpath or New Market.

Of course, there are other ways of telling the difference (quality of fabric, etc.) but why bother when it is so easy to spot a fake simply by seeing where it is on sale?

Why do people buy labels?: They pretend that they are buying quality. Ninety per cent of the time, they are just buying snob value. Anyhow, most people who buy bootlegs know that they are buying fakes. The ladies who lunch in Bombay are as aware of the dubiousness of their labels as the chap who buys Calvin Klein jeans in New Market.

But such is the insecurity of the 1990s shopper that any label — even a fake one — is better than no label at all. ■

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

FREE MIXING

Q: I am a 27-year-old married woman. I got married two years back. Ours was a love marriage and my husband is very affectionate towards me.
The only problem is that I cannot tolerate my husband's free mixing with other women. He has a lot of intimate female friends and his behaviour is free and frank with them.
To be honest, I feel extremely jealous as well as insecure because of this. When I try to question him about it, my husband insists that there is nothing beyond friendship with them. Please tell me how to deal with the situation.

K BASU SILIGURI

If your husband is the 'hug and feel' kind of tactile person, there is very little you can do about it except to accept him for what he is Trust and commonsense generate more of the same whereas there are very few things men find off-putting as a jealous, neurotic wife

However, were the shoe to be on the other foot, and it was you who was surrounded by a bevy of 'toy-boys', I doubt if your husband would be able to display the tolerance I am counselling you The best way out is to maintain a close degree of friendship and intimacy with your husband, while continuing to have friends and interests outside the framework of your marriage

LACKING IN CONFIDENCE

Q : I am a 22-year-old girl doing Chemistry Honours. I am an extremely shy girl and this has especially developed over the last few years as in my childhood, I was quite the opposite, I was rather talkative. I am so introverted now that every time I get up on a bus or go out, I feel I am the cynosure of all eyes. I also walk with a slight hunch and lack confidence in myself. Please suggest ways to get over my shyness.

SUTAPA DEB, BARASAT

Shyness feeds upon itself, and loneliness fuels introversion Whatever the trigger that caused you to metamorphose from a normal and talkative girl to one radically lacking in confidence, there is only one way out of your situation, which is to take the plunge back to the outside world Usually, the fear of other persons stems from an unusually sensitive nature, and from even a few innocuous remarks or chance cruelties which cause a further retreat from potentially hurtful situations You have to, repeat, have to, develop a thicker skin, cultivate an immunity to all the slings and arrows of outrageous fate, learn to dust your backside and move on everytime you slip on life's banana skin, and basically cling to that great saviour of sanity and social life, a sense of humour
Learn to walk tall, do not hunch or

FATAL ATTRACTION

I am an 18-year-old boy. I am a homosexual and am naturally attracted to young, good-looking men. As I cannot directly approach and propose to them due to my inherent shyness, kindly advise me on ways to do the same.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

I am afraid I don't have the requisite experience to advise you on this matter, and frankly, I don't really approve of your question Whether you are male or female, homosexual or heterosexual, promiscuity or casual sex are disastrous in a world rife with AIDS You are liable to corrupt other young people with your cynical attitude and place their very lives in danger, not to mention the risks you are taking with your own So take a cold shower, lots of exercise, concentrate on your studies and give your sex life a break.

stoop, just smile and display an attitude of self-confidence, even if you do not really feel that way. Soon, it will become a habit and start coming naturally. Go ahead, give it a try.

UNPLEASANT LANDLADY

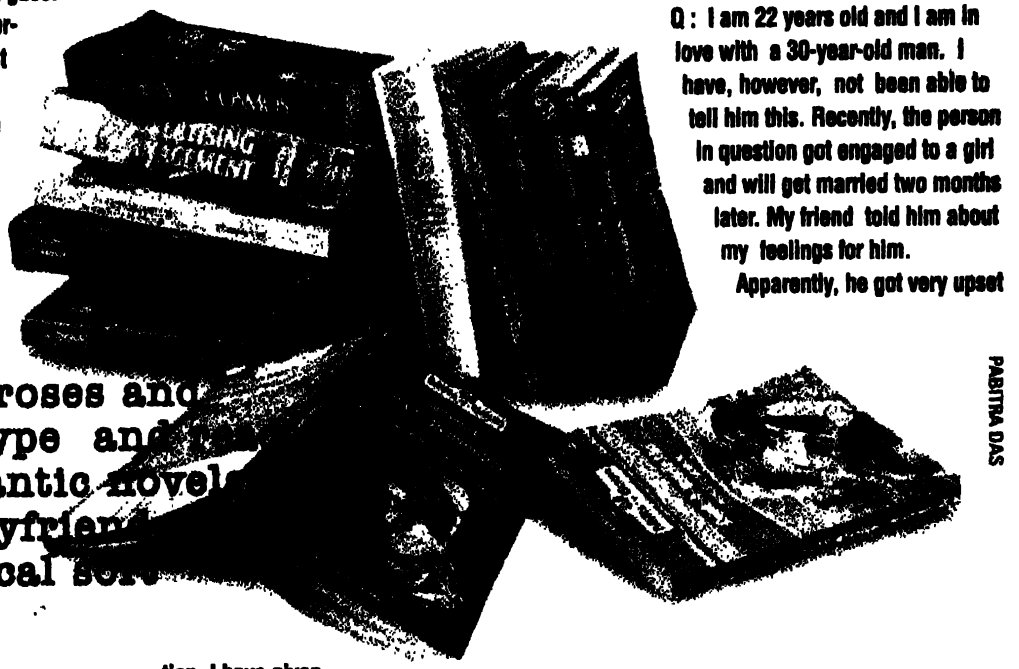
Q : We live together in a paying guest accommodation. All of us are service holders. Our problem is that our landlady passes remarks and comments about us that are downright insulting. We have given her no reason to do so and we have also had some heated exchanges and altercations regarding this. We are unwilling to leave this accommodation as it is otherwise quite comfortable. Please tell us how to deal with the problem.

NAMES WITHHELD, CALCUTTA

The best way out of any hostile situation is through mutual adjustments. As you all are quite comfortable in this accommodation, why don't you simply try to charm your landlady into a more benevolent frame of mind? Give her a little kindness and affection, make her a cup of tea, help her with her shopping, and so on. She may have tensions and frustrations of her own which you are not aware of.

GET REAL

Q : I am an attractive and intelligent 18-year-old girl. My problem is that I am the 'roses and champagne' kind of a girl and I like reading romantic novels. My boyfriend, on the other hand, is very practical and does not make me feel very special. At times, I wonder whether he is the right person for me but then I love him far too much to think otherwise. All this is really making me feel very depressed. I want my boyfriend to pay me more attention. I have given him a dozen hints about this but he just does not seem to respond. Please advise.



PABITRA DAS

MONICA SHARMA, IMPHAL

Romance is fine as a mild stimulant, or as an appetiser, but if you mistake it for the main course, you are in trouble. A diet of romantic novels is the worst possible training you can have for real life. I suggest that you go off the 'roses and champagne' bit for a while and develop your intelligence in other directions.

I think your current boyfriend is there in your life merely by virtue of necessity, and that once you have spread your wings in the big, bad world, you will find many dark, handsome candidates for your affections, all apparently out of the pages of your favourite romantic novel. But you will inevitably discover that the real and worthwhile men and women are the ones who stand the test of real life.You are probably over-protected and I hope you never have to find it the hard way.
Remember, roses have thorns and champagne is a vastly over-rated drink that gives a nasty hangover. Anyway, have fun growing up.

TOO LATE

Q : I am 22 years old and I am in love with a 30-year-old man. I have, however, not been able to tell him this. Recently, the person in question got engaged to a girl and will get married two months later. My friend told him about my feelings for him.
Apparently, he got very upset hearing this and told my friend that I should have told him of this earlier. After hearing this, I have not been able to concentrate on my studies. Please tell me how to go about gaining back my love.

NAME WITHHELD, CALCUTTA

Now that this person is engaged and on the threshold of a new phase of his life, I don't think it is an appropriate time to rake up the past and what might have been Just come to terms with things as they are. After all, if he is really in such a dilemma, he can still make some sort of overture to you to probe your feelings.
If you can't concentrate on your studies, take some time off and have some fun, laugh and enjoy yourself and take a break. As you will discover, life goes on, and you will meet new people and face new situations and sooner or later encounter the man you are fated to marry and settle down with. ■

MIXED Bag

GENUINE GLITTER

● When you buy a diamond you have little but your instincts to go by and of course the jeweller's word establishing the quality of the stone. But the diamond certificate which was hitherto required by professionals within the trade is now being demanded by consumers as well. With the launch of Diamond Exchange Enchante Jewellers recently became the first brand in the country to sell certified diamonds while also offering customers the facility to certify diamonds they already own. The diamond certificate guarantees the authenticity of the stones and contains a complete quality description of the diamonds which determine their value. The certificate details the shape, weight, clarity grade, fluorescence, colour grade, measurement, proportions and the finish grade of the diamonds. The certificate is occasionally supplemented with comments from the gemologists checking the stone. According to Chand Mehra of Enchante they are equipped with sophisticated machinery systems and follow International Diamond Council (IDC) rules and regulations. The fact that the stones are examined by expert graders ensures a high level of reliability of the certificate. Gemologists from the Gemological Institute of America issue the final certificate.

But a price must be paid. While the stone you want certified must be at least half a carat, the certification costs Rs 1,000 per stone.



Light and sound

While music associated with festivals such as Holi and Baisakhi has been rendered time and again, songs specific to Dussehra, Deepavali and other celebrations such as *Dhanteras* and *Chotti* Diwali have rarely, if ever, been recorded and published.

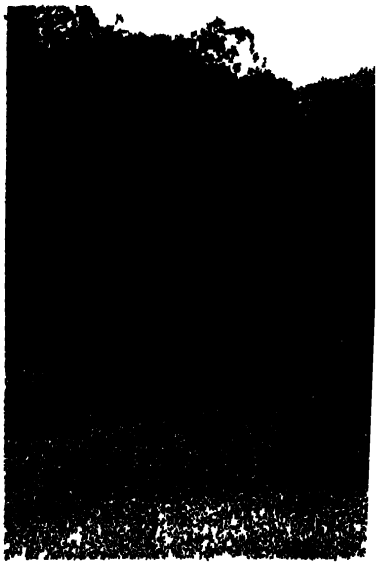
This lacunae has been removed with the release of 'Deepavali', a double-audio-album that features two hours of specially composed music by Rajan and Sajan Mishra and Shubha Mudgal. Culled from the temple traditions of Vrindavan, Mathura and Nathadwara, these songs based on the grand *raga* structures of the Hindustani and Carnatic systems have been rendered to the accompaniment of the *pakhawaj, tabla, manjira, jhaan*, flute and *shehnai*. These traditional instruments recreate for the contemporary listener, the majestic sounds of celebratory temple music. The first in the Celebration Series brought out by Music Today, 'Deepavali' seeks to provide music appropriate for the many celebrations that mark the Indian calendar. Recorded digitally on a spectral hard-disk configuration, the lyrics address myriad themes — the glitter, the radiance of the oil-lamps that are traditionally lit for Diwali, the game of dice that forms a significant part of the Diwali celebrations, prayers to Lord Ganesha and the coronation of Rama. Each verse tells its own musical story, recounting for the listener the many legends of Dussehra and Diwali.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Use primary colours in your

Par for the course

Golf and the gentle slopes of Scotland. Lush, well-laid grounds and majestic trees in bloom. A sudden spurt of deep woods with a stream meandering through. Imagine having all this in your neighbourhood. Well, not exactly that, but Nepal is near enough surely, given that it costs less to travel to Nepal than to certain parts of India.

Gleneagles Golf Developments of Scotland, with 100 years of experience in the field, has developed an 18-hole par 72, golf course in the Gokarna forest on the outskirts of Kathmandu. The forest is spread over 470 acres and is inhabit-

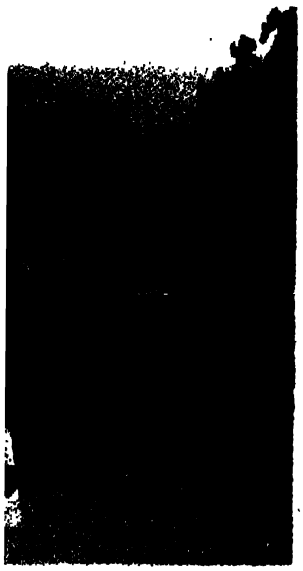


DESTINATION INDIA



fter almost a decade of conducting auctions in the country, Sotheby's have stituted an annual national award for ntemporary Indian art by an Indian tist from India. The award will consti- e a cash prize of Rs 3 lakhs and a emento. This will be presented to the ardee on December 11, this year. t of a group of over 100 artists, a r-person panel of judges will select e nominees and then the final win- r. Savita Apte, consultant expert, uth Asian art at Sotheby's, is the ex-officio chairperson of the panel and a non-voting member. The judges are Jehangir Nicholson, former sheriff of Mumbai, Dr Sarayu Doshi, curator and director of the National Gallery for Modern Art, Mumbai, and Czaee Shah, a well-known art collector and critic. "Indian art has emerged on the international scene as a force to reckon with. With the Sotheby's Contemporary Indian Art Prize, we wish to underscore its international status and be part of the strong and vibrant art movement that India is witnessing," says Simon Taylor, Sotheby's deputy managing director (Europe). Three of the works of each of the five artists will be exhibited in Mumbai before the presentation ceremony on December 11.

be this winter to stay warm



ed by deer, pheasants and peacocks. The exclusive preserve of the King of Nepal, the land has been leased to Gleneagles for 30 years.

Flanked on three sides by thickly forested hills, the course is a delight for everyone because close to it are 11 deluxe resort cottages one can use as a getaway with family and friends. Those who are not into golf can indulge in tennis, squash, swimming or simply walk through the jungle on specially created walking trails — an ideal holiday resort for people who simply want to flee the hustle and bustle of city life.

But to make sure that the Himalayas are not the only witness to your golfing feats, a clubhouse, offering a ringside view of the 1st, 9th and 18th hole, is under construction right now. It will have a shop, restaurant, bar, lockers and a gymnasium. So now there's more than one reason to make a trip to the Himalayan kingdom. In fact, there are 18.

STAYING IN TOUCH

While cell phones have stolen some of the pager's panache, Motorola has plans to give it a new sophistication. Launching the Scriptor 200, it introduced for the first time, India's smallest and lightest two line alphanumeric pager. This smart and memory rich convenient communication device will provide a greater choice to consumers who are on the high speed Flex paging network. Says Ajay Sachdeva, Motorola's head of marketing in India and SAARC countries, "The users are realising that paging is a smart choice for staying in touch and being informed of the developments. They are looking at products which combine value with simplicity."



Paging operators in the country have introduced or are in the process of launching value-added information services such as news highlights, sports updates, flight information and infortainment updates which is more like combining the dual advantages of a pocket radio and message recorder.

The Scriptor 200 gives an option to subscribe to up to seven information services simultaneously and has an 18 slot message capacity. At this rate, the new pager could any day pass off as the user's personal secretary. And don't worry, paging isn't passe — not just yet, at least.

RASOI

The food column



Sugar and Spice

Jiggs Kalra on some all-time favourite chutneys

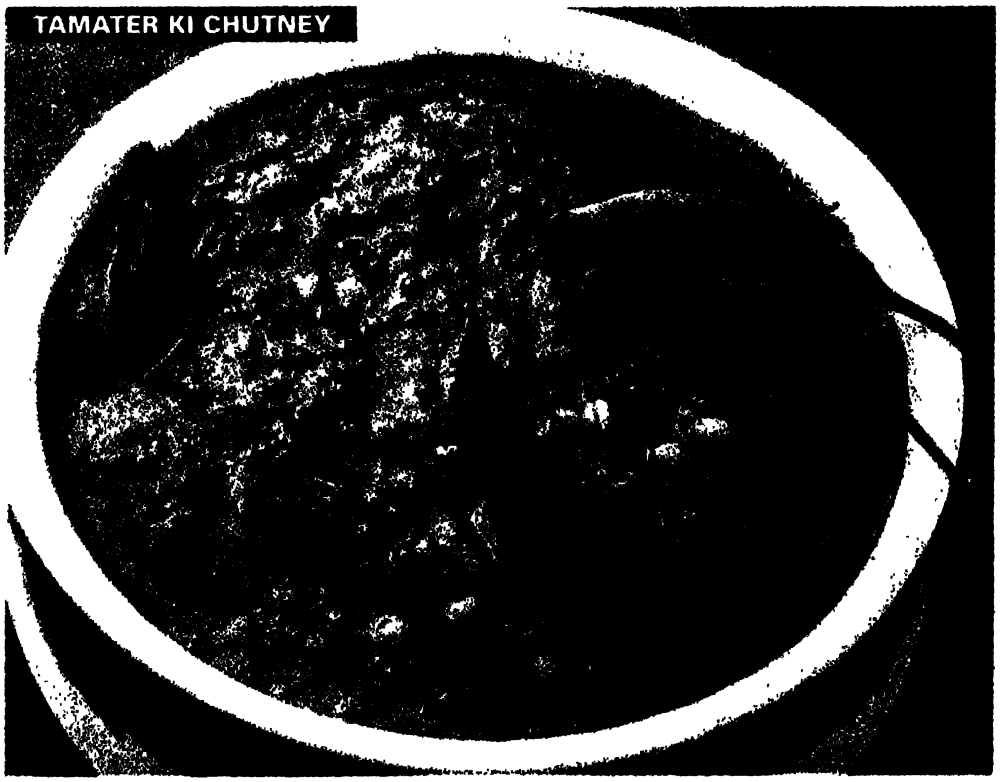
Chatni—that's the original Hindustani word for chutney. *Larousse Gastronomique* describes it as a "sweet and sour condiment, made of fruits and vegetables cooked in vinegar with sugar and spices until it has the consistency of jam." What a boo-boo when you consider that some of the most popular chutneys are made without vinegar and sugar. The extraordinary chutneys recipied below are guaranteed to light up your meals.

Tamater ki Chutney

INGREDIENTS

- 2.25 Kg/5 lb **Tomatoes (quarter)**
- 240g/1 cup **Groundnut oil**
- 1g/1/2 tsp ***Zeera*/cuminseeds**
- 1g/1/4 tsp ***Rai*/black mustard oil**
- **4 Whole dried red chillies**
- **24 *Kaari patta*/curry leaves**
- **10g/1¾ tsp Garlic paste (strain)**
- **10g/1¾ tsp Ginger paste (strain)**
- **18g/2 tbs *Zeera*/cumin powder**
- **18g/2 tbs Red chilli powder**
- **1.5g/1/2 tsp *Haldee*/turmeric powder**
- **4 Green chillies (seed and finely chop)**
- **3.5g/1tbs *Taaza dhania*/coriander (chop**
- **Salt**

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 45 minutes


TAMATER KI CHUTNEY

PREPARATION

- Heat oil in a *handi*/pan, add cumin and mustard, sti over medium heat until the begin to pop, add whole red chillies, stir until they begi to change colour, add curry leaves and stir until they st spluttering. Then add ginge and garlic, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evapo-rates. Add cumin, red chilli and turmeric powders — di solved in 90ml/6tbs of wate — and *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates. Now add tomatoes, green chillies, coriander and salt, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the tomatoes release their liqui reduce to low heat and sim-mer, stirring at regular inte vals, until the liquid has evaporated. Increase to med um heat and *bhunno*/stir-fr until the fat leaves the sides Remove, adjust the seasonin and cool. Remove to bowl an serve.



GOSHT KI CHUTNEY

Gosht ki Chutney

INGREDIENTS

- 1.2 kg/2¼lb Shoulder of kid/lamb
- 60g/2oz Ginger paste (strain)
- 45g/1½ oz Garlic paste (strain)
- 9g/1tbs Red chilli powder
- 3g/1 tsp *Haldee*/turmeric powder
- Salt
- 350g/13 oz Groundnut oil
- 4.5g/1tsp *Rai*/mustard seeds
- 4g/2tsp *Zeera*/cumin seeds
- 12 flakes Garlic (peel)
- 24 Curry leaves
- 8 Whole red chillies (slit, seed and cut ½" long stripes)
- 30ml/1oz *Imlee*/tamarind pulp
- 500g/1lb 2oz Tomatoes (chop)
- 10ml/ 2tsp Lemon juice

The Garnish

- 15g/1/2oz Fried raisins
- 15g/1/2oz Toasted almond flakes

SERVES: 4
PREPARATION TIME: 1:15 HOURS
COOKING TIME: 25 MINUTES

PREPARATION

- The Kid/lamb: Clean, bone, cut into 2½" chunks, wash and pat dry.

Put in a *handi*/pot, add ginger paste, garlic pate, tamarind pulp, red chilli powder, salt and water (approx 1.5litres/6¼ cups), bring to a boil, reduce to low heat, cover and simmer until the meat is cooked. Uncover, increase to high heat and cook until the moisture has almost evaporated. Remove and keep aside.

COOKING

- Heat oil in a *lagan*/flat pan, add mustard and cumin, stir over medium heat until they begin to pop, add garlic and saute till light golden. Add curry leaves and whole red chillies, stir until the red chillies begin to change colour (become a bright red, not black), add the boiled meat, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the rashes separate, add tomatoes and tamarind pulp, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides. Remove to a blender/food processor, add lemon juice and pulse into a coarse paste. Remove and adjust the seasoning.

Remove to bowl and garnish with raisins and almonds. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 23-year-old man. I want to become a professional model and have an extremely broad forehead. Though I have thick hair, I end up looking unatttractive in front of the camera because of this. Is there any way I can camouflage it?

PRATEEK RAJ, CALCUTTA

This is not really a problem but you will have to do a bit of leg work to look for a good hairstylist who can give you a good haircut and advise you on how to keep your hair. The best would be a side parting or a style whereby the hair falls on the forehead. Look at Shammi Kapoor and today's heart throb Shah Rukh Khan; both have broad foreheads and yet both make heads turn and hearts flutter. I have met so many people who are afraid of change and experimenting . Don't be because as long as you are afraid of change, you will not have new options. If you have decided upon a modelling career then you will have to experiment with different looks.

I am a 27-year-old man. I keep getting painful boils inside my mouth and also on my lips and chin. I have been told to take vitamin pills and a high-protein diet by my doctor. Is there anything else I can apply to soothe the discomfort?

RANJIT BASU, SILIGURI

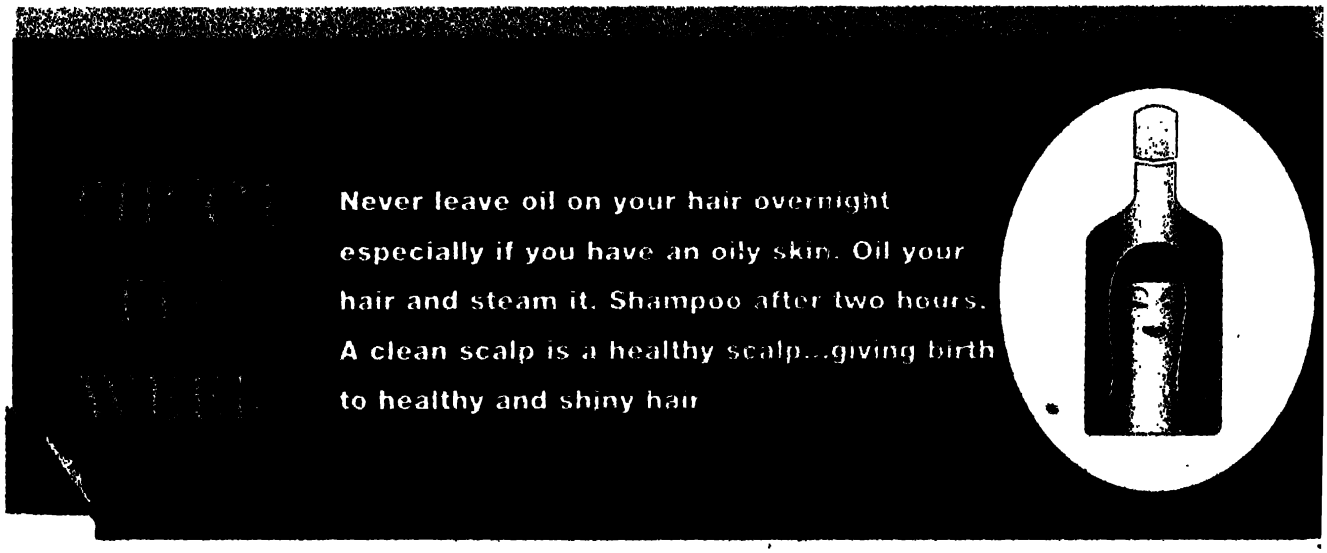
It's important that you keep a clean stomach at all times which means a lot of green vegetables eaten raw or cooked in very light oil. Constipation is to be avoided at all cost. For the boils inside the mouth, I would advise you to take 50gm glycerine and add two B-complex capsules to it. Shake the bottle well and apply on the boils. Keep swirling the mixture well in the mouth and try to keep it a long as possible on the boils.

Besides this, avoid sweets, aerated drinks,heavy gravy and oily food. Lots of dairy products are a must, and fruits and vegetables are undoubtedly a major part your daily routine.

I am a 24-year-old woman. I shave my legs and now I am getting rashes which are red and painful. Please help me g rid of them.

ANINDITA GUPTA, CALCUTTA

Firstly, you must stop shaving and g into waxing instead. Always wipe the legs with an ice cold compression of cotton or a very soft towel which has been dipped into cold water. Use a light moisturiser to massage the legs. If the boils still persist, I would advise you to apply a pack of pure sandalwood powder and fuller's earth. Mix these together with cold water



nd apply on the areas. Leave on till dry nd wash off.

am a 16-year-old girl. I have ot extremely dark elbows espite using lemon peel, ice etc. I cannot wear leeveless blouses. Please dvise.

IRIDULA KUMAR, BALASORE

Only lemon juice will never work. Massage the elbows for about five minutes a day with coconut l. Then take half a lemon and two tea-

I find it surprising that a woman, conscious about how her back looks, is not conscious about the shape and size of her body or rather accepts her obesity as something that cannot be changed! Why not! You have not mentioned your age but whatever it may be, there is no reason why you should not be able to clean your back. Perhaps, a member of the family can help you. Mix together powdered almonds, lemon juice, grated potato (raw) and one tsp fresh cream. Apply this and then scrub off in a circulating manner. Massage the area with almond and coconut oil mixed together. These remedies are to be done daily before bathing for about three weeks

Massage the feet with coconut oil to which you have added the juice of one lemon. Also keep a pumice stone in your bathroom and rub this in a rotating manner everytime you wash your feet. Avoid wearing shoes whenever you can and try to invest in a good pair of comfortable sandals. I often wonder why people don't pamper their feet enough especially since they are responsible for carrying our entire load from morning till evening. Ensure you look after them properly.

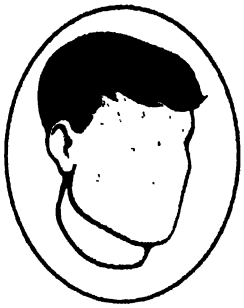
I am a 25-year-old man and have been shaving for the last 10 years. After a shave, my face burns and using after-shave or alum does not give relief. I even have shave burns and my face turns red if I go out in the sun. Kindly suggest a remedy.

ANANDA KARMAKAR, CALCUTTA

You seem to have a sensitive skin and it is important to take care of it. I find it heart-warming when men come out with their skin problems along with women. If pollution affects women, so does it to men's skin. If women age, so do the men; it is only this stigma that men should not look after their skins because of some sort of image that has been created in most Indian homes. Shaving burns is a common problem and the best way to tackle it would be to use a light moisturiser after shaving. Instead of applying alum or after shave which stings, make a solution of honey and almond oil and mix together. After shaving, massage this into the skin and leave on for five minutes. Wash off with cold water and then use after shave. ■

TO CONCEAL A BROAD FOREHEAD

One may opt for a side parting or a style which will have hair falling slightly on the forehead. Also consult a good hairstylist



oons of sugar and massage this on the rea daily. You will see the results within a eek and you will be wearing sleeveless ouses by the time my next column ppears.

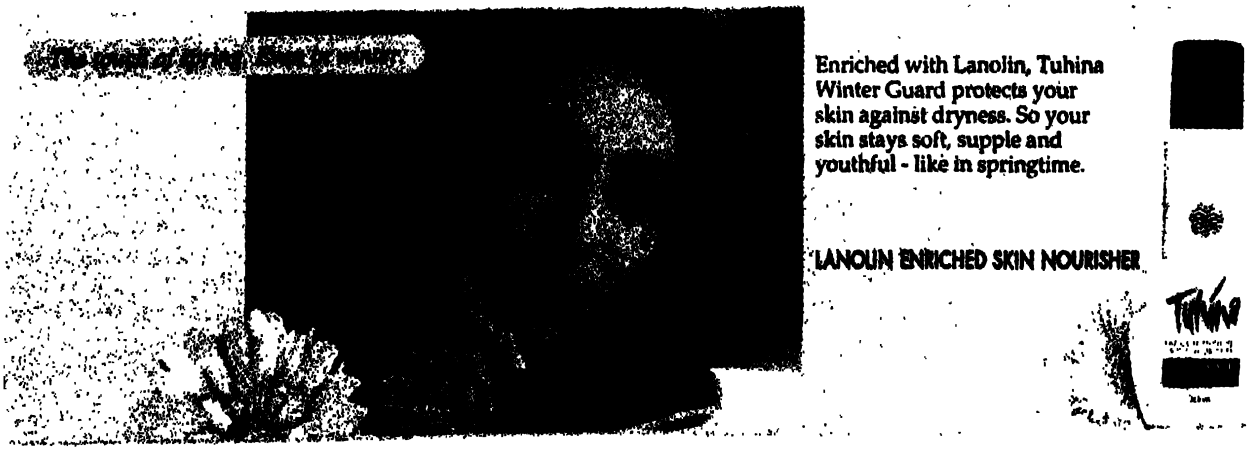
have a dark spotted back hich has patches on it. ince I am a little obese, I find difficult to clean it. How do I et a smooth flawless back?

INA KIRAN, JAMSHEDPUR

before you will see a flawless, smooth and beautiful back.

I am a 34-year-old man. I travel long distances to work. I have very ugly toes with black patches and scars on them. I wash my feet during a bath and also wash them after returning home. What else can I do to clean them?

NITIN BOSE, CALCUTTA



DESIGN Corner

Carpets can transform even the most awkward living space, says **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya**

ON THE FLOOR



It is that piece of woven material that has legends wrapped into it. Running through Greek mythology—as when Ulysses steps on to an ominous red carpet—and the *Arabian Nights* (which regales readers with tales of Alladin flying his princess on a magic carpet) to Roman history where Cleopatra arrived at Caesar's palace wrapped in a carpet. They have attained something of a mythic status.

Carpets are like family heirlooms to be cherished and passed on from generation to generation. But not every one is an antiquarian. Some of us have to buy our own carpets, which means going through a vast range of textures, fibre, design, colours and prices. In terms of technique, carpets are differentiated as hand-made, machine-woven or tufted varieties whose fibres could be anything between cotton, wool, silk, artificial silk or synthetics.

Unable to bear the thought of such priceless pieces under their feet, many proud owners display these exquisite rugs on their walls. The idea which evolved from the prayer rugs of the Islamic tradition transforms homes into riveting galleries.

While buying carpets, the choice of its surface texture depends on the nature of the area used. In formal spaces, where not many are likely to stamp on the carpet, many surface types are possible: the thick plush carpets which have more ply or more knots per square inch; the loop in pile uncut variety which gives a smooth surface; and the many layered surfaces with a patterned effect or combined with cut yarn.

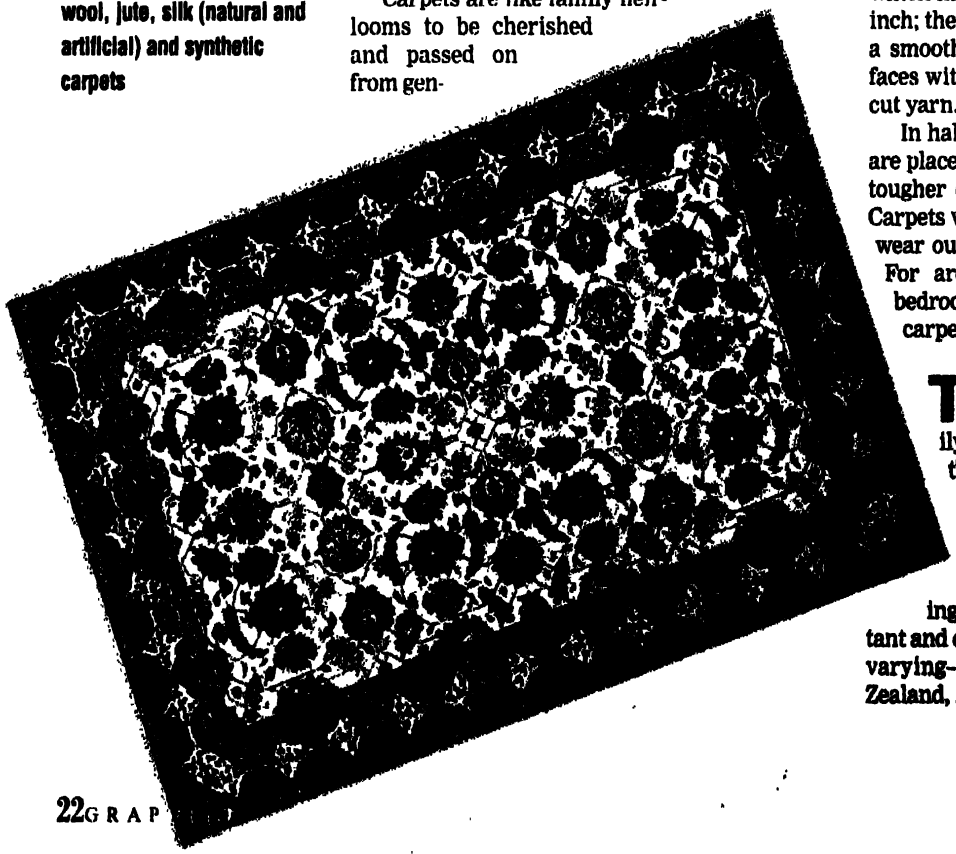
In hallways, staircases and corridors which are places of high traffic, it is advisable to use tougher carpets which are not too expensive. Carpets with a dense loop or flat surface do not wear out easily when subjected to trampling. For areas such as waiting rooms, children's bedrooms and the study, one can use tufted carpets which are economical.

The good news about cotton, hand knotted carpets is that they are readily washable while the bad news is that they soil and crumple too easily. Jute, a relatively recent addition to the family of fibres, remains till date the cheapest source material.

One reason for wool's high rating is that it is very resilient, dirt-resistant and can last for years. But its quality keeps varying—the best one comes from New Zealand, Australia and Kashmir, while the less

GREAT VARIETY

Carpets come in a vast range of fibre, texture, design and price. One can have cotton, wool, jute, silk (natural and artificial) and synthetic carpets



r-known variety comes from Bikaner, Panipat, aipur and Jaisalmer. The left-over wool is com-ressed, hand-embroidered or printed and sold s *numdhas*.

If price is no object, splurge on a silk hand-notted carpet. The raw mulberry silk used in ese carpets is quite unlike the cocoon silk sed only in clothes. "The best of Kashmiri arpets in pure silk have a knottage ranging rom 400 to 900 per square inch," says B.M. Krishna, general manager of Maharaja Arts, a ouse of creative carpets. The cheaper sub-titues like art silk are, however, not even a atch on the real thing.

Assuming you would not mind the synthetic ibres, acrylic is preferred for reasons of esilience and stain resistance. Easily wash-ible, acrylic fibres are among the most durable, ven when they are combined with wool in nachine-made and tufted carpets. For the out-loors, propylene (lightweight fibre) carpet is esistant to stains, moisture and fading.

The traditional hand-knotted carpets are till woven with the same tools and techniques. The weaver works on a loom on which the warp s mounted. In most cases, cotton is used for the arp as it does not lose shape.

There are three types of knots used in hand-notted carpets. The Persian knot, *sehna* is notted around one warp string and the Turkish knot around two such warp strings. The difference between the two lies in tech-nique. A third type, the Tibetan knot, involves neven cutting of pile that gives the carpet a idge-like pattern.

Duping the normal buyer who can't tell an Indian carpet from a Persian one isn't dif-icult. "There are various ways of artificially geing the carpets, the process of giving it an ntique wash, for instance," says Sheel handra, a wool broker by profession and car-et collector by passion. His Carpet Cellar has ver 3,500 antique carpets from all over the orld, making him one of the largest private ollectors of carpets in Asia.

Chandra unfolds some interesting carpet necdotes. For instance, what are known today s Mughal carpets, were introduced in India by veavers from Herat in Afghanistan, under mperor Akbar's patronage. He also adds that t a Sotheby's auction, a carpet once sold for a nillion pounds!

To spot a real silk carpet, make a fist and rub he knuckles on the pile. Real silk will give a urning sensation. Another test is to pluck a trand and light one end: real silk will not urn up to the end, but the embers will extin-uish immediately.

Gauging the age and origin of the carpet vill depend on the styles, designs and colour ombinations. A woollen Herix carpet from Persia is characterised by a typical red colour and a medallion as an emblem.

If beauty comes with a price, then carpets have a range that justifiably runs from upwards of Rs 5,000 to a couple of lakhs; the truly expensive ones—specially the ones woven by jailbirds nearly 80 years back—are more than mere showpieces.

These days you can even weave your own carpet design. Walk into the Birla TransAsia Carpet office at Delhi's South Extension. The company has a well-equipped design studio where you can get your own carpet crafted with the aid of CAD and CAM software, mixing and matching the desired colours and patterns.

Carpets have that rare quality of blending the soft, classic and the sublime. And if you have a feel for their vintage and texture, few would be able to pull the wool over your eyes.■

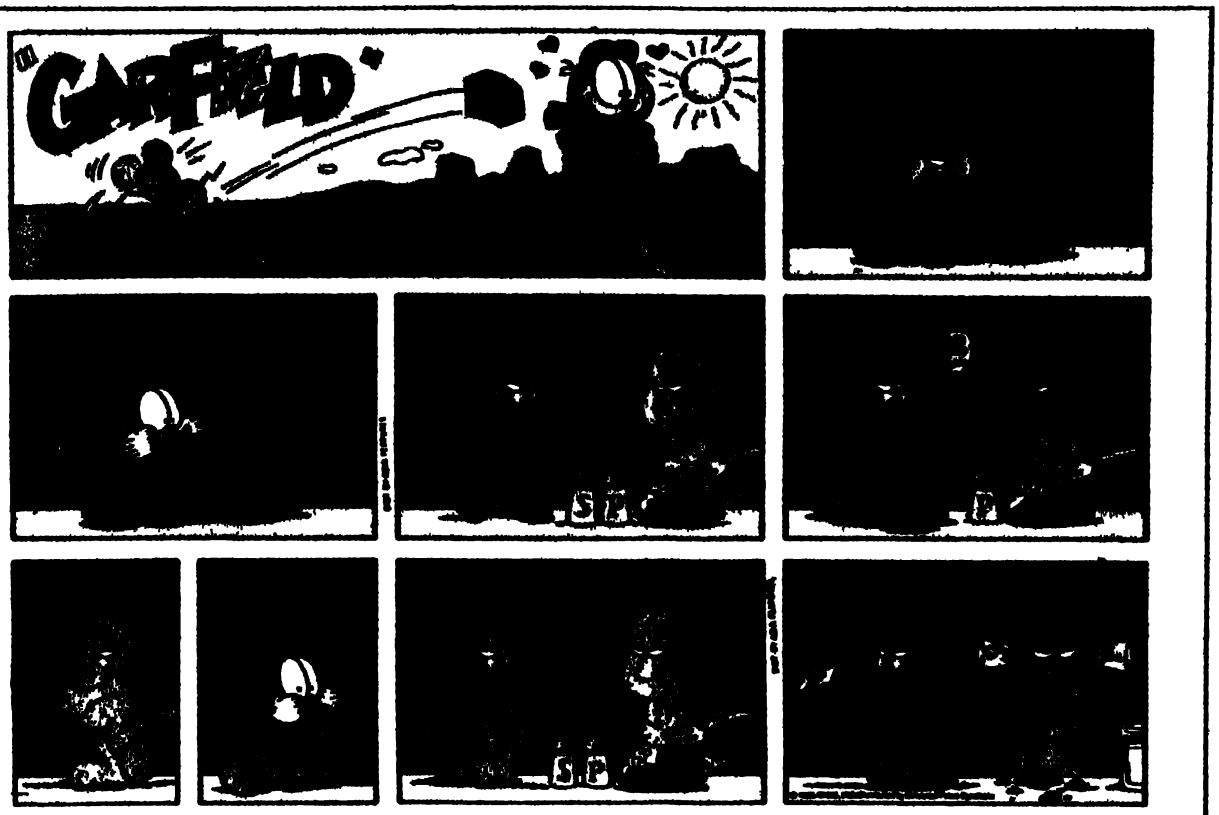


FAKE OR REAL?
It is easy to dupe a lay customer into buying a fake Persian carpet by 'ageing' it after giving it an antique wash. To spot a genuine silk carpet, make a fist and rub your knuckles on the pile. Silk should give a burning sensation

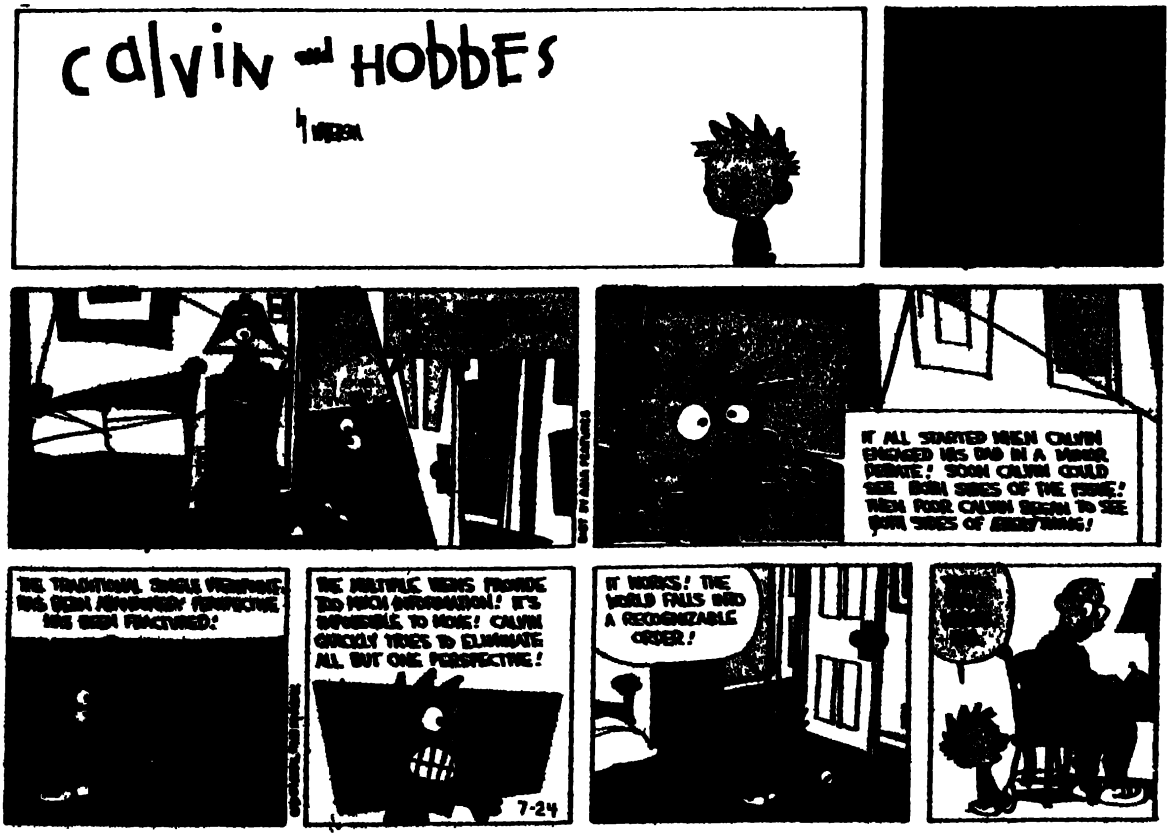
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	1, 5, 7	IC 742	1110	2 4 6
IC 741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 743	1000	1 2 5 6	IC 744	1220	1 2 5 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC 744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4 7	IC 744	1620	4 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2 4 6	CD-268	2135	2 4 6
IC 715	1620	3, 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1 2 3 4 5 6	IC 202	1625	2, 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 3 5	IC 722	1625	1 2 3 5
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
SW 511	1345	daily	SW 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 763	0700	daily	SW-901	0815	daily
SW 902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2 6
* IC-856	1545	2, 6	IC 401	0855	daily
SW-912	2000	daily	SW-911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
CD 412	1715	1 3 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1 3, 5 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3 5, 7	IC 702	1440	1 3, 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC-704	1640	3 5 7
			IC-239	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1 2 3, 4, 5 6	SW-612	1240	1 2, 4 6 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
SW 611	0950	1 2 4 6, 7	IC 714	1430	4 7
HYDERABAD					
SW-511	1345	daily	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3, 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	SW-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD-255	0530	1 3 5	CD-256	1000	1 3, 5
CD-213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
IC 713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
SW-621	0850	3 5	SW-622	1305	3 5
CD-257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1 3 5, 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
SW 202	0845	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	SW 201	0910	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
SW 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 273	1945	daily	SW 211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD-411	2120	1 3 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2 4 6 7	CD-286	1010	2 4 6 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2, 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2 4 6	CD-254	0820	2 4 6
CD-255	0550	1 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1 3 5
[illegible]					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
[illegible]					
CD-572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3, 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ-195	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0325	7	KL 475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB 106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC 731	1015	4 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1810	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1 3, 6	IC-856	1900	2, 6
AI 305	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal

Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
BG-002	0815	1	BG-001	0815	1
BG-002	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-001	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-722	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-004	1645	2	BG-003	1545	2
BG-006	2105	daily	BG-005	2025	daily
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
SU-538	1100	4	SU-537	0800	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
RB-105	1000	2, 3, 7	RB-106	0910	2, 6
			RB-106	0925	4
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1040	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1600	3, 7
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
		Howrah		
		Delhi-Kalka Mail		
		Amritsar Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Allahabad		
		Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun. Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat.		
		Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.		
		Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.		
		Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues & Sat.		
		Jodhpur Express		
		Shalimar (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday		
		Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.		
		Guwahati Sunlight Express Dep.: Tues., Wed. & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri. & Sat.		
		Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday		
		Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.		
		Doon Express via Grand Chord		
		Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line		
		Delhi Janata Express		
		Amritsar Express		
		Kathgodam Express		
		Mithila (Howrah) Express		
		Kamrup (Guwahati) Express		
		Black Diamond Express		
		Coalfield Express		
		Asansol Express		
		Durgapur Express		
		Jamalpur Express		
		Sealdah Express		
		Rampurhat Express		
		Chambal (Howrah) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.		
		Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.		
		Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express		
		Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.		
		Sealdah		
		Toofan-Yoga Express		
		Darjeeling Mail		
		Lal Quila Express via Main Line		
		Kanchanjunga Express		
		Gour Express		
		Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.		
		Kalkata Express		
		Jammu-Tawi Express		
		Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop		
		Rajdhani (Lucknow) Express		
		Ganga Sagar (Dankuni) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
		Howrah		
		Madras Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Nagpur		
		Gitanjali (Howrah) Express		
		Shaktipunj (Visakhapatnam) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday		
		Ahmedabad Express		
		Kurla Express via Nagpur		
		Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack		
		Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express		
		Tata Steel Express		
		Ispat (Gorakhpur) Express		
		Sambalpur-Rajgangpur Express		
		Ranchi Hatia Express		
		Puri Express via Cuttack		
		Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express		
		Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express		
		East Coast (Hyderabad) Express		
		Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday		
		Tirupati Express		
		Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr.: Tuesday & Sunday		
		Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only		
		New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only		
		Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only		
		Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only		
		Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only		
		Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only		
		Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday		
		Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only		
		Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only		

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Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised); Dial 2209466 (manual enquiry).

The Best

BEAUTY IS SKIN DEEP

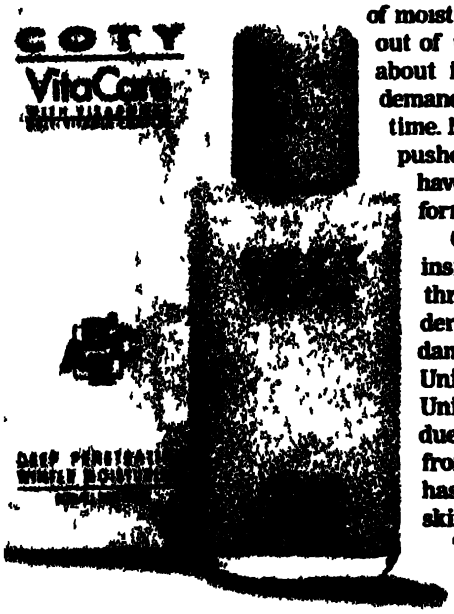


And moisturisers and sunscreens are where it's at these days, says **Sudipta Basu**

'SUN'SITIVE SKIN
With the recent demand for sun protection creams, moisturiser making companies have had to include sunscreens in their formulations

What's the point of sunscreens and moisturisers at this time of the year, you may well ask. One is likely to replace the little 30 ml tubes and bottles in one's bag with an abundance of tissues and hand towels to either brave heaven's downpour or simply block a runny nose. Cosmetologists, however, insist that you keep those tubes and bottles close at hand even while dripping wet. Your skin, you see, needs moisturising even on the most humid of days.

The plethora of cosmetic and natural line of skin care products in the market, however, can be somewhat confusing. So, when it comes to making choices, most people quickly flip the caps and sniff, some look for the prices, but very few check the ingredients used.



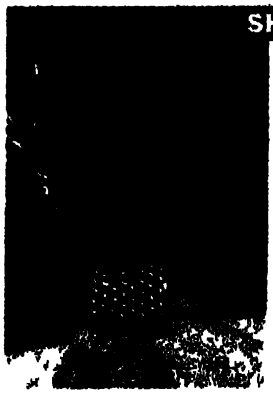
Some years ago, it was enough to dab a spot of moisturiser on your face before stepping out of the house. A small change came about in this pattern with the recent demand for sun protection during the daytime. Moisturisers have since then been pushed for sun-down evening wear, or have had to include sunscreens in their formulations.

Cosmetologist Zarina Godrej insists that one wears sun protection through the year, "come hail or thundershower". Eighty per cent of the damage to skin, say scientists of the University of Tampa, Florida, and the University of Tufts, Boston, is caused due to exposure to sunlight. Apart from skin burn, exposure to the sun has also been found to be a cause of skin cancer.

The two sun rays that pose maximum damage are the UVB and UVA. While the former dehydrates and burns out the skin, the latter hits right through the surface of the skin to damage the third layer which is the cell-making factory. This causes premature wrinkling. "The UVA is the sly one," says Godrej. "One does not have to step out into the sun to catch it. It is present wherever you see a patch of sunlight."

One must use sunscreen liberally, rather than in tiny dots like a moisturiser or foundation. Godrej adds, "And since one cannot control sweat in Indian climates, one should avoid making the mistake of wiping it off and thereby knocking off the protection. Stick to gentle dabbing." This rule applies for both men and women.

While chemists abroad sell sun protection in bulk, in India, one has to contend with the several brands that stand on the shelves. A 100 ml bottle of Revlon's sunscreen and moisturiser costs Rs 69, whereas a fairness cream which offers the same degree of sun protection costs Rs 75. Lakme's 120 ml oil-free sunscreen costs Rs 95, a



SHEETAL MALLAR
Model
I have a very oily skin which tends to burn easily. So I use Johnson & Johnson's Purpo which has a sunscreen and a moisturiser base as well

Maxfactor moisturiser, Rs 60, and a Radiant Moist of the same quantity, Rs 84.

In a similar range come products from Pond's, Nivea, Garnier, Everyuth, Coty Vita Care and Freya. Elizabeth Arden's 30 ml SPF 15



Moisturiser Cream costs Rs 1,800, and is available only in select outlets. Among the natural line, a 120 ml Shehnaz Husain sunscreen and moisturiser costs Rs 395, a 200 ml Lotus sunscreen, Rs 115, 35 mg Biotique carrot and sandalwood sunscreen creams are priced at Rs 110 and Oriflame moisturiser with sunscreen at Rs 120.

Dr Vijay Aswani, a dermatologist at the Jaslok Hospital, Mumbai, maintains that there is a steady rise in the cases of people suffering from skin diseases related to exposure to the sun. The most common disease is polymorphic light eruption due to the ultra-violet rays. As a precaution against this, Betacarotyne and Chloroquin 125 mg are prescribed.

"Dark skins are naturally protected against the sun by a concentration of melanocides, whereas fair skins have a low concentration of this and need to apply tropical sunscreen," says Dr Aswani. "For the Indian sun, one needs an SPF (sun protection factor) of 30 and above, but since most companies do not venture beyond 15, each application ensures a protection of two to three hours only. It is thus important to re-apply soon after." Apart from the brands available in the market, he also recommends brands like Coppertone, Shade, Pre-sun and Purpose.

Zarina Godrej adds that the International FDCA (Food Drug Cosmetic Administration) body has specified that either Zinc oxide, Titanium-di-oxide or Parasol/Ayobenzone be present in a sun protection lotion for it to be of any effect. "But most importantly, the SPF number should be mentioned," adds Godrej.

Although one is hesitant to introduce cosmetic products to infants, Godrej maintains that one must begin to use sunscreens as early as the age of seven. "Children below this age should be allowed to step out in the evenings only after 5 pm," she adds. "A streamlined diet consisting of carrots, leafy vegetables and fruits also supports protection in summers," adds Dr Aswani.

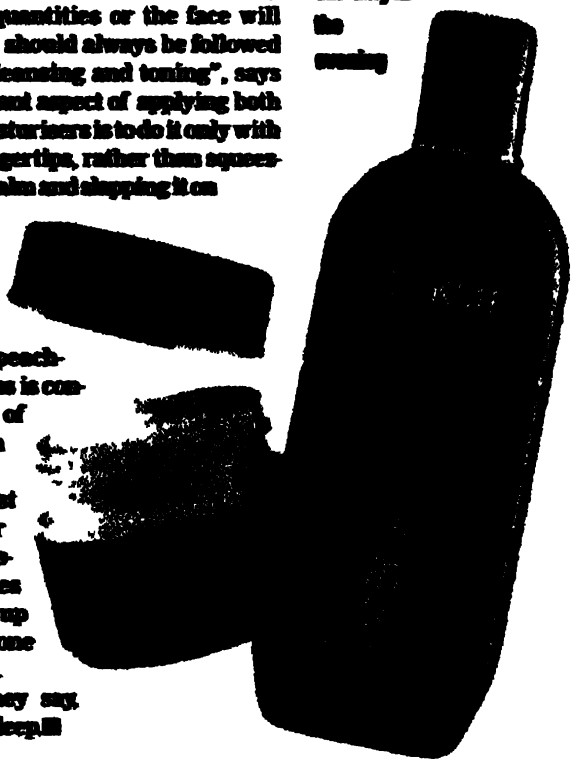
Moisturisers, on the other hand, should only be used in small quantities or the face will become puffy, "and should always be followed after a thorough cleansing and toning", says Godrej. The important aspect of applying both sunscreens and moisturisers is to do it only with the help of one's fingertips, rather than squeezing it all out on the palm and slapping it on the face.

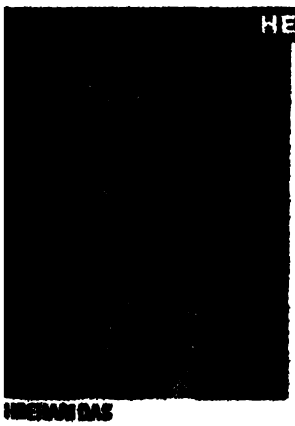
That's sure making serious business of a simple morning regime, even though peach-skinned Laila Rouass is content with a splash of water on her face in the mornings and ace make-up artist Mickey Contractor with a dab of moisturiser as he rushes about town doing up the faces of everyone from Rekha to Kajol.

But then, as they say, beauty is only skin-deep!!

STARTING YOUNG

Cosmetologists insist that one must begin to use sun screens on children as early as the age of seven. Children below this age should be allowed to step out only in the evening





HELEN BRODIE

Model

I try to avoid the sun as much as possible during the day. But when I do have to face it, I use Elizabeth Arden's morning gel

HEEMAN DAS



MICKEY CONTRACTOR

Make-up artist

It is mandatory to use sun protection during the day. But I am seldom out in the blazing sun, so the Clinique moisturiser is okay for me

MY PERSONAL *Style*

ALWAYS AT HOME

Rajat Sharma prefers a small get-together to a big bash

I am, basically, an indoor person. I prefer my guests to come home instead of calling them somewhere outside. In any case, I prefer a small get-together with a few select friends to a large gathering. And I try to do my best to make it as informal as possible. My guests should feel at home. They should not feel uncomfortable or out of place. Otherwise the whole point of having a party is lost.

I am lucky to have an excellent cook who can rustle up anything from Indian to Chinese to Continental food. He is really very good. So food is usually according to the tastes of my guests. But I would certainly not have people getting drunk and vomitting all over at my party. So I rarely serve alcohol and I do so only when I am sure that nothing untoward would happen. One concession that I do make is that I serve non-vegetarian food even though I don't like it.

My circle of friends is a broad sweep: from journalists to politicians; from filmstars to lawyers and so on. So I try to invite a mix of people. I wouldn't want to have only journalists at my party or only lawyers. They meet each other so frequently anyway during the day that it makes no sense to throw them together once again in the evening.

One big party that I remember is the one we organised after *Aap Ki Adalat* completed 100 episodes. We had invited everyone who had been our guest on our show. We had people like Dilip Kumar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, Yasin Malik, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Aamir Khan, Uma Bharti and so on. I don't know if they had anything to say to each other but it was some party.

We organised it at the Taj Palace and the smallest details like the colour of the napkins, the cutlery, the food, the flower arrangements, everything was done by us. It took a lot of planning. Though it was organised by professionals it had a personal touch to it because I and my office colleagues made sure that no detail escaped our attention.

But such affairs are very few. I am not much of a party person. I'd much rather be on my own, and that's why my parties are so infrequent.

AS TOLD TO GHAZALA WAHAB



MASALA MIX

One big party that I remember is the one we organised after *Aap Ki Adalat* completed 100 episodes. We had invited everyone who had been our guest on our show: Dilip Kumar, Laloo Prasad Yadav, Yasin Malik, Ghulam Nabi Azad, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, Aamir Khan, Uma Bharti and so on

be a world player



Heath Streak strikes in a single breasted jacket and grey trousers with a striped shirt and tie.

Nayan Mongia is charm personified in a Chinese collared Nehru jacket and matching trousers.

Steve Waugh prefers to play it cool with a light ice blue combination of blazer, trouser and inner shirt.

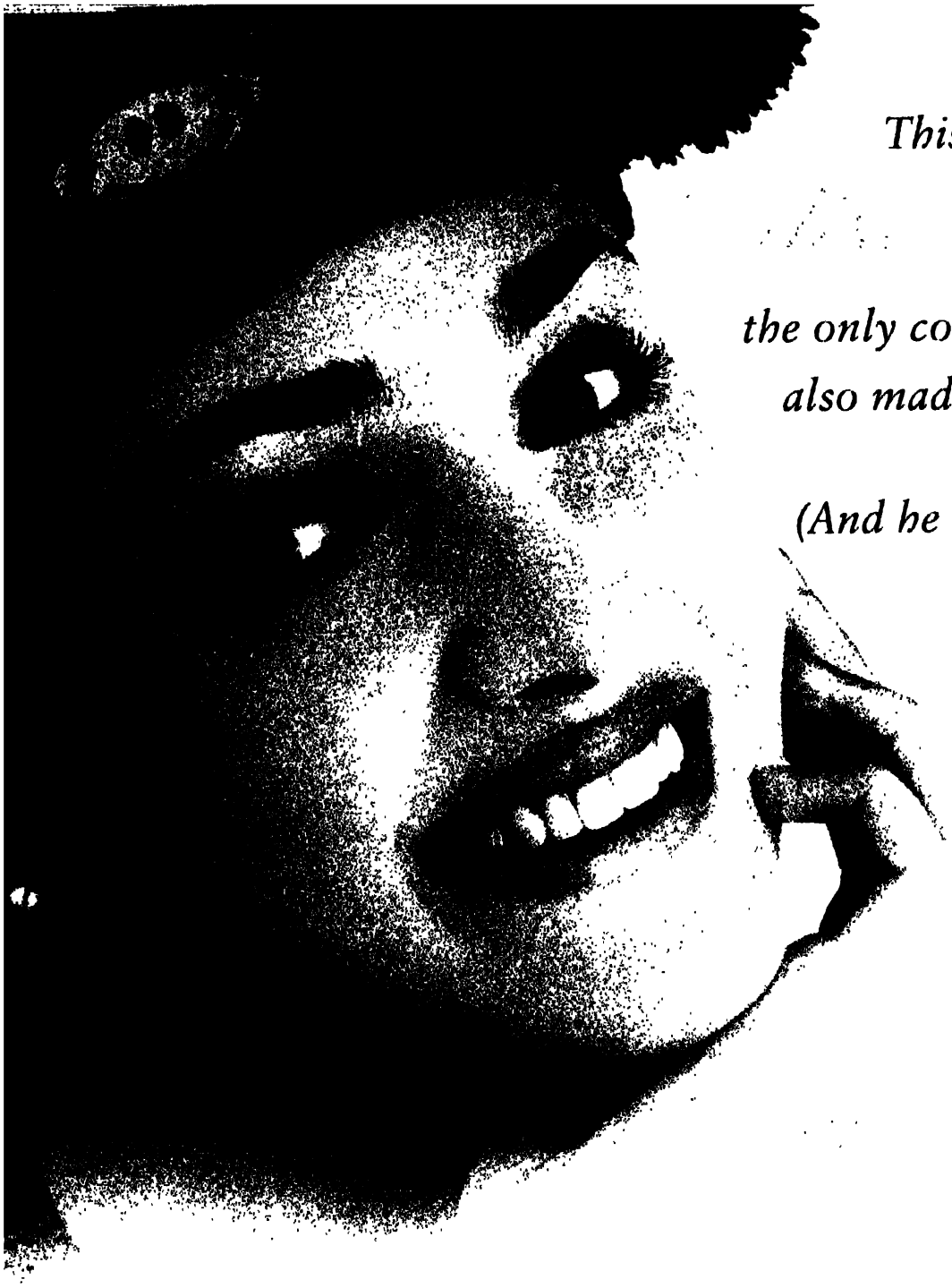
Hrishikesh Kanitkar looks elegant combining traditionality and modernity in an off white safari suit with a double buttoned collar.

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(And he discovered me

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WRITE IN



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THE SUITABLE BOYS

The cover story on the eligible bachelors of our country made very interesting reading ('Top 20', September 20). Although one may not agree with the 'eligibility' of all the bachelors mentioned, the tongue-in-cheek style of writing about them was appreciated by everyone. The story was also timely, given the spectre of population explosion that our country faces at the moment. It would be in the larger interest of the country if at least some of us were to retain our bachelor status.

S. BASU, CALCUTTA

BOYZONE

The cover story on the eligible bachelors of the country was very enjoyable. Although one cannot dispute the fact that he is a great artist, I am not quite convinced that M.F. Husain can be termed an 'eligible' bachelor. If he is, I feel rather sorry for the plight of Indian women. I think this is the best compliment that the old man has ever received in his life!

A. Mitra, Bihar

I am an ardent fan of cricketer Ajay Jadeja and I jumped up with glee to see my favourite cricketer being called one of India's top 20 bachelors (which indeed he is). However, I was apalled when I read what you had to say about him. He is definitely not 'diminutive', at least not by average Indian standards. And, excuse me, one would definitely give him a second look even if he was not a well-known personality. However, I suppose, beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder, doesn't it? You could also have included Rahul Dravid's name in the list.

Rohini Sen, Calcutta

HEALTH HAZARDS

You have raised a pertinent issue in the column 'Random Strokes' (September 13) by highlighting the ill-health of the Prime Minister of our country and how it affects the fate of the nation. One must however be careful to guard against fabricated reports on the same subject that newspapers print in order to boost their sales.

Sunil Banerjee, Calcutta

IT'S GOT THE LOOK

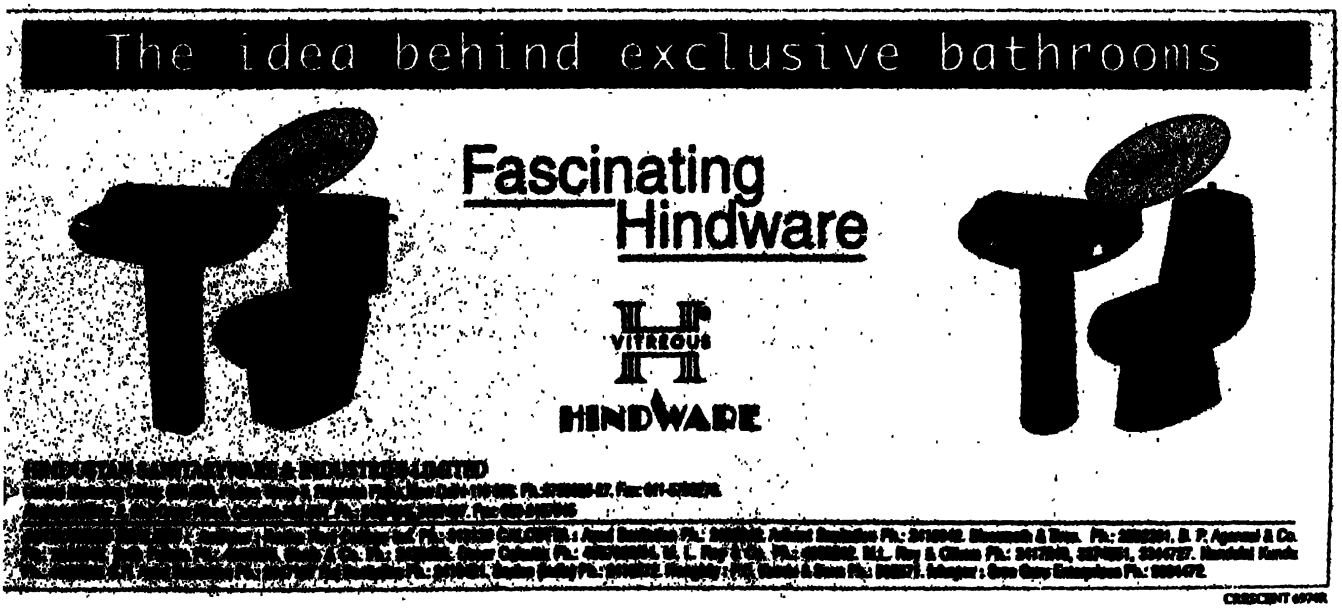
Thank you for improving the layout of *Graphiti*. You can however definitely broaden its base by incorporating articles on science and travel in it.

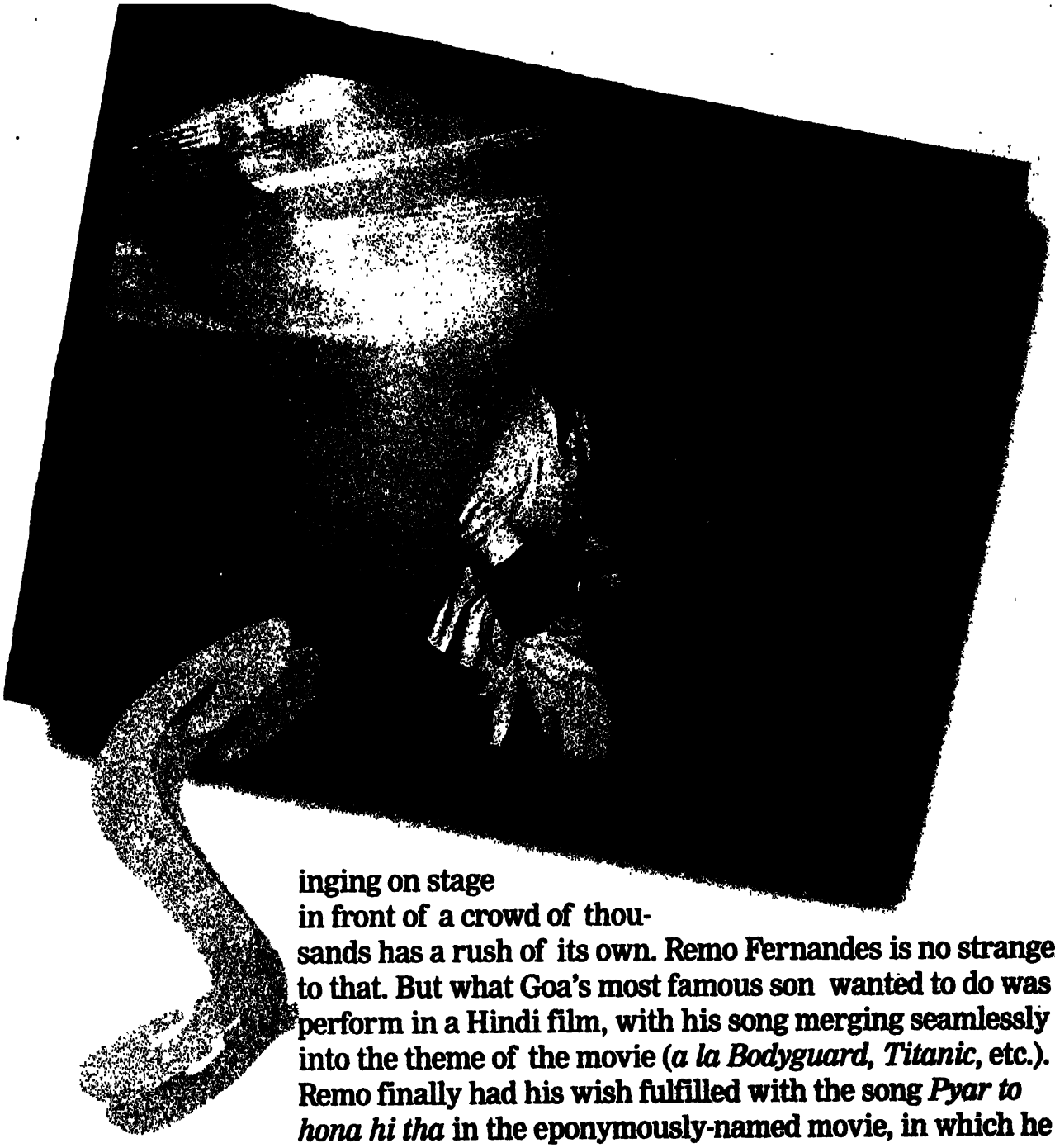
Shubhro Biswas, Calcutta

COVER PHOTOGRAPH : Vikas Khot

graphiti ★ 1 November 1998

4 MUSIC MANIAC Remo Fernandes sings away his blues **10** OUT OF THE CLOSET Jaaved Jaaferi's wardrobe is both fun and funky **14** SURVIVAL STRATEGIES **20** DESIGN CORNER Fabrics can change the look of any house **28** THE BEST Cartoon Network may be the new favourite but the humble comic book still holds its own **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE



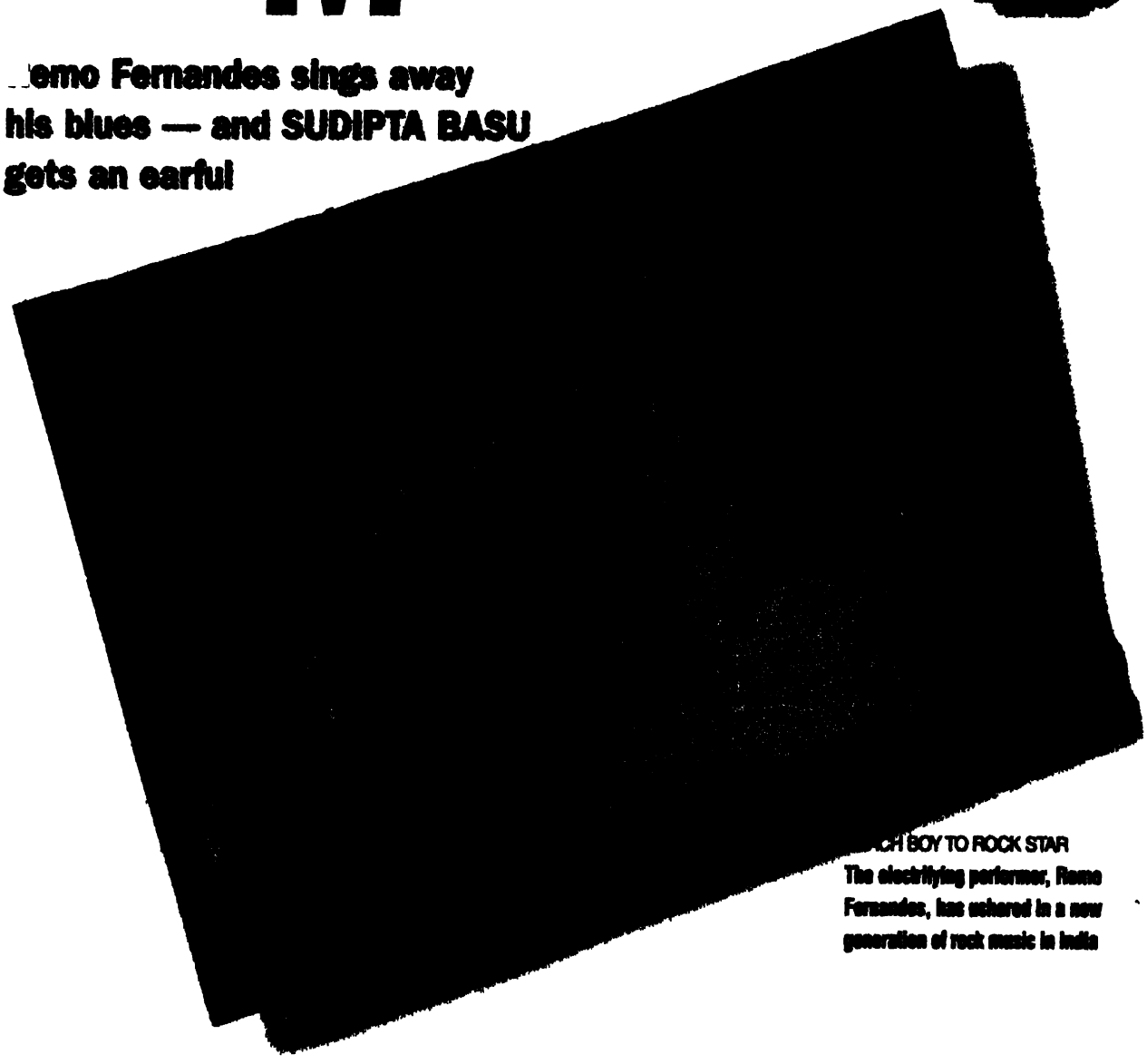


inging on stage in front of a crowd of thousands has a rush of its own. Remo Fernandes is no stranger to that. But what Goa's most famous son wanted to do was perform in a Hindi film, with his song merging seamlessly into the theme of the movie (*a la Bodyguard, Titanic*, etc.). Remo finally had his wish fulfilled with the song *Pyar to hona hi tha* in the eponymously-named movie, in which he made a guest appearance.

He had first voiced this desire to Mani Ratnam while doing the *Humma humma* number for *Bombay*. But the film maker declined on the grounds that a personal appearance by the singer might confuse the masses. "Mani was not sure how the public would react. 'First they will see the lead character singing the song and then in the video they will see you...' was Mani's apprehension," recalls Remo.

Music Maniac

..emo Fernandes sings away his blues — and SUDIPTA BASU gets an earful



...CH BOY TO ROCK STAR
The electrifying performer, Remo Fernandes, has ushered in a new generation of rock music in India



But Ajay Devgan had no such reservations. In fact, when the production company flew him down from Goa for *Pyar to...*, Remo thought that it was going to be a promo for the film — that is, till he saw the sets. "It was amazing and not quite in keeping with the standards of a small ad film. And I told myself what the hell am I supposed to be doing here?" shrugs Remo. "Then, before I knew it, I was soaked into the actual process of film making."

But if you've missed the movie, never fear. You'll soon be seeing more of Remo, who is currently putting the finishing touches to an as yet untitled album for Magnasound, his first one in Hindi. After over a decade in the Indian-English music industry, with a handful of Hindi film songs under his belt, Remo is finally ready to try his luck with a full-fledged album in the national language.

"These are my own songs that I would normally put down in an English album. I wrote them in English some years ago and had them translated only recently in Hindi," he says. "I have been looking for a translator for many years now, and it might sound very amazing but I could not find one who could translate my songs adequately in Hindi, despite the fact that it is the language of the masses."

That is till he found a bi-linguist from Delhi, Shyam Banerjee. "All lyric writers here are so used to writing Hindi film songs in the line of I-love-you,-you-love-me,-let's-go-to-the-disco-tonight manner, that when they worked on my songs, they came back to me with very little of the original essence," says Remo.

Fernandes resists being slotted with the current lot of Hindi pop artists, though, for he feels one has come to associate this trend of music with just *bhangra* and techno. The soul of his forthcoming album then, he asserts, is the fact that it is recorded by human beings, as against the general rush of music being mass produced today.

"These days a lot of the music is programmed and sequenced. So there is the perfect note and the perfect beat, and there is no mistake about that. Then they use music loops which is pre-recorded music done with extremely sophisticated sound systems in the US and UK. It's got base, drums, the works, and they are fabulous sounding, for the best musicians abroad have recorded in the best studios under the best conditions. All you have to do here is to get a local singer to sing on these sequenced sounds," he says. "Agreed it is a trend, and I am not exactly campaigning against this, but it is just that when everyone else is doing this I feel like going back to my roots. My album is thus, all about human beings playing in a studio."

What fires Remo up is the tenor in human sensibilities which is not always perfect. The drum machine, for example, is absolutely perfect, as it marches forth relentlessly in the face of all emotions without feeling any of it. "It is always perfect. But when human beings are faced with an exciting chorus, adrenaline speeds you up, the band goes faster, just as the pace slackens with a slow verse. All these little elements add a lot of ambience to your music. And as a result of this what we have got here is a forgotten element in music, the human touch."

Remo has also tried to steer clear of friendly socio-political banter here, which has become his trademark over the years. He has said it all, he claims, and has nothing more to add. There is only one song in the series which he has sung in celebration of the Indian woman. "The woman in India may not be as privileged as her Western counterpart, but she has achieved small freedoms as compared to her mothers and grandmothers. Often many of them take all this for granted," he says.

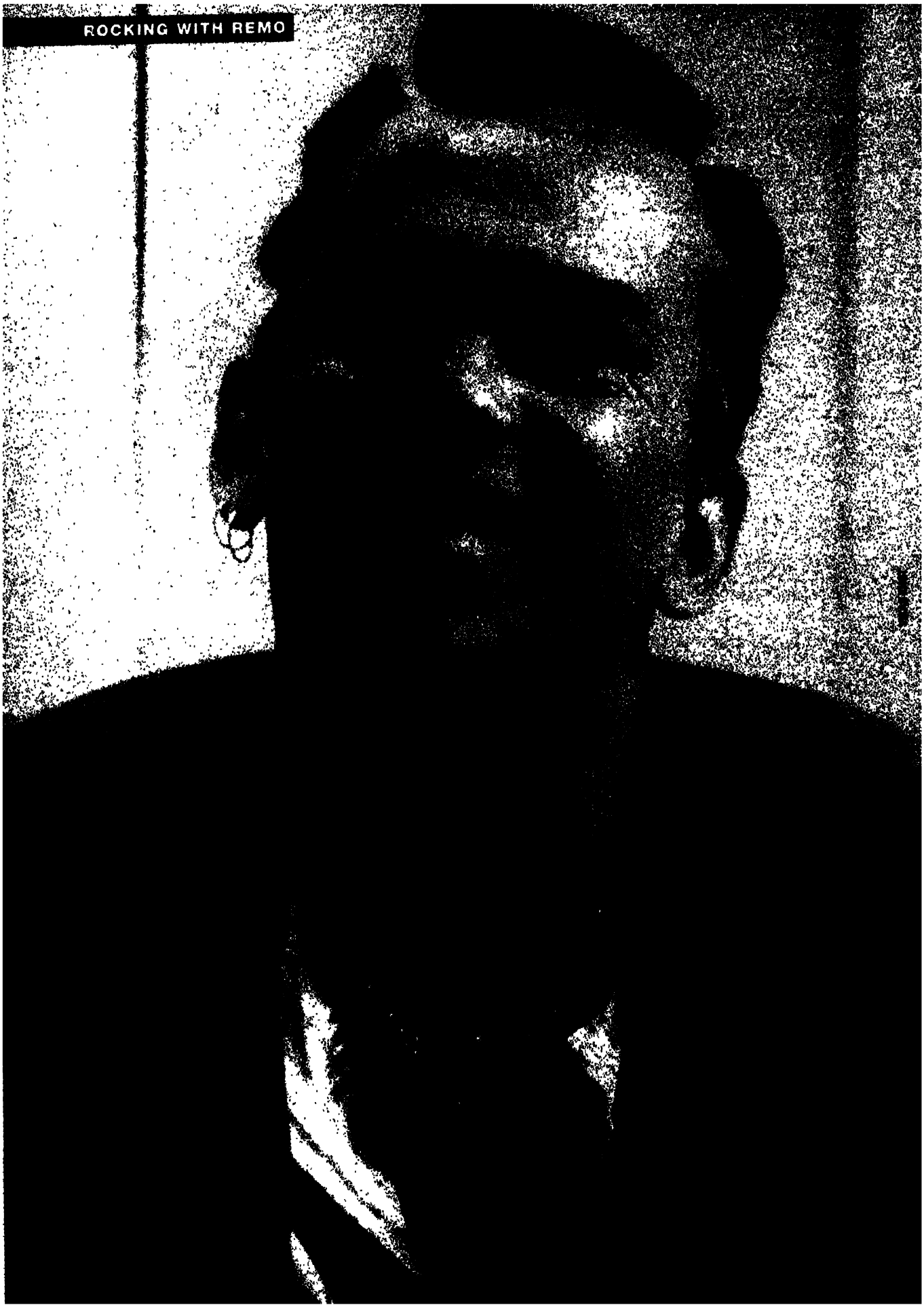
Apart from this the collection will also have two folk songs from Goa and Daman in the original and an instrumental number from Nepal that he learnt from a friend in college. "These songs are too beautiful for the rest of the country not to hear in the original," he says. "And c'mon, if India can trip on the Spanish *Macarena*, Brazilian Portuguese *Lambada* and *Didi* which is in Arabic, what's wrong with Konkani."

What Remo has been less confident of is his way with Hindi. Having been born and brought up in Goa, where the mother tongue in the family and at school was Portuguese, he is far from familiar with the language.

Even today, Remo speaks in French with his wife Michele and English with sons Noah and Jonah. A feeling of belonging with the rest of the country hence, remained an aspiration, as it were. "Despite being one geographically, one couldn't quite connect with the average countryman," he says. "Which is also why I released the first two or three albums in Goa since they only had to do with that state."

Thus, attempting to connect with the rest of the country through his music was a gruelling task indeed. Even the early song, *Jalwa*, where he had to mouth a simple one line through the course of the song seemed a task. "That first song was a real torture. Even words like *Dekho dekho, yeh hai jalwa* needed rehearsing. I was repeatedly told that it was *dekho* and not *deko*. I did not see the difference," he recalls.

> "I was repeatedly told that it was *dekho* and not *deko deko yeh hai jalwa*. I did not see the difference"


ROCKING WITH REMO

Humma humma was a greater grind. That was till A.R. Rahman had him record the Telugu version of the song. "And then Hindi seemed so simple," he laughs. "I wrote the entire song in English with my little inflections. But the language is so subtle, I couldn't tell the difference between the accents."

Huiya ho followed, and together all of them seemed to catch the audiences' attention. The songs even broke through into the Rang Bhavan crowd of Mumbai While with his English music earlier he seemed to have barely cut into five per cent of the youth of India, he was now ready to reach the masses.

"The Rang Bhavan crowd can be very pseudo, though. They see something in the West and want to copy it immediately. You have them shouting *Roadhouse Blues* at every rock concert, climbing on to one another's shoulders and throwing their shirts around So boring, really," he says. "And yet they seemed to like my little native accents that peppered the songs. It also burst the myth that Hindi songs were loved only by Hindi film lovers. This is when I told myself that I might finally be ready to hit the larger masses," he says, seemingly buoyed up with the thought.

"Everyone underestimates the masses," says Remo. "People will not venture into anything that might be considered remotely innovative, claiming that the masses will not understand. That becomes an excuse for them to thrive in their mediocrity."

He deliberately brushes aside the current crop of one-song-hit Indipop crooners who spend more energy on package than content, and picks out Lucky Ali, Silk Route and Ila Arun as people who have "at least brought in a personal touch to their songs". "Otherwise be it east, west, north or south, everyone is singing *bhangra*," he says. "It is like the time *ghazals* were a fad, everyone who could wrap a shawl around them thought that they could sing a *ghazals*."

Speaking of trends, the current vogue of lip-syncing at rock concerts hasn't touched him either. He voiced his wish of singing with Jimmy Page and Robert Plant of Led Zeppelin apart from playing the base guitar at the Channel [V] Awards in '96. When he received a lukewarm reception from them (Plant had a bad throat, he said), Remo was secretly happy that he would only be playing an instrument with the band

"Hence, meeting them backstage was more interesting than being on stage. But I guess I would have broken my rule for them just once. They are legends, like my guru and I'd sweep the floor for them if they wanted," he states sheepishly. "It was somewhat like the time I met George Harrison in Goa."

If he resists performing to the tune of his own playback records in public, he has also remained steadfast to his promise that he will never go out of his way to "cheat the masses" in his live shows by belting out a local favourite in the region he is performing. "It's like telling them how much you love their culture and seducing them with such lies," he says. "I have just done my music and gone deeper into my roots."

Just as the socio-political weather around him fired the lyrics of his popular English hits, the name of his band, The Microwave Papadams, sprang into his face at a family luncheon. His sister from Portugal was visiting the family in Goa when she explained that she baked her *papads* in a microwave there, and that they tasted rather good without the smell of smoke

"And hey presto, I thought this is what I was looking for. A perfect sync between the ancient and the modern," says Remo. "Our ancient *papads* are being done in hi tech microwave in Europe.. but I wasn't sure how my band would take it. As it turned out they had a good laugh over it."

The explosive Bombay City wrote itself out in much the same way. Years ago, one evening he and his friends were partying in Bombay, and almost on the spur of the moment they drove down almost one quarter of the way to Goa to have dinner.

"Roger Drego, my friend, insisted we check out this Maharashtrian place that had great food. There were 15 of us in his VW convertible and we were playing and drinking and munching, and all the time the wildness of the city was soaking my brain '*Bom bom bom Bombay, we are just an atom bomb in bay*' came at that spur of the moment."

Politicians don't rock and roll, he admits, was the easiest to write. "When you dance, you are in a complete innocent state of mind and heart, which can never be said of them, hence they can't rock and roll," he says.

These days however, what he loves most is taking long walks with his wife, Michele, around his neighbourhood in Siolim, Goa, when he is not recording. The atmosphere around there is pretty much the same as was depicted in one of his first dew-fresh videos Ocean Queen. And it is this natural beauty that re-charges Remo's batteries, and keeps him rocking and rolling - and, of course, singing. ■

> **"Lucky Ali, Silk Route and Ila Arun have brought in a personal touch. Otherwise everyone sings *bhangra*"**

THE RIGHT CHOICE, BABY!

While with his English albums Remo barely cut into five per cent of India's youth, with his Hindi numbers he reached the masses

OUT OF THE *Closet*

JAAVED JAAFERI

Fashion is both fun and funky, as far as this veejay is concerned



VIKAS KHOT

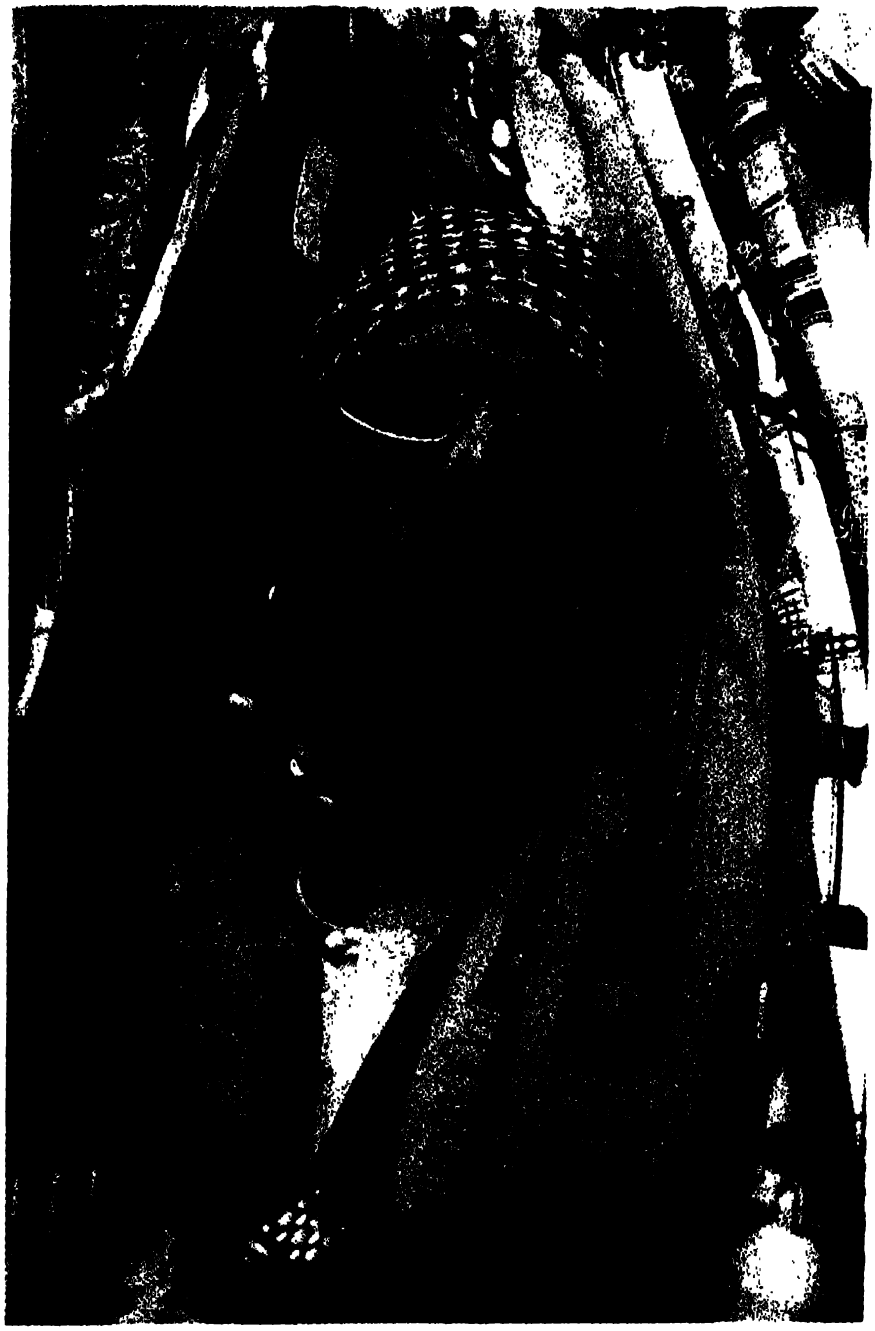
My closet can at best be described as one that is completely spread out. That is, from a simple cupboard inside my own room, it has now found an extension within the passage of our house, space being a problem in Mumbai. Between my brother and myself we put away most of the stuff that we do not require regularly here.

Mine is not an elaborate cupboard, though. I do not have a varied wardrobe to begin with. But I team several items together that are not traditionally meant to be worn that way. I throw a jacket or a blazer over a simple shirt and a pair of trousers or a casual T-shirt and walk into a party or any social do. I mostly let my mood decide what I want to wear. I do not have to conform to any written norm.

Among traditional outfits, salwar kameezes are an all-time favourite, though. I have about six to eight pairs of these, mostly picked from Pakistan. Some of them have been locally stitched as well.

I am averse to brands. I think it is very stupid to be so taken in by something that has a horse or an alligator stuck on it. And what's more, pay a price that could go towards the upkeep of an entire household in this country. I am not being pretentious, but why the hell should I pay Rs 10,000 for a pair of jeans when I am quite comfortable in one that I can get for Rs 700. Versace, Pierre Cardin...the names mean nothing to me. All I know is that I will not wear the same pair for more than two years. So why spend a fortune on them?

I like clothes, but I do not go overboard with them. I have no philosophy



VIKAS KHOT

like clothes reflect a man's personality, etc., to bind me. I do give my clothes some slight thought, but only just, enough thought to be able to mix and match various items together.

I used to dress up a lot when I was in college. I mostly used to play around with accessories. I was probably the first one in the business who brought funky headgear into vogue. Jackie Shroff was another person who had a yen for funk, but he was always a star and hence more noticed. I wasn't much of a public figure then.

I did things like using belts in a different manner from the way they are usually worn, and then maybe couple two ties around my neck. I had picked up a lot of ties and belts between '83 and '85 from London. Then, my mother's *bandhni dupattas* would find their way into forming my headgear. I have an entire collection of ties and hats stacked away in that closet that we have built in the passage. They are from my '83 collection. Most of them are very thin ties and out of vogue.

It was around this time that I also started experimenting with the salwar, shirt and jacket. This used to be and still remains my favourite ensemble. I love to fool around with the salwar kameez and a Western jacket. Sometime I'd even team a Chinese coat with a salwar.

While in showbiz one is expected to behave in a certain fashion. After Channel [V], the head gear, earring and funky manner have stuck. I might be known to do totally funky things, but I have never worn psychedelic colours in true [V] tradition. I always conformed to the formal funky — I'd play around with variations of ties, jackets and blazers. I love polo caps, and mostly wear them reverse. Many people are doing the same now.

Even when I am on my shows I wear my own clothes. I don't pump in a lot of money for this, though. White and off-whites are my favourites. I have several salwar kameezes and shirts in the same colour.

For footwear I mostly wear cowboy boots that are shin-length. Otherwise I wear keds. My boots are mostly in browns and blacks and I have picked up most of them from America and England. Jackie told me about a certain guy who makes very good stuff here as well, but I haven't checked him out yet.

I must confess that I have been somewhat guilty of giving in to complete decadent behaviour when I picked up a pair of Luchesse boots from Texas for $500. I have never done a thing like that before and never am I likely to do it again. Most of my shoes are between $100-150. But that was a moment of sheer weakness that I can never flaunt. But those are damn good shoes and I don't wear them very often.

As for accessories, I only wear silver earrings and rings; and watches are used for purely practical purposes. They are not very expensive either. I don't have the time to look after my closet. My wife occasionally cleans up the drawers. I shop for my clothes from wherever I can. Most of them are from Mumbai or from my jaunts abroad. ■

AS TOLD TO SUDIPTA BASU

IT'S DIFFERENT!

I was probably the first to bring funky headgear into vogue. I do things like using belts in a different manner from the way they are usually worn, and then maybe couple two ties around my neck. I have an entire collection of ties, most of them out of fashion

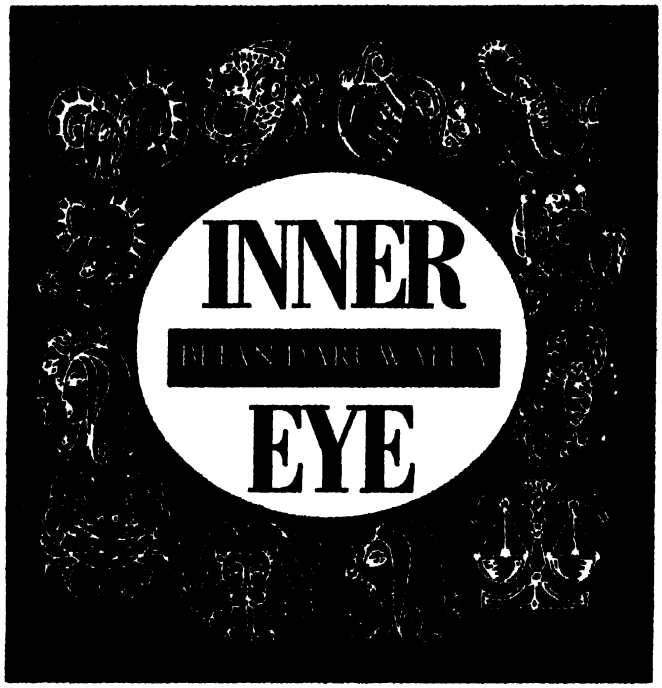
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) Ties and bonds preoccupy you These may be ties of love or professional ones partnerships or collaborations You may feel duty-bound to honour some commitments, especially to near and extended family, and may even need to incur several expenses in the bargain There may also be journeys to make and lawsuits to deal with

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) It's time for tribulations and worries, for some matters will still be pending But this week there are add-ons in terms of personal gain of a rather more concrete type There are happy times, enhanced powers and prestige as a result of your own efforts and hardwork Links, ties and partnerships are meant just for you

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) The new moon brings in relief from worries and woes Food, fashion and finances will be the three Fs important to you this week You may need to sign papers and documents, legalities will have to be dealt with, also new contracts, partnerships, collaborations and deals are on the cards On the work front, it is full steam ahead

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) You will shift your focus to other Fs — family and fine arts (especially the performing arts like music and theatre) that will enthrall and excite you There will be some recreation and joy, but also income as you overhaul your career and finances, and renew old contracts, indulging in much social and family activity Your creativity will be at its magnificent best

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) The new moon brings much gain, and also great authority and popularity You don't need to be over-assertive any more, but will however need to address some past issue in order to make progress now Learning about management and negotiation, also exercising tact, diplomacy, even kindness will get you further than mere stubbornness



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) You will live life to the hilt The Mars-Sun placing adds conviction to your beliefs and gentleness in your dealings as you develop tolerance and a caring attitude You will vibe wonderfully well with those around you, gain popularity and a shinning new image Mars is the planet of energy — it makes you focussed, action-oriented and positive in all you think and do.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) The new moon carries on the upswing trend and the special area of interest will definitely be money Now that you are flush with funds, you will make inspired moves to get the best value for it. At this juncture, you will not be unjustified in feeling that money does buy you happiness Enjoy it while you can for even this will pass away.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Venus combines with this moon quarter to create pleasure, wish-fulfilment, the coming true of fond dreams and ambitions. Your warm, caring, loving nature will certainly bring out the best in you. You will excel at work and also at personal relationships Money matters will be of concern to you as you need to deal with loans and funds, even leases and rentals.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) In addition to all that kept you involved last week, there is also an equally deep involvement with home and family — the joys of parenthood, filial duties and all that go to make up the quantum of family life There will be get-togethers and re-unions, all to stress your necessary interaction with near and dear ones

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) The frantic pursuits that have kept you busy for the last two weeks ease off now and also yield results. You feel you've managed to get a lot done and can now justifiably afford to relax However, it might be wise to keep Ganesha's warning in mind — complacency breeds problems. It might even undo all that you've achieved

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Evaluation and assessment of yourself, your goals and your stance in life will preoccupy you. You'll turn willingly and happily to the homefront to reinforce your belief in lasting values However, Ganesha assures that it's time to gain much, so wind up pending matters Also take care of elders and those who need you

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) The new moon marks a new mood of personal interactions and relationships. You turn more to family and friends, also to romance and recreation. Creative pursuits, hobbies, interest in arts, cinema yield excellent results. This trend will prevail irrespective of setbacks. In addition, speculation, investments, games of chance may see you coming into a fair amount of money. Luck is on your side, so enjoy.

BIRTHDAYS

SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Are film stars below the rule of law, asks Seema Goswami

The talking point is: The arrest of Salman Khan for the offence of killing three endangered animals: two black bucks and a chinkara. Khan was shooting in Jodhpur when he decided to go on a *shikar* with fellow stars, Saif Ali Khan, Tabu, Sonali Bendre and Neelam Kothari. But while the others just cheered from the sidelines, it was macho man Salman who actually shot the animals.

He would have got away with it, if he hadn't committed the transgression in Bishnoi territory. The Bishnois are a Rajasthani tribe which worships nature, and reveres the black buck as an incarnation of Krishna. And the moment they heard the shots and caught Salman in the act — so to speak — all hell broke loose. The Bishnois insisted that he, along with those accompanying him, should be jailed for this offence.

As it turned out, however: The heroines were the first ones to be arrested. Looking terrified and tearful, they arrived at the local police station, but managed to secure bail for themselves. So did Saif Ali, on the grounds that he wasn't the one wielding the gun. But Salman was taken into custody, and kept in a makeshift prison for several days even as the Bishnois demanded his blood and his fans bayed their support.

Salman's reaction was: To label this as a political vendetta. Both he and Saif insisted that they were being made scapegoats because vested interests wanted to win over the Bishnoi vote bank in the forthcoming elections. Khan insisted on his innocence, though he did get his family to return the weapons he had allegedly used in the *shikar*, and which he had sent off to his home in Bombay in a panic.

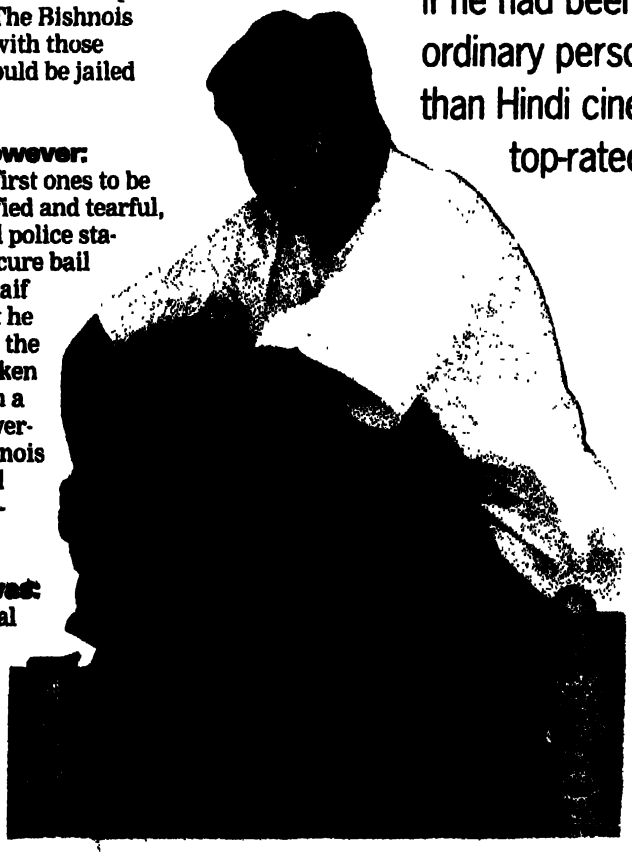
So, was Khan being unfairly victimised?: Going strictly by the book, yes. Sure, he may have killed the endangered animals (and even eaten one of them if reports are to be believed) but like any other citizen of India he was entitled to the protection of the rule of law. And that dictated that Salman be released on bail, pending a free and fair trial for his alleged crime. After all, he was hardly likely to abscond, given his strong ties to the community. And where would he hide, given how well-recognised his face is in this country?

So, all the authorities really needed to do was to impound his passport, charge him a punitive amount of money as bail (as they did eventually) and let him go. In the end, if Khan was convicted of the crimes he was charged with, he could be given the maximum punishment — but until then he was entitled to his freedom.

Instead, the actor was kept in a makeshift jail in the office of the prison officials, where he was served with food from the Umaid Bhavan hotel and allowed access to a mobile phone to keep in touch with friends and family, thereby making a mockery of the entire process.

In time, however, good sense prevailed, and Salman was released on bail and flew back home to a tearful reunion with his family, including fiancee Somy Ali.

> Would Salman Khan have found it so difficult to procure bail if he had been an ordinary person rather than Hindi cinema's top-rated star? ●



This entire drama, though: Does raise some pertinent questions. Do film stars get an unfair rap simply because they are film stars? Would Sunjay Dutt, for instance, have languished in jail under TADA for quite so long if he hadn't been a movie actor? And would Salman have found it so difficult to procure bail if he had been an ordinary person rather than Hindi cinema's top-rated star?

The strength of our democracy depends on the answers to these questions. ■

SURVIVAL
Strategies



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

FRIEND TURNS FOE

Q : I am a 20-year-old man in love with a girl whose brother is my best friend. He has come to know about our affair, as a result of which, he is not talking to me. I am very close to the girl's family and they like me quite a lot. Her parents are unaware of the relationship. I respect her parents and don't want them to feel back-stabbed or betrayed. I feel desperate. Neither can I leave the girl nor do I want to lose the friendship with her brother. Kindly suggest a way out.

SHALAIN CHITTARANJAN

You must have a serious talk with your friend and convey to him that your relationship with his sister is no passing fancy but a serious commitment He may express his anger and resentment, but you have to be patient and get his understanding, if not approval Ask your girlfriend to speak to him as well After all, it is not a crime to like someone It is just that most parents are protective about their daughters As this seems a rather conservative family, it would be a good idea for the two of you to have a longterm look at your future plans Gradually, prepare your families for a serious relationship, and go about things in a mature, rather than a furtive way All the best

PAY PROBLEMS

Q : I had worked in a private firm in Siliguri and due to some personal reasons, had to leave the job within two months of my appointment. My problem is that more than three months have passed and my boss has failed to clear my dues, including a month's salary. In fact, I have lost count of the number of times I must have visited the office, in vain. I have always been a good worker and have never misbehaved with my boss. I find his behaviour intolerable. Kindly advise me on ways to get back my dues.

NARAYAN BHATTACHARJEE BARASAT

I would suggest that you get in touch with a competent lawyer practising in Siliguri who will, on your behalf, initiate appropriate legal proceedings before the labour court You can try to speak to your ex-employers one last time, but going by their record, it looks unlikely that they will respond to you positively The labour courts involve a degree of patience and a lot of procedure, but I feel they are the best option open to you at the moment

PORNOGRAPHY PLEASURE

Q : I am a 23-year-old man, quite unsettled in life. I find myself drawn to pornographic films and literature. I am very addicted to these and find myself masturbating and

PASSING THOUGHTS

I am a 20-year-old boy. My problem is that I get easily distracted and I am not able to concentrate on any particular thing at any particular given time and most of the time, end up giving priority to trivial matters. I have tried to control my mind through meditation, but in vain. Kindly advise.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Concentration is easy to build upon once you have the motivation. You are young and your mind is distracted by every passing whim and fancy. Just sit back and consider what it is you want out of life, how you visualise yourself ten years from now. Then work out the strategies and course of action which will enable you to turn your dreams into reality. Prioritise and sequence your activities, and above all imbue all these with faith and belief. You have my word for it, it works.



My erstwhile [illegible] I have lo[illegible] have v[illegible]

and losing my physical capabilities. I do not think it is possible for me to marry since I am pretty hooked on to this bad habit. Please offer your valued suggestions.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Masturbation is not the enormous crime society makes it out to be. In fact, it is quite often the safest method of handling pent-up sexual feelings — safer, say, than promiscuity, AIDS and rape. When the time comes and you are married to a suitable partner, you will have no problems transferring your sexual feelings from your imagination to your real life.

Pornographic literature is a different kettle of fish. The problem with pornography is that it often involves a degree of sadism, masochism and other extreme and pervert sentiments. You can get habituated to feelings of guilt and negativity in association with the sexual act, and this can trouble you after you get into a normal interactive relationship with a human partner.

Physical exercise and a healthy body will help you regain your self-control. Do not worry overmuch, this is a phase many young men pass through and outgrow.

A 'TALL' ORDER

Q: I am a 17-year-old student. My problem is that I am six feet tall already. I am also very thin. Due to this, my friends and relatives talk about nothing but my height. They say that my height will finally reach six feet six inches or thereabouts. Because of this, I cannot study or concentrate upon other aspects of my life. Is there any medicine which can check further growth? I will be very grateful to you if you can offer your valued suggestions.

ABHISHEK, RANCHI

Problems, problems, problems! I think you have grown as tall as you probably ever will, perhaps an inch or so more at the very most. Once you reach your optimum height, you will start filling up sideways as well. Many young men I know would give anything to be in your shoes, but then as they say, the grass is always greener on the other side.

Your friends and relatives probably envy you in private. Walk tall, concentrate on building up your confidence and posture, groom your personality to match your imposing height. Look in the mirror and tell yourself, "Look tall, walk tall, think tall". And thank God that your problems are so lofty.

BOSSING AROUND

Q: I am a 55-year-old woman whose only son has recently got married. Our son had an arranged marriage and we chose our daughter-in-law with much care. She seemed a very sweet and accomplished young lady. However, all this changed as soon as they got married. My daughter-in-law has no respect for elders and treats me very badly. She is more interested in partying than looking after the house. My son is too spineless to deal with her and I guess he wants peace in the house. Please tell me how to tackle my daughter-in-law. I do not wish to sound like the archetypal 'wicked' mother-in-law.

SARITA SINGH, JAMSHEDPUR

What you should do is actually quite clear. You should quit playing God around your house — you sound quite condescending and quick to pass the buck! If your son is spineless, I can only conclude that you have made him so — haven't you heard of the autonomy of the individual? A traditional Indian family can be one of the cruellest institutions in the world. Sometimes, individuals have to rebel to test their own strengths (and weaknesses). It appears to me that the most constructive thing that you can do at the moment is to invest in your own happiness, your self-esteem and your own self. Make new friends, join yoga classes, or even a card group. Become detached from your situation and allow events the space to work themselves out. ■

MIXED Bag

• NEW-LOOK HOME

Morarjee Mills recently launched their Casabella home furnishing fabrics — a range of exclusive coordinated designs in bed linen, upholstery and curtains. The fabrics were displayed at the Nehru Centre gallery in Mumbai. The venue was given the touch of an actual home and office complete with a living room, dining room, master bedroom, children's room, conference room etc. The home furnishing market has been rapidly growing and realising the potential, Morarjee Goculdas Spinning and Weaving Co. Ltd entered into a 50:50 joint venture with Manifattura Castiglioni S.P.A of Italy to bring new ideas in this area. Says Pramod Gothi, CEO of Morarjee Goculdas, "Casabella embodies the class and finesse of traditional Italian expertise. It is bound to become a name in the Indian market soon."

Priced between Rs 175 to Rs 275 per



metre, Casabella curtains and upholstery are available in 100 per cent cotton, polyester cotton and polyester viscose. The bed linens are priced between Rs 700 and Rs 1,100 a metre. Casabella fabrics will be available in all leading retail outlets in the country.

1998 — A Love Story



It seems there is really n fullstop to the Bill Clinton Monica Lewinsky affai Newspapers, magazine and television clippings are stil flush with juicy details of th episode that made the Kennet Starr report one of the hottes bestsellers in recent times.

The latest to make a killin out of the report is the *des* Radhakrishna Prakashan Pvt Ltd. A largely Hindi publishin house, it has brought out, both in English and Hindi, the com plete Kenneth Starr report "t bring to the readers books and documents of contemporary relevance." While the book in English, titled *1998-Love Story* is an unabridged version of the report, the Hindi book, titled *Main Sharminda Hoon* (I am repentant), is a slightly abridged version of the same. The books were released at a function in Delhi recently by the acting CEO of Prasar Bharati, Om Prakash Kejariwal. According to him, "If there could be talk of impeachment of the US President based on the Kenneth Starr report, these books will get historical importance."

Apart from the historical importance, one thing comes clear: that even after the media has done the Starr report to death, it is still much in demand. And according to the publishers, more than 600 copies of the book, priced at Rs 75 each, were sold in the first week itself. Now, that's some business!

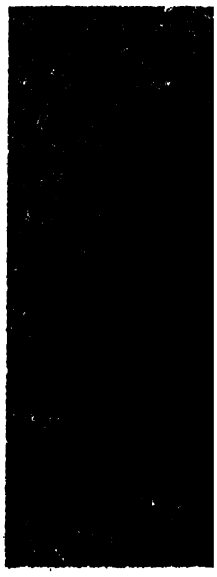
FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Spray some perfumes on t

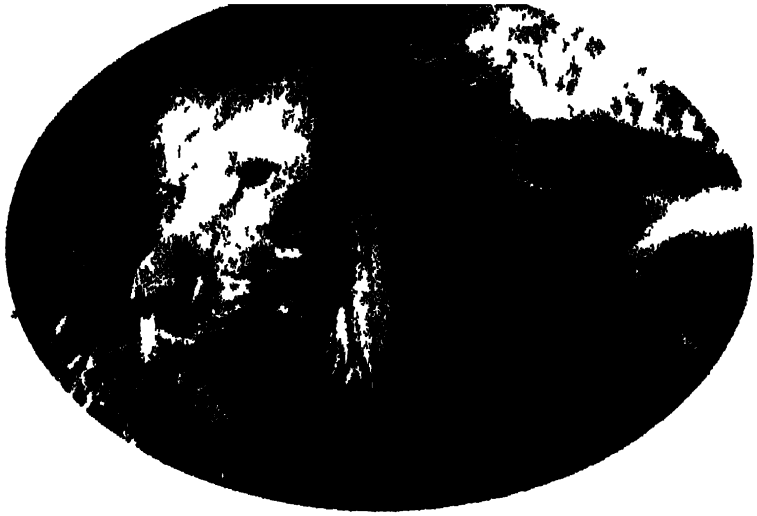
ANIMAL ALLIES

Animal lovers need no longer be the unsung crusaders in their battle to give animals better living rights. The recently constituted Venu Menon Animal Allies Foundation has declared an annual award for any person or organisation which has made substantial contribution in the filed of animal care. Comprising a medal and Rs 25,000 in cash, the prize seeks to honour outstanding contributions in animal welfare every year, starting from next year.

All nominations will be screened by a nine-member jury all bound by their common love for animals. Author Ruskin Bond and former Miss India, Nafisa Joseph, are among those in the panel of judges.

Only one award will be presented this year. A special prize of Rs 5,000 and a medal may also be given to a deserving school/student, subject to the jury's recommendation. The award





Call of the Wild

The first child of the Discovery Communications Incorporation and the BBC Worldwide Limited's alliance has been born. ***Animal Planet***, an hour-long block on DD II is the culmination of the tie-up, earlier this year, between these two giants in the non-fiction entertainment genre.

Though originally conceptualised as a full-fledged channel of its own focussing on the world of animals, their interpersonal relationships, their habits and their passions, ***Animal Planet***, will run two series, ***Amazing Animals*** and ***Zoo Life***, on DD II at 4.30 pm every Saturday for the time being. This exercise is being undertaken to test if such programming has a future in India. In the US, ***Animal Planet*** has been successfully running a separate network for the last two years with a subscription of nearly 42 million in over 22 countries.

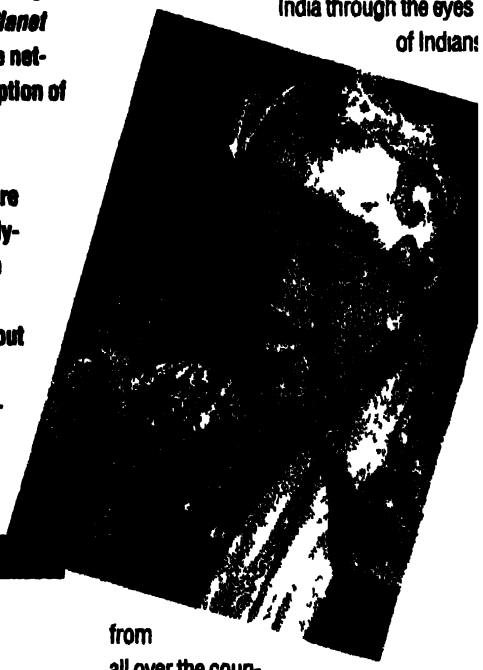
Says Kiran Karnik, managing director, Discovery Communications India, "We are excited that we can provide quality, family-friendly programming which satisfies the viewers' curiosity about animals."

Animal Planet will enlighten viewers about the wonders of the animal kingdom and bring cutting-edge information about animals and how "we share the planet", says Karnik.

• FOR INDIANS, OF INDIANS, BY INDIANS

In a country where language, culture and appearance change every 300 miles, ther is really no dearth of variety After all, in India, fact is often more interesting than fiction. And Amvision, a film production company launched in 1995 by Phalguni Matilal and Sharmeen Abdullah, have hit upon an interesting idea for their new series, aptly titled, *The Indians*

The serial makes an honest attempt to capture some extraordinary Indians to bring to public notice the contribution made by them "*The Indians* aims to highlight the diversity and uniqueness of India through the eyes of Indians



from all over the country," say the serial-makers

The 26-episode serial for DD I will be directed in parts by Aruna Har Prasad Niret and Nikhil Alva Among the pe and places they plan to feature a Sorcar, the renowned magicia men of the Mumbai film ind *doms* of the cremation g Varanasi and Kumbh M The idea is not only t the life of these pe essence of life in live The 30-m both in Engl

hes while they dry. They smell wonderful later



will be given at a ceremony on February 19 next year in Delhi. The nominations will be based on the following

- Respect for animal life This category includes nominations for any citizen of India who has significantly contributed to animal welfare.
- Animal care in zoos: Targeted at both zoo authorities as well as private NGOs, this category will award contributions aimed at eliminating cruelty and alleviating hardships faced by animals held captive in zoos.
- Animal care in schools: This category invites entries in the specific area of abolishing needless dissection of animals in schools, or in the broader realm of inculcating love and respect for animals through innovative educational programmes.

Deserving animal welfare workers can write to the foundation at Post Box no: 3557, New Delhi —110024.

Phone 91-11-2454644

RASOI

The food column



Sweet-Talk

Jiggs Kalra on some Indian desserts that taste and look good

We got tired of being told that Indian desserts may taste wonderful, but have little eye-appeal. Team Rasoi — Pushpesh Pant and Raminder Malhotra — chose to do a complete makeover on the two most popular Indian confections — *gulaab jamun* and *rasmalai*. And with them, we begin a three part series on *meetha* with a festive look and wish you a Happy Deepavali.

Eclaire-e-Hind

INGREDIENTS

- 300 g/11 oz ***Khoya*/milk cake (knead gently)***
- 50g/2oz ***Chhenna* (knead gently)***
- 40g/4 tbs **Flour**
- **A pinch of *meetha* soda/soda bicarbonate**
- 900g/4 cups **Sugar**
- **Cooking oil to deep fry**



The Filling

- 240ml/1 cup **Cream**
- 55g/1/4 cup ***Choonl borha*/castor sugar**
- 60ml/1/4 cup ***Gulab ka sharbat*/rose syrup**

The Chocolate sauce

- 50g/2 oz **Bitter chocolate**
- 20g/4 tsp **Cocoa powder**
- 100g/1/2 cup **Sugar**
- 5g/2½tsp ***Arraroot*/cornflour**
- 50g/1/4 cup **Unsalted butter**
- 15ml/1tbs **Cream**

SERVES: 8
PREPARATION TIME: 1 hour+ cooling time

PREPARATION

- The syrup: Boil the sugar with 540 ml/2¼ cups of water, removing the scum at regular intervals, to obtain syrup of one-string consistency. Remove and keep warm.
- The *Gulaab jamun* mixture: Sift flour and soda bi-carb. Mix *chhenna* with *khoya*, add flour and soda bi-carb, knead gently. Divide into eight equal portions and make 5" long smooth 'cylinders'. Heat oil in a *kadhai*/wok, add the cylinders and deep fry over medium heat until golden brown. Swirl oil with a *pooni*/perforated spoon constantly and without touching the *gulaab jamun* until they come to the surface (this prevents sticking). Remove and immerse immediately in warm syrup. When the syrup comes down to room temperature, refrigerate for 30 minutes. Remove from syrup before assembling.
- The Chocolate sauce: Chop the chocolate into small pieces. Mix cocoa, cornflour and sugar in a bowl. Boil 200ml/3/4 cup + 4 tsp water in a saucepan, add the cocoa mixture and cook over medium heat until it begins to bubble (approx. 5 minutes). Then add the chocolate and the butter, cook until of medium thick (it should not run on the plate) sauce consistency. Remove, pass through a fine mesh strainer and keep aside.
- The Filling: Put cream and sugar in a bowl, place the bowl in an ice bath and whip until soft peaks are formed. Then add rose syrup and stir carefully until incorporated, ensuring that the cream



does not curdle.
● Transfer to a piping bag.

ASSEMBLING

● Slit the cylinders along the length without cutting through to the other side and arrange on top of 8 individual plates. Pipe equal quantities of the rose cream along the length of the slit *gulaab jamun* and tastefully place sweet 'silver' beads on the cream. Spread equal quantities of the chocolate sauce by the side of the *gulaab jamun* and make cream swirls.

Phaldaari Chhenna

INGREDIENTS

- 600 g/1lb 5 oz ***Chhenna****
- 15g Flour
- 1g Baking powder
- 750g/1lb 11oz Sugar

The Whipped cream

- 120ml/1/2 cup Cream
- 30g/2 tbs ***Cheeni barha*/caster sugar**

The Fruit salsa

- 150g/5 oz Mangoes (canned; dice)
- 150g/5 oz ***Arhu*/peaches (canned; dice)**
- 150g/5 oz Assorted berries (frozen; thaw and dice)
- 100g/3 oz ***Khubani*/apricots**
- 100g/3 oz Black grapes (seedless; dice)

The Saffron sauce

- 120 g/1/4 lb ***Rabarhi* (sweet)**
- 120ml/1/2 cup milk (boiled and cooled)
- 1g/2 tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron**

SERVES: 8
PREPARATION TIME: 2:30 HOURS (PLUS TIME TAKEN FOR *CHHENNA*)

PREPARATION

● The *Chhenna*: Knead gently to mash any granule. Sift flour and baking powder together, mix with *chhenna* and knead to make dough. Divide into eight equal portions, make balls and squeeze gently between the palms and flatten to make 'patties' (approx 4" diameter), ensuring that the surface is smooth.
● The Poaching: Boil sugar with 360 ml/1½ cups of water to make thin syrup. Transfer half to a *kadhai*/wok (reserve the rest for preserving), bring to a boil, add the 'patties' and poach over high heat for 8-10 minutes. This is a tricky operation because under no circumstances should the syrup be allowed to settle down. To maintain the consistency, add a little more water, as and when required. The *chhenna* is deemed cooked when the 'patties' rise to the surface. Remove to the reserved syrup and refrigerate.
● The Whipped cream: Put cream and sugar in a bowl, place the bowl in an ice bath and whip until soft peaks are formed. Then add rose syrup and stir carefully until incorporated, ensuring that the cream does not curdle. Transfer to a piping bag.
● The Fruit salsa: Mix all the ingredients and divide into 16 equal portions.
● The Saffron sauce: Crush saffron with a pestle or back of spoon, reserve in 15ml/1tbs of lukewarm water for 5 minutes and then make a paste. Mix *rabarhi* and allow the remaining milk to pass through a fine mesh strainer, into a separate bowl. Then add saffron and stir until fully incorporated.

ASSEMBLING

● Remove the 'patties' from the refrigerator, drain and place on top of e of eight individual plates. Slit al the circumference, leaving an i one side to make deep pockets spread a little whipped crea carefully pack a portion of in the 'pockets'. Arrange a tion as if some of the sals ing out of the 'patty'. Sp quantities of the empty plate and serve. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 16-year-old student. A month ago, I had acne on my skin. I controlled it by using an acne cream but it has left black spots on my face. Please suggest a remedy.

SWAGATA TRIPATHI, BOLPUR

Many times, the strong chemicals present in the anti-pimple and acne creams lead to stretch marks. You will have to treat your skin very gently. I would suggest that you make a *lep* of the following ingredients — ground *masoor dal*, powdered rice, lemon juice, *besan* and milk. Make a thick paste and apply on the face and leave on for 10-15 minutes. Dab with milk and scrub off in rotating movements very gently. Wash face with cold water. If your skin is prone to acne, be careful about your diet as well as your intake of water. Water therapy goes a long way in improving the skin condition and I highly recommend at least 10-12 glasses of water daily to flush out toxins.

I am a 20-year-old man and my problem is that my beard is turning reddish-brown. Please suggest a natural way to darken it without using *henna* or dye.

UTPAL J, NADIA

It will be very difficult for you to darken the beard without *henna* and you will require a lot of patience and regularity in whatever you do. Take 250 grams of *amla* and burn it in an iron vessel till it ashens. Add water and boil for about 20 minutes on slow fire. Apply this water concoction to the beard and let it dry. This is to be done daily for a month for results. Alternatively, is it imperative that you keep a beard? I thought the clean shaven look was in.

I am 19 years old and want to have white and clear eyes, i.e. the region around my eyeballs. Please suggest a way to clean them.

SANJAY, CALCUTTA

There must be a reason as to why your eyes are not clear. Are they tired, do you keep late nights, do you work on the computer? These are some of the questions that you will have to ask yourself. I would suggest that you use an ayurvedic eye drop called I-Tone which is very soothing and available at most chemist shop. I also think that you should visit an optician for professional opinion on this matter.

My hair remains dull even after shampooing. How do I give a natural shine and lustre to my hair? Is it true that one should always wash one's hair with cold water and never with warm and tepid water? Please advise.

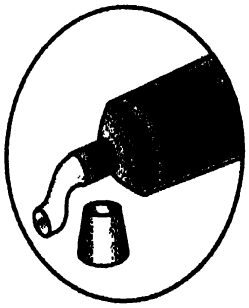
RAHUL KUMAR, BANGALORE

Can you imagine people living in cold climates washing their hair with cold water? We would get a lot of cases of pneumonia, wouldn't we? Firstly, know your hair type and buy a shampoo accordingly. Go for a mild one instead of a harsh, chemical one. Oil your hair at least once a week as the scalp, like our body, needs nourishment. I would suggest that you wash your hair with warm water, be sure that it is not hot and have the last rinse with cold water as this gives the hair body and bounce. It is important to remember that a nutritious diet and a healthy lifestyle gets reflected in both our hair and skin.

I am a 17-year-old girl and my problem is that sometime back, I had contracted a skin

TO REMOVE MAKE-UP FROM DRY SKIN

Use a cream-based make-up remover. Or use almond or olive oil and then massage almond oil and leave it on for an hour



Winter is around the corner and the skin tends to feel stretched. Do not neglect the hands as they tend to age fast. Make a paste of 50 gms each of walnut and almond powder and massage on the hands for about ten minutes. Wash off and see how soft and beautiful they feel



disease in my thighs. Now, I am cured but it has left black patches in this area. For this reason, I cannot wear short skirts. Please help.

SUMITRA SEN, CALCUTTA

Most people who do get skin diseases should consult their doctor who has seen the exact nature of the skin eruptions If they are subsided marks, I would suggest that you mix almonds and coconut oil and give the area a very light massage and then follow this with the following pack — grated potato, lemon juice, the paste of five almonds and milk Apply this on the marks and leave on till dry Then scrub off in rotating movements This must be done daily for at least two weeks for results and then reduced to thrice a week for a month

I am 16 years old and want to know about turban therapy. What purpose does it serve? What are its benefits? Please explain.

M L BOSE, BURDWAN

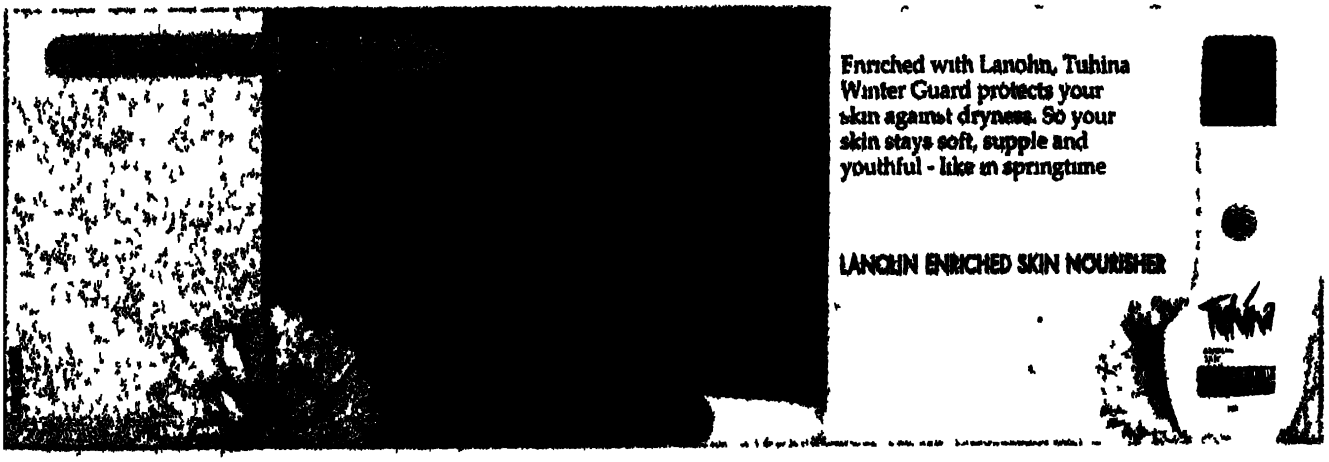
I am glad that you have asked such an interesting question Turban therapy involves steaming one s hair and then wrapping it around one s head like a turban The benefits of this is that when you oil your hair, the steam from the turban allows the oil to penetrate into the pores of the scalp, nourishing the hair from the root and promoting a healthier, thicker growth Most people massage oil on the surface of the scalp which helps to make the hair soft no doubt but the scalp doesn't get adequately nourished

I am a 44-year-old woman and my skin feels extremely dry and stretched especially after an evening of heavy make-up. I usually wash my face with soap and water to remove any trace of make-up and apply moisturising lotion before going to bed. Is this adequate?

ANURADHA KAR, CALCUTTA

It is quite obvious that despite the moisturising lotion, your skin requires extra nourishment, otherwise the skin would not feel stretched and dry The use of soap must also be drying it out further At this age, the skin tends to lose natural moisturising levels and requires extra nourishing internally as well as externally Try to use a cream-based make-up remover or remove the make-up with either almond or olive oil Wipe the make-up off with a moist cotton pad and then massage almond oil well into the skin and leave on for about an hour If you are one who enjoys facials always have a nourishing face treatment rather than a clay or sandalwood pack that will dry out the skin completely

Take a nutritious diet with dry fruits, dairy products vegetables and fruits ■



DESIGN Corner



Furnishing fabrics can change the look of your house, says **Geeta Sharma**

DRESSING UP THE HOME

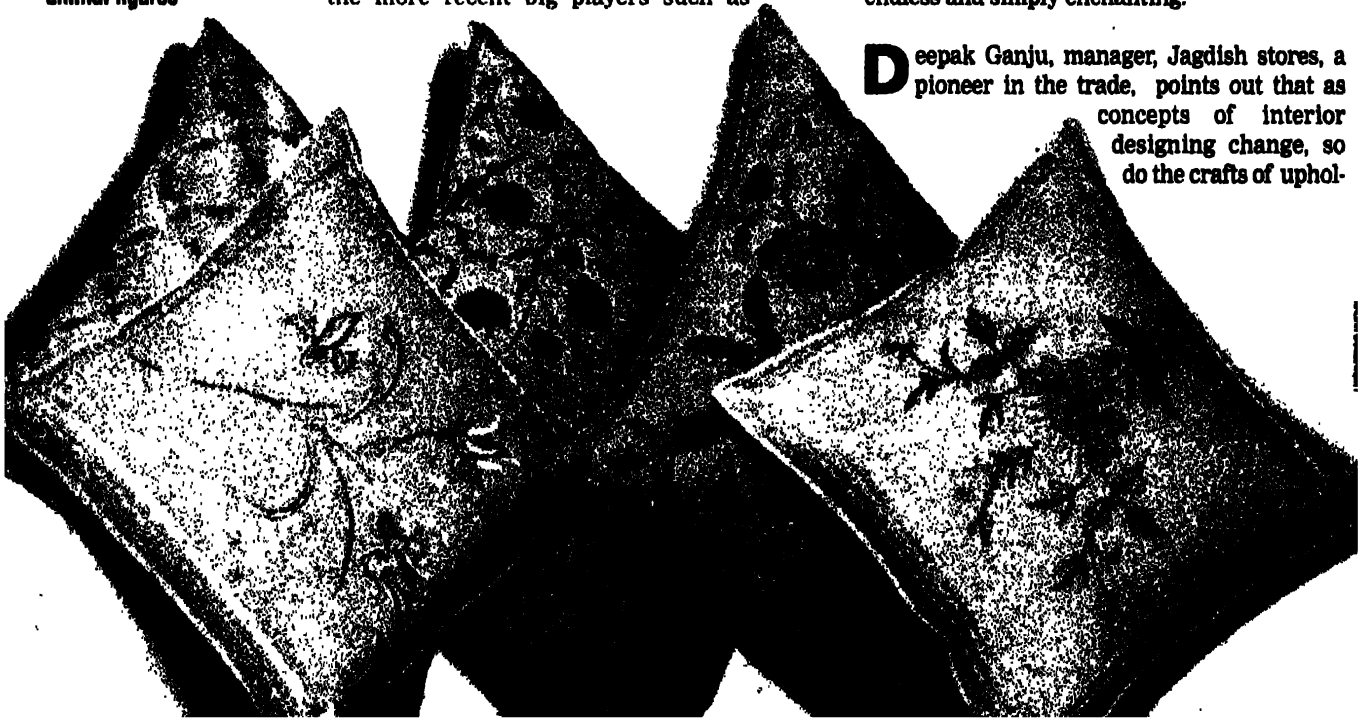
Just the other day, they were like silent by-standers, adding their quite, eloquent elegance to interiors that have traditionally been dominated by trappings like carpets, furniture, beds, wall hangings and the casual bric-a-brac of crystal and antique showpieces. That's no more today. Soft furnishings have changed the very look of interiors, having come a long way from being a mere necessity to sheer luxury.

In fact furnishing fabrics have finally arrived as a designer item. And people in the textile business are trying to woo buyers with an enviable variety of materials and motifs. So be it the traditional brand, Bombay Dyeing, or the more recent big players such as Vimal, and Raymond, all of them have added to their stock, highly specialised ranges. Brands such as Shamken Eden, and Life Style in Mumbai, Parasrampuria in Delhi and Suzlon in Ahmedabad also contribute to the furnishings market, most of the wares being supplied to a large number of retail stores.

The catchword in furnishing fabric design today is paper-transferred prints that bring alive vivid images of the artist's creations. And why only an artists' canvas, almost anything that can be created on paper can be transferred to cloth, preferably, polyester-based fabric which makes an ideal base. So from abstract brush strokes, animal figures, floral patterns and teddy bears to Donald Duck, the range is endless and simply enchanting.

SIMPLY ENCHANTING

From cottons, silks to polyesters, furnishing fabrics now come in a great range and varied designs — flowers, geometric patterns and animal figures



Deepak Ganju, manager, Jagdish stores, a pioneer in the trade, points out that as concepts of interior designing change, so do the crafts of uphol-

stery. He says his company wants to offer the latest in design and technology in furnishing fabrics to its clients. And towards this end, the store has added an exclusive fabric of English origin, Verveas, which has a shiny silken look. Verveas comes in 20 light, medium and dark shades to match the mood of any interior. The inspiring designs have found a big market in offices and hotels.

Along with the usual favourites, they have an ornamental collection of curtain fabrics that include a premium range from Sheer. Used primarily as a double curtain alongside the main curtain, Sheer curtains look attractive in polyester, lace and in the latest range of organzas. Other curtain fabrics include cottons, silk blends and satins offering a host of designs: from zig-zag abstracts to splashy geometric patterns, from the ever-brilliant florals and paisleys to a virtual explosion of primary and pastel shades.

Also trendy and much in demand are colour coordinates, says Ganju. The coordinates are a range of fabrics that use various shades of a colour with varying themes on the furnishing material for the entire room. So, if there is a peach coloured curtain, a lighter shade of the same in different patterns is made to keep up the continuity of the mood. Blues, yellows and reds are the hot favourites in this genre.

Animal motifs and sceneries are also the 'in thing' in bedroom furnishings although floral designs were the traditional favourites in this area.

Charu Sharma, manager, Fab India, a premier store promoting handlooms, points out that people have a set preference for certain designs that tend to live down generations. So while the stripes and checks are preferred for the living and dining areas, softer motifs and prints are left for the bedrooms. Fab India, for instance, offers a large variety of self designs and motifs in bed covers and sheets, table cloth, cushion covers and mats — all in handlooms.

Another discernible preference, in terms of look and design is cotton that has clearly emerged as the new bestseller on the furnishing front. The shiny lure of the polyester viscose has given way to the cool look and basic colour tones and natural feel of cottons. So along with jacquards, jacquard velours, seersucker silks, silk blends, rayons and acrylics are a whole range of cotton fabrics lining the shelves.

"There was a time when only foreigners would go for cottons, be it for furnishings or casuals. Today, everyone, from the traditionally rich to the *nouveau riche*, have a developed a preference for cottons," says Sharma. Committed to promoting cotton handlooms, Fab India is in a sense a trend-setter in promoting and popularising cotton fabrics, that are right out of the looms.

It has left an indelible stamp with designs popularised by its erstwhile designer, Ritin Mojumdar, who has now retired to Santiniketan. With Majumdar having retired, Fab India, no longer employs professional full-time designers. Instead, it prefers to now commission work straight to the weavers, mainly in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Hand-woven fabrics have also gained an edge over other fabrics since their self designs and weaves get accentuated in the light. And the leader here too is the cotton weave, more so the blended cottons. To increase their durability and to add a muted sheen to cotton, different possibilities are being explored. Seasons, a furnishings boutique in Delhi, has a large variety of mercerized cotton or Egyptian cotton that is quite popular abroad. The yarn of the cotton is treated with a caustic alkali, to lend it some sheen. Booklay is another favourite, a thick cotton fabric with a velvety feel in elaborate self-woven designs.



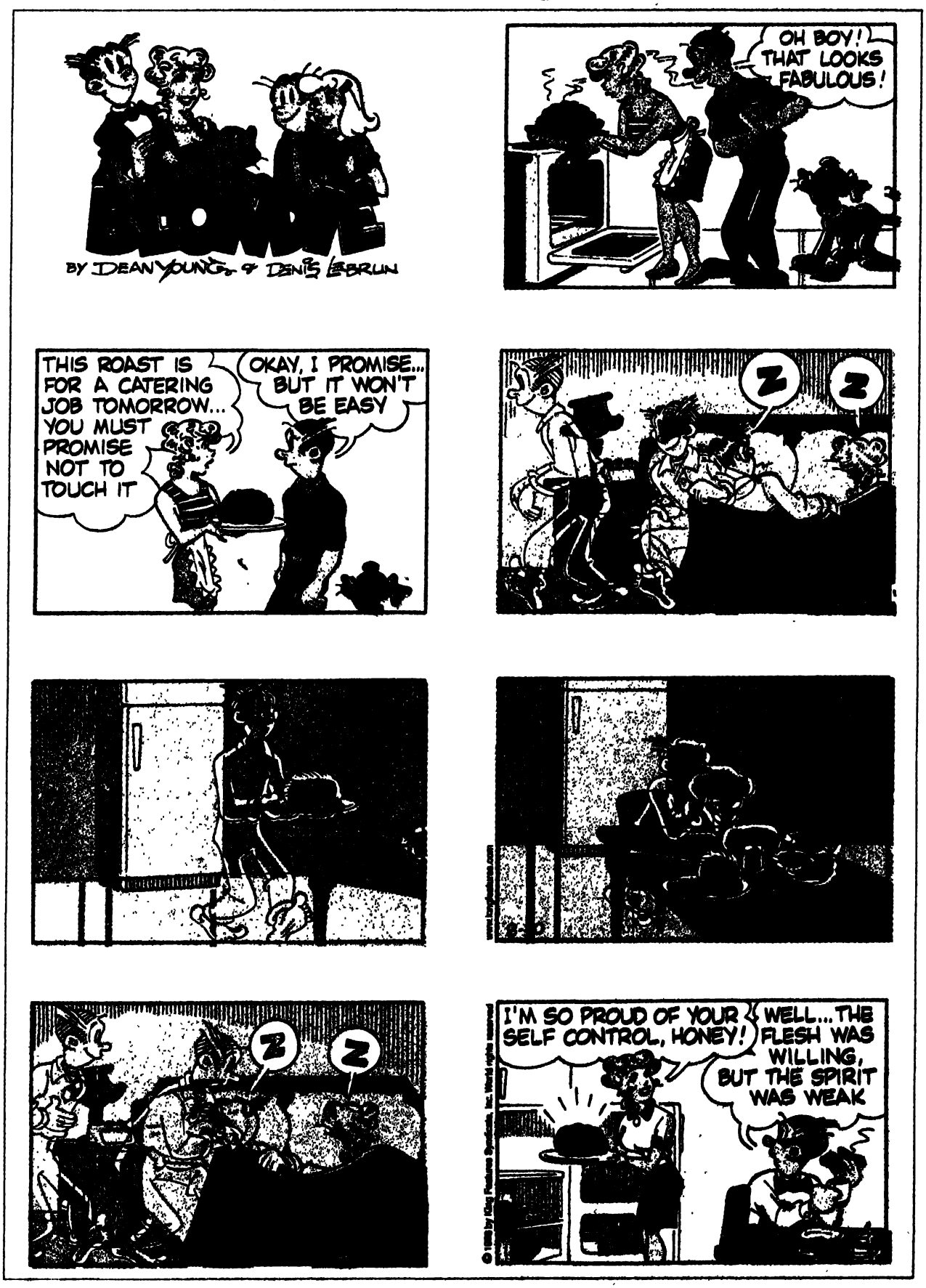
BACK TO HANDLOOM
Fab India offers a large variety of self designs and motifs in bed covers, bed sheets, table cloth, cushion covers and mats — all in handlooms

Ceramic designer Anita Lal's chain of stores, Good Earth, also has a variety of cottons that are treated to acquire a soft, velvety feel. Good Earth, has an elegant range of original designs in woven fabrics. Using the finest combed cotton and quality dyestuff, the fabric is available for both upholstery and drapery.

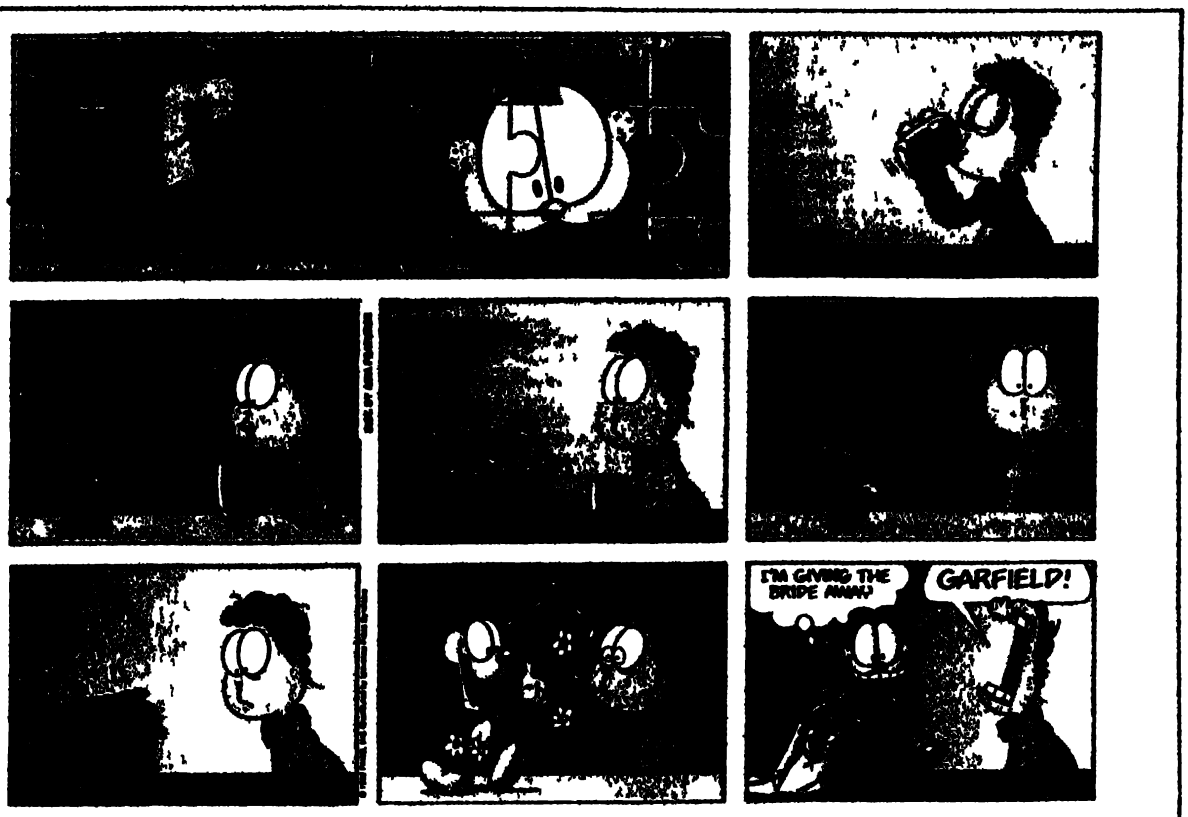
Good Earth also has motif or theme-inspired collections such as Calico, which comprise cheerful floral chintz and vivid prints. Then there is Hibiscus, inspired by mughal motifs, a breathtaking variety of hand-crafted line in shades of white, ecru and silks in jewel tones.

Furnishing fabrics then have really come a long way. With a combination of fine cottons, exotic silks, polyesters and imaginative prints, they can make a home a great visual experience. ■

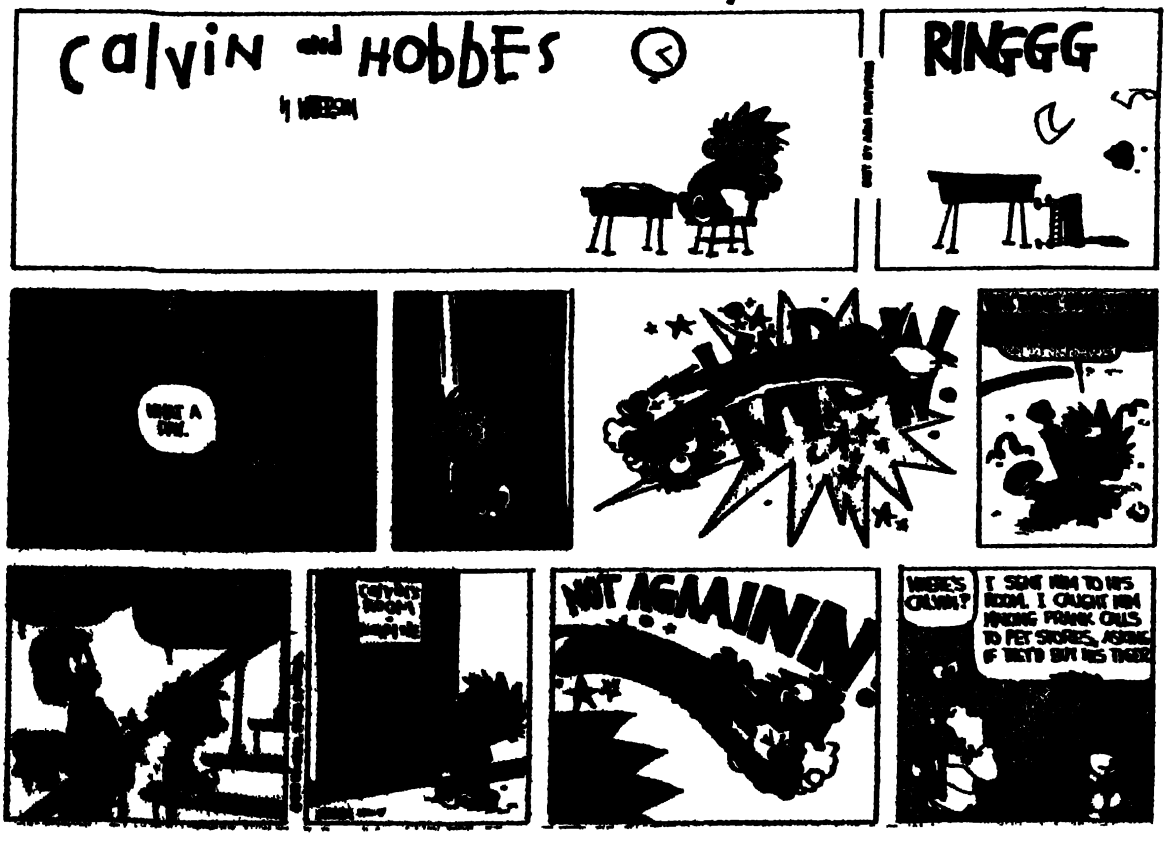
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	1240	3, 5, 7	IC-742	1110	2, 4, 6
IC-741	1240	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC-743	1000	1, 2, 5, 6	IC-744	1220	1, 2, 5, 6
IC 743	1100	3	IC-744	1320	3
IC 743	1400	4, 7	IC-744	1620	4, 7
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1620	2, 4, 6	CD-268	2135	2, 4, 6
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AIZAWL					
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
			IC 202	1405	6
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1, 2, 3, 4	IC-722	1625	1, 2, 3, 5
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W 511	1345	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1800	daily	IC-766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0815	daily
9W-902	0850	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC-855	0755	2, 6
* IC 856	1545	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W 912	2000	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2040	daily
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1101	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1440	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD 257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	1, 3, 5, 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0715	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	9W-612	1240	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC 229	1900	daily	IC-202	1405	6
			IC-202	1625	2, 4, 5
			IC-202	1655	1, 3
9W-611	0950	1, 2, 4, 5, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1345	daily	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1815	1, 3, 5	IC-778	0910	1, 3, 5
IC 769	1315	2, 4, 7	9W-512	2130	daily
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5
IMPHAL					
CD 255	1630	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1000	1, 3, 5
CD 213	0800	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
IC-713	1000	4, 7	IC-714	1430	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
JORHAT					
CD-213	0800	2, 6	CD-213	1300	2, 6
9W-621	0950	3, 5	9W-622	1305	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
KHAJURAHO					
IC-201/203	0715	1, 3	IC-204/202	1655	1, 3
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0645	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0930	daily	9W-201	0910	daily
IC-715	1620	3, 5, 7	IC-716	2155	3, 5, 7
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	1945	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1945	daily	9W-211	1905	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC-769	1815	2, 4, 7	IC-770	0910	2, 4, 6
PATNA					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
CD-412	1715	1, 3, 5, 6	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-286	1010	2, 4, 6, 7
RANCHI					
IC-725	1240	2, 6	IC-725	1635	2, 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VARANASI					
CD-572	1045	2, 4, 7	CD-571	1655	1, 3, 5

FLIGHTS

AIRMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0925	7	KL-475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB-106	1025	2, 6	KB-108	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			

IC-731	1015	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	0855	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1500	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1835	3
BG-088	1250	2, 5	BG-087	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International Terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
BG-082	0815	1	BG-081	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-081	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1650	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC-724	1650	3
BG-084	1845	2	BG-083	1545	2
BG-086	2155	daily	BG-085	2025	daily
[illegible]					
BI-107	2040	2, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
[illegible]					
IC-747	0830	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
[illegible]					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
[illegible]					
SU-536	1100	4	SU-537	0800	4
SU-536	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

[illegible]					
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
KB-105	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-106	0940	2, 6
			KB-106	0925	4
[illegible]					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
[illegible] TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible] YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways



TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Train No.	Time		Train No.	Time
		Howrah		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Delhi-Kalka Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Amritsar Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun Arr: Tues., Wed. & Sat	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep. Mon., Tues., Fri & Sat. Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Rajdhani Express via Gaya. Dep. Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat. Arr. Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep: Wed. & Sun; Arr: Tues. & Sat.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Jodhpur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Guwahati Sanghat Express Dep.: Tues., Wed & Sat; Arr. Tues., Fri & Sat.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Doon Express via Grand Chord	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Utkal Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Delhi Janata Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Amritsar Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kalinga Utkal Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Mithila (Purnia) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Black Diamond Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Coalfield Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Asansol Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Durgapur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Jamalpur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Saalimaar Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Rajyarani Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Shaktipunj (Chapra) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	[illegible]	[illegible]
		Sealdah		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Howrah-Toma Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Darjeeling Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kanchenjunga Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Star Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kalkar Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Jammu-Tawi Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Magadh Steel Express via SBG Loop	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Shaktipunj (Lalgola) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Ganga Sagar (Kantharia) Express Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.	[illegible]	[illegible]

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

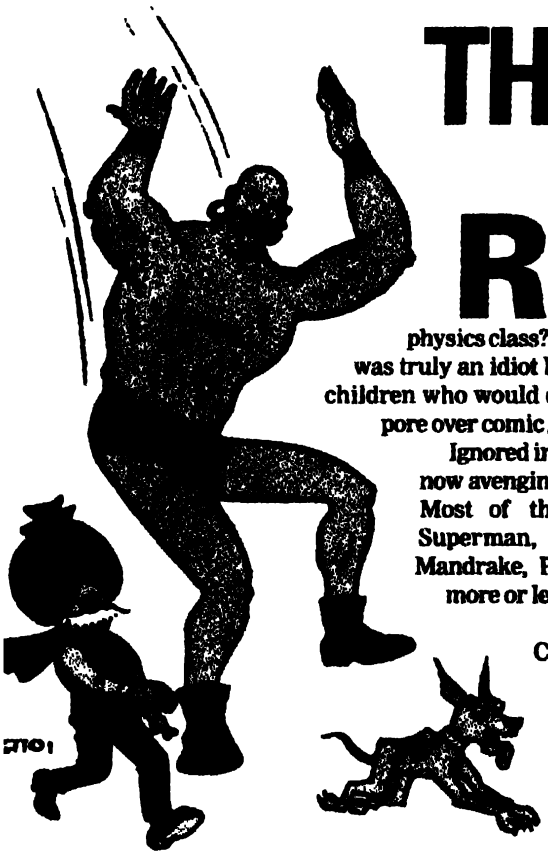
Departure			Arrival	
Train No.	Time		Train No.	Time
		Howrah		
[illegible]	[illegible]	Madras Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep. & Arr.: Except Saturday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Ahmedabad Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Kurla Express via Nagpur	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Tata Steel Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Ranchi Hatia Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Puri Express via Cuttack	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Purulia Express Dep: Except Saturday Arr: Except Sunday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Tirupati Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Azad Hind (Puna) Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr.: Tuesday & Sunday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr. Friday & Monday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	[illegible]	[illegible]

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THE Best

Children may be hooked to Cartoon Network, but the humble comic book still survives, says **Ghazala Wahab**





THE COMIC TOUCH

Remember the time you hid a Phantom comic book inside a textbook during that boring physics class? Television, at that time, was truly an idiot box. It hardly interested children who would either play outdoors or pore over comic books.

Ignored in its infancy, television is now avenging itself on comic books. Most of the old favourites like Superman, Batman, Spiderman, Mandrake, Phantom and so on have more or less disappeared from the market as Indrajal Comics of The Times of India group, which used to publish them in India, shut shop a few years ago. Very few children nowadays are interested in these characters. Only die-hard fans try and snatch a minute or two with a Phantom or a Mandrake through newspaper strips. Most others would much rather watch Cartoon Network.

According to Gulshan Rai, publisher, Diamond Comics, "The downfall happened because of the cable network. In my opinion, 1992 was the peak of comic publishing in India, but soon thereafter sales started declining."

Among the comic books which survived the onslaught of television are the Archies series. The reason probably is that it is contemporary and close to reality. But the problem with Archies is that its reach is limited to English-speaking children. Even then not many understand American humour.

The old guards, like Tin Tin and Asterisk, who still have a shelf life are too up-market. Tin Tin, in any case, has stopped printing new stories. Sudesh Dewan, a bookshop-keeper in New Delhi's Janpath, says, "At Rs 180 and above they are well beyond the means of most children."

Maybe it is poetic justice of sorts that the homespun comics which were ridiculed and not taken seriously earlier are the ones which are selling now. Amar Chitra Katha, which was encouraged by both parents and teachers, remains a perennial favourite despite repeating stories and costing Rs 25.

Says cartoonist Pran, "When I started my career in 1960, no newspaper wanted to give a chance to an Indian comic character despite the fact that the readers would have had more in common with him than Superman."

The first character created by Pran was Daabu in 1960. It was published as a weekly car-

MADHU TREHAN

TV anchor

I remember reading Phantom, Dennis the Menace and Flash Gordon as a child. But my all-time favourite remains Charlie Brown from Peanuts. For me, he embodies the whole philosophy of life. I think he is very Buddhist in his approach, and that is what I like about it



toon strip in *Navbharat Times*, *Milap* and *Children's Sunday Post*. But Daabu could not survive the combined onslaught of the foreign hero. In 1968, Pran came up with Shrimatiji, a middle-class housewife with middle-class aspirations and values. It first appeared in a regional women's magazine *Sarita*, and has since been published in a few vernacular women's magazines. But recognition came to Pran only after Chacha Choudhury was created by him in 1969.

"The character of Chacha Choudhury was inspired by a retired government official I knew. He was a wise old man and people in the neighbourhood used to go to him for advice," says Pran, who later went on to create five more characters including such successful ones as Pinki, Billu, Channi Chachi and Raman, which was was released by none other than Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the Eighties. "I took a great risk by creating Chacha Choudhury," says Pran. "It was the antithesis of the foreign comic characters of that time. Here was an old, short and bald man against the glamorous, muscular western heroes. His only weapon was his brain."

But Chacha Choudhury could not survive only on brains. Bowing to market pressure, Pran had to create Sabu, an extra-terrestrial from Jupiter who became Choudhury's companion, a few years later. Pran laments the fact that despite all this, English newspapers have still not accepted any of his characters.

As far as publisher Rai is concerned, comic book sales have picked up tremendously over the last six months. "The craze of cable television is gradually decreasing," he says. "I think, credit for that should be given to the remote control, because now people keep changing channels so frequently that their attention span is reducing. Very few children enjoy the usual TV programmes, they prefer Cartoon Network and it has rekindled interest in comic books also."

Rai has recently procured the rights to publish Superman, Batman and He-man. Diamond comics have a circulation of about five to seven lakhs in a month in nine languages. "Of all the languages," he says, "Hindi and Bengali sell the most. We have about 6,000 regular subscribers."

Encouraged by the rising sale of comics, Rai also launched Comic World, a monthly comic magazine in five Indian languages, about four months back. "In this short span we have managed a circulation of 1,71,000 copies a month. So obviously, the future is bright," he says.

So even as comics make a comeback, their creators continue to languish in darkness. Says Pran, "This is the tragedy of this profession. The character becomes popular but nobody knows about the creator." ■

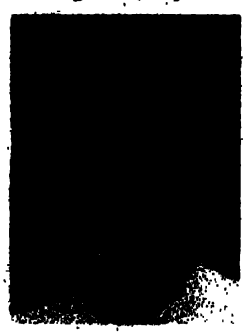
HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN

The Cartoon Network has rekindled interest in comic books among children leading to a boost in their sales

NATWAR SINGH

Politician and author

I haven't read any comic book or strips for the last 40 years. But as a child I remember I was very fond of Laurel and Hardy — that was some 60 years ago. Though not very subtle, I used to find them very funny. Nowadays, I sometimes watch The Simpsons on TV, but that's about it



SUDHIR TAILANG

Cartoonist

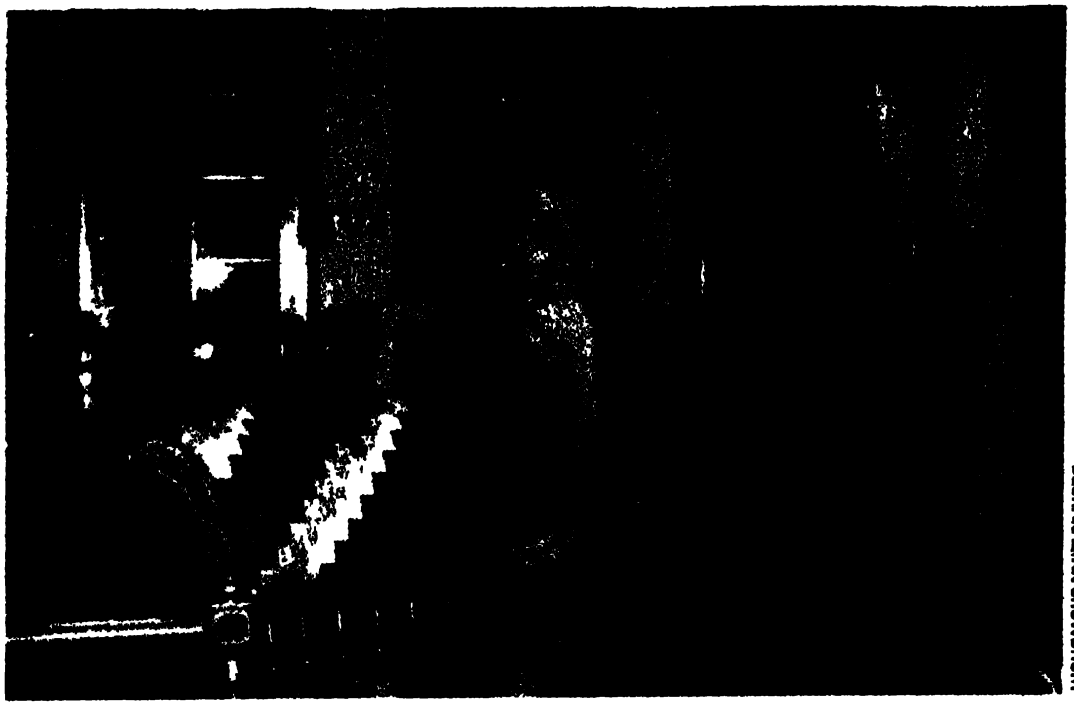
Phantom is my favourite. I grew up on him. Though I don't recall why I liked Phantom more than others, I think it must have been because it had some kind of an Indian flavour. Then, the stories were woven in such a mysterious manner that it appealed to the child in me. Even now, whenever I can, I try and catch up with Phantom in the newspaper strips



MY PERSONAL *Style*

THE INFORMAL TOUCH

That's the way Nalini Singh likes to welcome her guests to her parties



DESHAKALYAN CHOWDHURY

SIMPLE STAPLES

I prefer dishes that are simple and easy to cook, the kind that are staples in villages and towns. And my guests tell me that they find these dishes simply 'wonderful'

What I like to do is to bring together with great warmth and informality, people who know each other or would like to know each other, with just a small floating bloc that may not know everyone there The main thing in such get togethers is the warmth and I just love to be hospitable

Once in a while if a great performer is in town, a singer or a *qawaal*, then generally after dinner, we organise an informal performance So people who are interested stay on

Food is something that I have always liked to have cooked at home and that, too, largely an all Indian fare, with emphasis on Bihari dishes. I prefer items that are simple and easy to cook, the kind that are staples in villages and towns And my guests tell me they find these dishes simply "wonderful "

There is, for instance, the dish called chokha which is simple to cook and tastes great. To prepare it: bake a vegetable, say a brinjal, mash it and then add diced garlic with some green chillies, chopped coriander, a squeeze of lemon and a teaspoon of uncooked mustard oil (sans dropsy!) Then, there are some varieties of meat and chicken made simply with *desi ghee* and sliced onions.

I am a hundred per cent vegetarian but make pretty good non-vegetarian food also, at least, I am told so. My two children are my best critics and tasters for my non-veg cooking. In fact, they have guided me since they were toddlers They have grown up now, and are not here in Delhi any more, but whenever they are in town, I use their tasting skills.

As for beverages, though I don't drink, and only occasionally have a tablespoon or so of wine, I like to serve my guests, whatever they like· wine or hard liquor. There are always of course 'soft' specials: *bael* sherbet (wood apple juice) in summer and for winter, hot wine-based fruity concoctions boiled with cinnamon.

I also include sweet dishes, mainly Indian, in the menu.

I sleep very late. I don't call it a day before one or two at night, so I am never in a hurry to wind up the party. As for starting it, I don't have any fixed time. All my invites list the time of the party or dinner as "8.30 p.m...until you come."

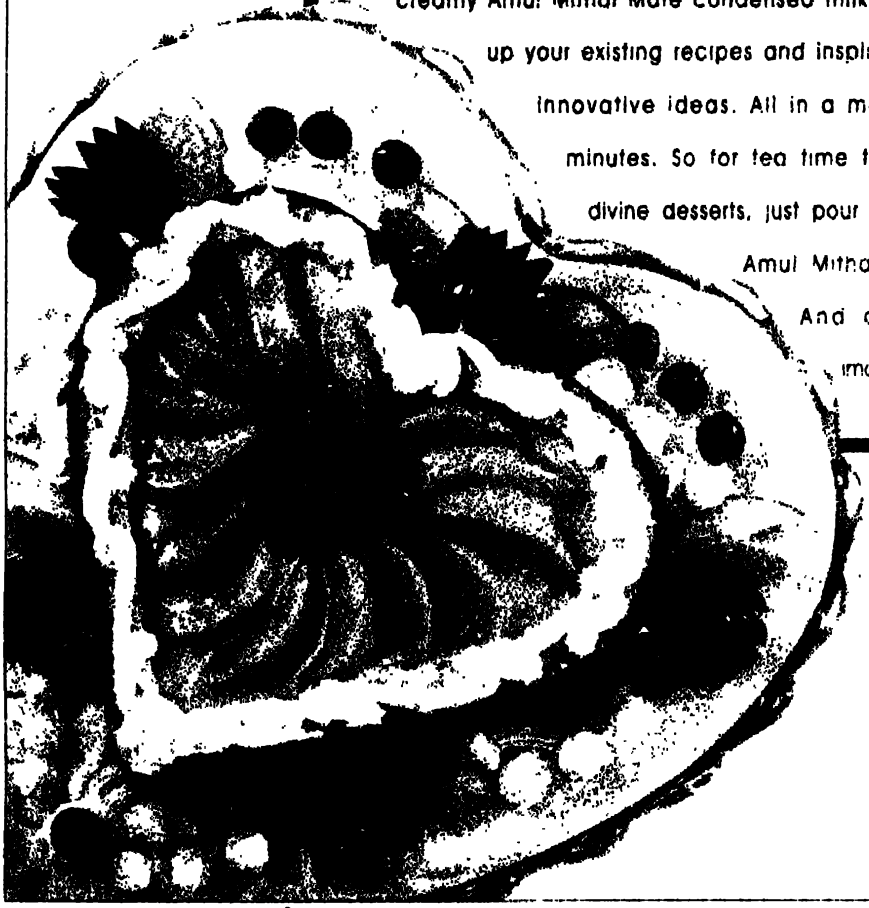
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We don't own bungalows or tea estates or a fleet of cars. Oops... I almost said, "Or diamonds."

I feel so beautiful in my new diamond earrings. Chosen with care by Mum and Dad. What is it about my diamonds that touches my heart so deeply? It must be the sparkle. Or the value. Or the love of those who give it. I feel so proud to be their daughter. It's hard to believe something as magical as diamonds doesn't cost the earth. All of which adds up to make me the proud owner of the most precious thing.



DE BEERS

A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

WRITE IN



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FACE TO FACE

When it comes to showbiz, glamour and beauty, it makes sense to take a peek behind the stage and discover the face behind the 'Face' ('Cosmetic Changes', September 27). Make-up artists are an indispensable part of the film industry. It's true that there are less of the likes of Pandit Balkar who has perfected the art of make-up. But some of the upcoming lot of style gurus do possess what it takes to be a good make-up artist — a feel for the faces!

NALINI KUMAR, CALCUTTA

PANCAKE POWER

The cover story on make-up artists was skin deep in its approach to the new breed of make-up artists.We would have liked to know more about the Hollywood men belonging to the same profession. Also the men from the South, especially those involved with Kamal Hasan's make-up in movies like *Hindusthani* and *Chachi 420* should have been discussed.

Achala Vasudeva, Bokaro

Congratulations for a very funky and different looking cover. But since your subject was so very visual, it definitely deserved more pictures. For instance, a stage-by-stage physical metamorphosis of a plain Jane to a more glamorous person would have been a great study of the power of pancake.

Ratri Sen Gupta Calcutta

HAVING A BLAST

I felt sorry when I read about the mellowed nightlife of Mumbai in 'The Best' column on the city's nightspots. There used to be a time when the night was young, and all who were so willing, could party the night away with his/her friends. The ruling political party could do greater service to the city if it concentrated on more basic issues like water, housing and the rising living costs rather than banning nightspots and pubs.

Swaraj Kulkarni, Durgapur

BATHING BEAUTIES

Thanks to your article on bathroom fittings ('Shower to Shower', September 27) , we now have several options to liven up our bathrooms. It would be really nice to see a bathroom which will have it all—tiles, tubs, sinks and closets. But going by the middleclass budget and space constraints, most of us would end up admiring the ones on your pages.

Shubhro Biswas, Calcutta

COVER PHOTOGRAPH : Rajesh Kumar

graphiti ★ 8 November 1998

4 MAVERICK MESSIAH T. Subbarami Reddy is a man of many parts

10 DESIGN CORNER Even a drink tastes better when you're at the right bar

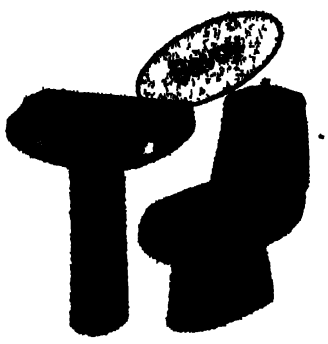
13 SMALL TALK Is Delhi the new glamour capital of India? **22** CLOSE ENCOUNTER Hari Prasad Chaurasia has miles to go before he sleeps **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE Gaurav Ghei appreciates no-fuss entertaining

The idea behind exclusive bathrooms

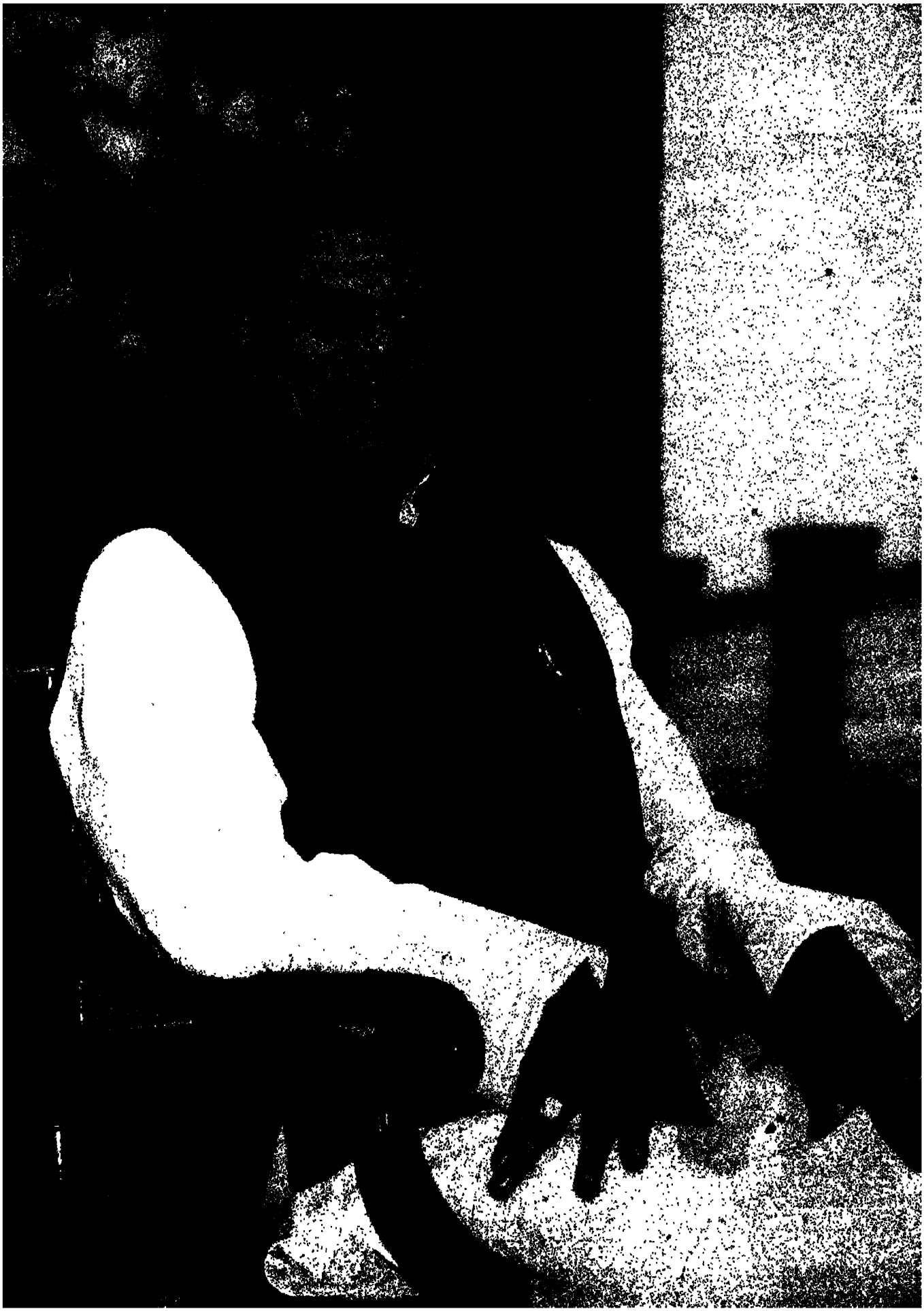


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Maverick Messiah

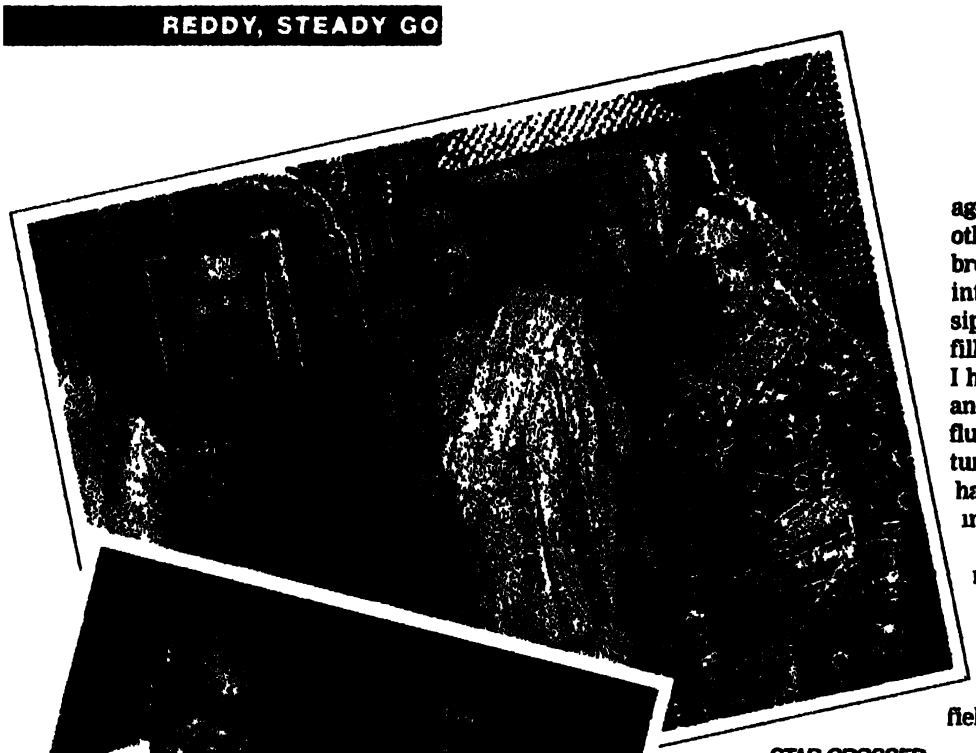
T. Subbarami Reddy is a politician, a philanthropist, a film maker and an egotist. SAMITA BHATIA meets the man of many parts

The table is laid for two. One set gleams softly as solid silver is wont to do, while on the other, gaudy flowers are frozen in melmoware. Dr T. Subbarami Reddy notes that he has an extra guest at his table; the photographer has just walked in. Brisk instructions are shot out in Telugu to a ready-to-please staff member fluttering nervously at hand. In a jiffy a third plate is zipped out. More of melmoware.

Heaping a generous portion of *sambaar-chawal* onto his silver *thali,* Reddy, the Lok Sabha member from Visakhapatnam, says, "I'm a determined man and don't waste time — whether I'm eating a meal or taking decisions."

Which is perhaps why the meeting includes lunch, so he can wrap up the odd interview and get on with the other important tasks of the day. There's much to be done before he jets off to Visakhapatnam in the evening.

As he demolishes the liquidy mish-mash, he notes that you are toying with your food. Insisting that you give the *sabzi* a try he admonishes, "This is probably the most authentic Andhra meal you'll get in the city." And the hottest, too, you mutter under your breath. As if on cue, Reddy pops a dangerous looking red pepper into his mouth.







STAR CROSSED

Reddy is as comfortable in Parliament as in film bashes. He is seen here (from top) with Jayaprada on the sets of *Swami Vivekananda*; with PM A.B. Vajpayee; with Boney Kapoor, Sridevi and Sitaram Kesri

Even as you wonder how he man ages to devour the deadly peppers lik others would munch salted nuts, h breaks into your rumination with a introduction of himself. In-betwee sips of whey from a silver tumbler h fills you in, "Over the last two decade I have been known as a philanthropis and promoter of arts. My life is a con fluence of diverse fields – politics, cul ture, business and spirituality. And have been successful in making a mar in each of these dimensions."

How does he manage to perform s many different roles? He shrugs non chalantly, and adds, a trifle bombas tically, "It's a rare phenomenon a it's impossible for a human being t diversify into so many differen fields."

Modest, he's not. But then, you did n't expect him to be either. For while you waited for Reddy to make an appearance at the appointed hour, his obliging personal assistant had updated you on the "great man". Saheb was at Parliament House but had sent his aide back home to ensure that the scribe did n't leave without meeting him.

In what was obviously an oft-repeated eulogy, the assistant said almost reverentially, "Dr Reddy is a very famous man in Andhra Pradesh." Perhaps to add weight to the statement he heaved a mammoth publication, *India Matters*, on to the centre table. Flicking through the pages of the glossy featuring the who's who of India, he opened the dog-eared double-spread featuring Reddy.

Continuing with the hard sell, he reached out to pluck brochures from several piles stacked on a side-table. Glossy 'profiles' that were choc-a-bloc with a kaleidoscope of images capturing a beaming Reddy with political heavyweights.

There he was shaking hands with Rajiv Gandhi, making a presentation to Sonia Gandhi or sharing a joke with Deve Gowda. Turn the page and he was receiving the Swarna Kamal award for his film *Bhagvad Gita* from Dr Shankar Dayal Sharma while others showed him addressing public meetings. There was

> "I guess I'm more in the limelight because my parties are glamorised by the presence of film stars"



RAJESH KUMAR

Reddy with his family and Reddy with every film star worth mentioning.

But the images that kept repeating themselves were of a bare-chested Reddy, surrounded by *sadhus*, in different stages of *puja*. There were shots of him standing deity-like while the laity queued up to touch his feet.

"He is a very spiritual man," his aide added helpfully, "and today he awoke at 3 am to perform *puja*." So you are not surprised when, over lunch, the man himself tells you that he frequently meditates for 14 hours at a stretch. He explains magnanimously, "Through *sadhna* we must generate energy within ourselves which can subsequently be put to use for the welfare of society."

His religiosity may get the better of him at most times, but evenings of hectic socialising figure generously on the agenda. Like his big budget multi-starrers, his mega bashes in the capital too are liberally sprinkled with celebrated film personalities.

Reddy is as comfortable in filmi circles as he is in the portals of Parliament House. As a matter of fact, most of the filmi parties that the capital witnesses come courtesy Reddy. Shabana Azmi, Karisma Kapoor, Anil Kapoor, Jayaprada, Boney and Sridevi have often added high drama to a well-attended bash. As proof he passes you large albums and bundles of photographs that freeze Delhi's power brokers as they shake hands with celluloid stars.

He says a trifle defiantly, "I love to socialise. And a party is a common platform for people from different walks of life to mingle. I guess I'm more in the limelight because my parties are glamorised by the presence of film stars."

He likes to carry the glamour — or flashiness if you will — to his home as well. His residence, 1 Banjara Hills, on home turf in Hyderabad, reflects the Bohemian spirit of a man who revels in opulence. The ambience is uncluttered despite the curios and artifacts that vie for attention. The mansion-like home is a psychedelic blend of Italian marble, extravagant fabrics, wall-size mirrors and paintings. Speaking of his eclectic taste, each room exudes a different ambience.

His bungalow in the heart of the capital, too, has been given a face lift. Far from being a humdrum government accommodation with peeling walls and the smell of damp, the house is meticulously tended to. Manicured lawns are complete with trellises while the interiors are done up in plush furniture, thick carpets, velvet curtains and huge mirrors. "The MCD provided just the bricks, the rest has been redone by me," he confirms proudly.

As he flashes a beatific smile for the camera, shifting postures obligingly, several strings of large *rudraksha* beads clash woodenly around his neck. Does he keep them on all the time? Always, he says, reverentially touching a string to his eyes. For the *rudraksha*, he informs you, comes from Lord Shiva's third eye and has been responsible for generating tremendous energy within him.

This energy, he says, has been responsible for making him "the most successful businessman of Andhra Pradesh". Reddy manages to squeeze in much else into his persona and successfully juggles various roles. He's a politician with a fair fan following, is a much-loved philanthropist in his home state, a film-maker ("films are only a hobby"), industrialist and an ascetic with a mission.

It was this same energy that made him a forceful student leader in college. His desire to lead an active public life was no secret, though after his graduation he paused to think. Hailing from an agricultural family in Andhra, he wanted to make a mark in a different field — industry or business. "I decided that it would be only after I had become self-sufficient and resourceful that I would step into an active public life," he recalls.

Opportunity knocked and Reddy had the chance to participate in the con-



REDDY-MADE
Reddy's Banjara Hills mansion in Hyderabad reflects the Bohemian spirit of the owner — a man who loves to revel in opulence



struction of the world's largest mason ry project, the Nagarjunasagar Dam in Andhra Pradesh

"I was only 23 years old and was awarded a gold medal by the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, for my out standing performance in the construc tion of the dam," he recalls Then he flips through the omnipresent promo material and he points to a relevant photograph of the gold medal, that is

He'd tasted success early in life and firmly stuck his fingers into various pies And there are pictures to testify to each success TSR Towers promoted by him in Hyderabad speaks of a huge con struction business Successful cinema halls, Maheswari and Parameshwari, hark to his filmi career So too pictures of a grinning Reddy with the cast of his productions, *Chandni* and *Lamhe*

He may well be recognised as an industrialist and film maker but Reddy says that his followers know him best for his "philanthropic bent of mind" So, too, for his contribution towards the promotion of culture, for his encour agement to upcoming artists and, of course, his religious fervour He says thoughtfully, "As an industrialist I am a capitalist but in my sincerity, dedica tion and affection for the poor people, I'm a socialist"

More photographs are passed around — Reddy giving away wheel chairs to the physically challenged and others of him listening attentively to the woes of the downtrodden. He fills in, "Poor women in my constituency can turn to me even to pay for their *mangal sutras*"

He liberally allocates funds for the education of rural women, for building temples, churches and mosques. Six hundred Subbarami Reddy youth clubs serve in the state through the Subbarami Reddy Kala Peetham and the Subbarami Reddy Seva Peetham for providing help to the needy.

"I have nurtured the Visakhapatnam constituency in various fields ever since I stepped into business," he says and adds, "and having achieved so much I was ready for politics."

Reddy made tentative forays into politics when Rajiv Gandhi was Prime

> "I feel that I am where I am incidentally and accidentally and not because of any greatness on my part"



Minister. It was then that several leaders in the state had advised the PM to take Reddy into the Congress fold "as they felt that I was a very popular man," he recalls.

Pegged to contest the general elections in 1989, Reddy had to abandon his political aspirations since the ticket had to be given to Uma Gajapathi Raju to beef up women representation in Parliament. Instead, Reddy was made chairperson of the prestigious Tirumala Tirupati Devesthanam (TTD) Board.

He got his break in politics in 1996 when he won the elections with a margin of 7,000 votes. He recalls, "As an MP, I came across as a man who could deliver. " And he wasn't surprised when in 1998 he beat his closest rival by 70,000 votes.

In keeping with his philosophy, his agenda in politics is obvious -- to be useful to society. He feels that being a Member of Parliament has given him a foothold to achieve much more for the community.

He elaborates. "In a personal capacity, I can help my people in small ways. But I can't achieve what the government can — like giving housing or providing an infrastructure development fund for villages," he explains

Firmly ensconced in politics, Reddy has meticulously gone about the task of transforming his constituency into a novel project by splitting it into 14 areas. Each area falls under the ambit of an official who keeps Reddy updated on the problems of the people.

He likes to flaunt his blemish-free careergraph. "I'm well placed and don't hanker after wealth so I can afford to be honest," he says bluntly.

In a nutshell, then what is his politics? "The fervour of nationalism," he says firmly.

He carries this passion to the film world as well. Nation building, he believes, can also be achieved through cinema. And films are a medium that can bring divinity close to even the uninitiated. Thus, his productions, the *Bhagvad Gita*, and his more recent "mission", *Swami Vivekananda*.

Such films may not bring in money but are his "humble contribution" to the youth of India. "The present generation is desperate for an ideal and I thought that there could be no better ideal than Swami Vivekananda." A film that had roped in a glittering cast nevertheless. Bollywood stars Mithun Chakraborty, Hema Malini, Raakhee, Jayaprada, Tanuja, Meenakshi Seshadri, Debashree Roy, Shashi Kapoor, Shammi Kapoor were some who were happy to play minuscule roles in the film.

Do films and politics mix then? "Glamour and commitment are two very different aspects of a person. Unfortunately we find that most film stars in Parliament House today are not cut out for the job at hand." Glamour, he says, comes to naught if it is not supplemented with a commitment to the people.

To convince you of his active participation on the floor of the House, he hands over a bundle of cyclostyled sheets listing the issues he'd taken up during the last session. That was when he'd raised 153 questions and had been "complimented by Sonia Gandhi for the great job done".

A few hours in his company and you're not surprised that he's often labelled as an egotist and publicity hound. Express your thoughts and he retorts, stung, "Communicating the good work that you have done in the fields of art, culture or in Parliament House does not mean that you are publicity hungry."

For at the end of the day, nothing, he says, belongs to him. "I have ambition in life but no fascination," he adds somewhat philosophically, "I want everything in life but nothing is mine; I feel that I'm where I am incidentally and accidentally and not because of any greatness on my part."

You know what they say about greatness, don't you? Some people are born to it, others achieve it, and yet others end up having it thrust on them. Reddy, however, belongs to different category altogether: he has managed to thrust himself on greatness. ■

DESIGN Corner

When it comes to having a drink, the ambience is the key, says **Ghazala Wahab**

BAR ONE

MOOD SWINGS
Lights, sound effects and seating arrangements can create a mood as much as the staff manning a bar. A lot of care is taken while designing interiors like Someplace Else (below) at The Park, Delhi

Ambience is the key. Whether it is a restaurant, a shop or a bar, ambience is so important that it no longer constitutes packaging. It is part of the substance. And nowhere is this truth more self-evident than in the case of bars.

Few people would want to drink good whiskey sitting on a cane chair. For a drink to click, the lights have to be just right — not as bright as they are in a beauty salon, not as dim as in a seedy joint — the chair has to be perfect — not so soft that you sink in, not so hard that your backside starts hurting. What's more, the distance between the chair and the table has to be just right too, not so close that everytime you want to move your legs you knock over the glass, not so far that you have to double over to reach your drink.

The most popular bars owe their success more to their ambience than to the dexterity with which the bartender mixes cocktails. Says Jayant Juneja, who has The Jazz Bar at Delhi's Maurya Sheraton and Djinns at Hyatt Regency behind him, "Ambience, according to me, is the most important thing about a bar. It acquires even more importance because it is a one-time thing, unlike cocktails with which you can experiment everyday. The ambience can eventually make or break it."

The interesting thing about ambience is that it is created as much by the tangible as it is by the untangible. The lights, the sound effects, the small memorabilia on the walls or counters contribute as much towards creating the mood or ambience as does the staff manning the bar. The Junction Bar at the Taj Bengal, for instance, gains from the soft



muted lighting that is conducive to relaxation (and the odd clandestine encounter) and the comfortable seating that makes people linger on.

Chandu Chaddha who designed the Residency Bar at The Park Royal in New Delhi says, "A bar should be internationally trendy with a soothing atmosphere, exotic and sensuously romantic."

But above all, a bar must click with the guests. Because drinking cannot be enjoyed if you are not comfortable. And for that reason the people running the show at a bar become very important. Agrees Chaddha, "The staff should be friendly yet unobtrusive and the bartender must be extremely knowledgeable about liquor."

But coming back to the tangible elements of a bar, it is very important to have a clear idea about the kind of people you are going to cater to. Says Mohit Gujral who has recently designed two bars for India Habitat Centre, each fundamentally different from the other, "One has to get the fundamental issues sorted out first. What is the market you are going to address? If you are trying to woo all age groups, then you cannot be too jazzy. But if it is only the young crowd you are looking at then you have a lot of scope for experimenting."

Gujral feels that in a hotel bar most people look for areas of privacy. Says Gujral, "The seating should not become too crowded or too noisy." One has to make sure that the interiors are done in materials that are sound absorbent. If you don't want to go for carpets then opt for a wooden floor. Drape the windows with heavy curtains. In short, avoid hard surfaces.

But Juneja differs slightly on this. His concept of a bar is that of a casual place where "the noise level is high, where strangers just stop and say hello to each other, where the dress code is informal." Says he, "There has to be a lot of socialising in the bar, a sense of bonhomie. The old, stuffy, formal look is out."

As are dim lights. What is in nowadays is object lighting. There are areas in the bar which are better lit than others. Laughs Juneja, "I suppose people are not ashamed about frequenting bars unlike older times when most bars looked like bordellos."

Chaddha also emphasises the light factor. "The lighting should be just right. Very bright lights make people uncomfortable, on the other hand too dimly-lit a place will have a sleazy feel. For that reason, even cubicles should be avoided in a bar," he says.

What makes a bar a difficult thing to experiment with is the fact that the basic requirements of a bar remain standard. There has to be a counter with bar stools. The counter must have certain width and height. Behind the counter, shelves have to be of a certain size and visibility. There should be enough space for the bartender to move easily.

But these practical constraints notwithstanding bars are evolving as the concept of theme bars catches on. Says Chaddha, "Theme bars are very popular internationally." But the recurrent theme in most Indian bars in the English pub look. As in Someplace Else, designed by Prakash Mankar at The Park in Calcutta and Delhi. It is so named because according to the hotel "it is not just a pub, neither just a bar, nor just a club, but someplace else."

Even when they don't claim as much, most bars seek to emulate the pub culture of Britain. As Gujral explains, "It gives an old world charm to the place, makes it warm and elegant.

One area where experiments do take place are private bars at homes. Says Chaddha, "Most people put up something like a four-feet-high bar with high bar stools. But according to me a home bar should have a very comfortable feel. People are uncomfortable when they perch on a high stool." He says that one can create a decent bar with the minimum of Rs 20,000 only.

Gujral doesn't believe in the bar concept for homes. According to him you can at best have a bar trolley or a cabinet in your living room. Juneja agrees but adds, "Some people derive pleasure by standing behind a bar counter."

People who want to create something unusual find different ways of doing it. At least, at home, one can let the imagination run wild. However, "People stick to a safe theme," interjects Gujral, "more so, rich people."

But surely, now that there is nothing unofficial about drinking, people can throw caution to the winds and create a dream bar of their own. And remember, ambience is the key. ■



BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL
Most bars look alike — with a counter, bar stools, and shelves. What sets them apart is the theme of the place as in the Residency at the Park Royal, Delhi (above)

SURVIVAL *Strategies*



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

DANGEROUS LIAISONS

Q: Our highly educated son is involved with a divorcee. She was married earlier to an engineer and then a doctor. Both the divorces occurred as a result of her character. My son now seems to have become her third guinea pig. Would you suggest how to stop this marriage, legally? My son refuses to listen to us. Please help.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

I am afraid there is no legal recourse available to you to stop this marriage. The chemistry between two individuals operates in the strangest of ways and if your son is so intensely attracted to this much divorced lady, he is unlikely to listen to your protests.

What you could do is to avoid a confrontation and maintain your lines of communication with your son at all costs. Refrain from constant criticism of your son's girlfriend, as this will polarise the attraction further. Instead, use the subtle power of suggestion to build up some doubts in his mind about the suitability of a shotgun marriage.

In my judgement, human beings do tend to repeat their scripts, and if this lady has failed in two marriages in succession, she is unlikely to make a success of the third one. The best scenario would be if you could delay the marriage issue, in which case, the attraction may play itself out naturally. In any case, human beings are resilient and I am sure, your son will cope with his own life anyway.

MARK(S) OF A CHILD

Q: My problem is my cousin who is 11 years old. He was a brilliant student earlier. But nowadays, he has got into a bad habit in that whenever he has to get his report card signed from home, he either increases his marks and gets it signed or he forges the signature of his parents. Please tell me how to tackle this problem as tactfully as possible.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

Your cousin needs to be reassured that he has the love of his family members whatever his success in examination or in other such external matters. All young children need to go through a period of rebelliousness, and lying about marks is probably something which children around the world do at that age. A dysfunctional family life, with tensions between parents and siblings, only tend to accentuate things.

Since you clearly have a caring and nurturing relationship with your young cousin, I suggest that you take time out to win his trust and faith, explain to him that you believe in his character and capabilities, and as examinations are merely meant to keep track of scholastic progress, he may as well be honest

JUST GOOD FRIENDS

I am an attractive 23-year-old girl. I am a government employee. One of my colleagues is in love with me. He is a handsome, nice and a caring person from a respectable family. I like him as a friend but no more. This person has asked me to marry him. On one side, I do not quite wish to lose this offer, but on the other hand, I just don't feel what one is supposed to feel towards one's life partner. I am unable to decide. Please advise.

G.D, HOWRAH

I think you know in your heart of hearts that this is not the man for you. It is just your social insecurities and your fear about not finding another man. You are still very young, you are highly qualified, you have a secure government job. Why don't you count your blessings and concentrate on your career for the moment? Look at the situation again in two or three years' time and see if you are still drawn to this man then, or if some better candidates for your head and heart have turned up.

and upfront about them.
Every child needs a grown-up he can relate to. I am certain this approach will work.

LOVELORN LASS

Q: I am a 16-year-old girl and have recently joined a co-ed institution after passing my class X. Most of my friends have fallen in love and are enjoying themselves. I see myself standing alone amidst a crowd of lovers. I feel very depressed and even in my house, I am not accorded proper treatment by my mother. Please help.

TANYA, DHANBAD

OUT OF TOUCH

Q: I had an intense relationship with a man of my age. We have had a relationship for many years and we loved each other deeply. However, for the last six months, he has stopped keeping in touch with me. I have tried many times to contact him but there is no reply from his side. I cannot even understand whether he has left me or not. Please tell me how to tackle the problem?

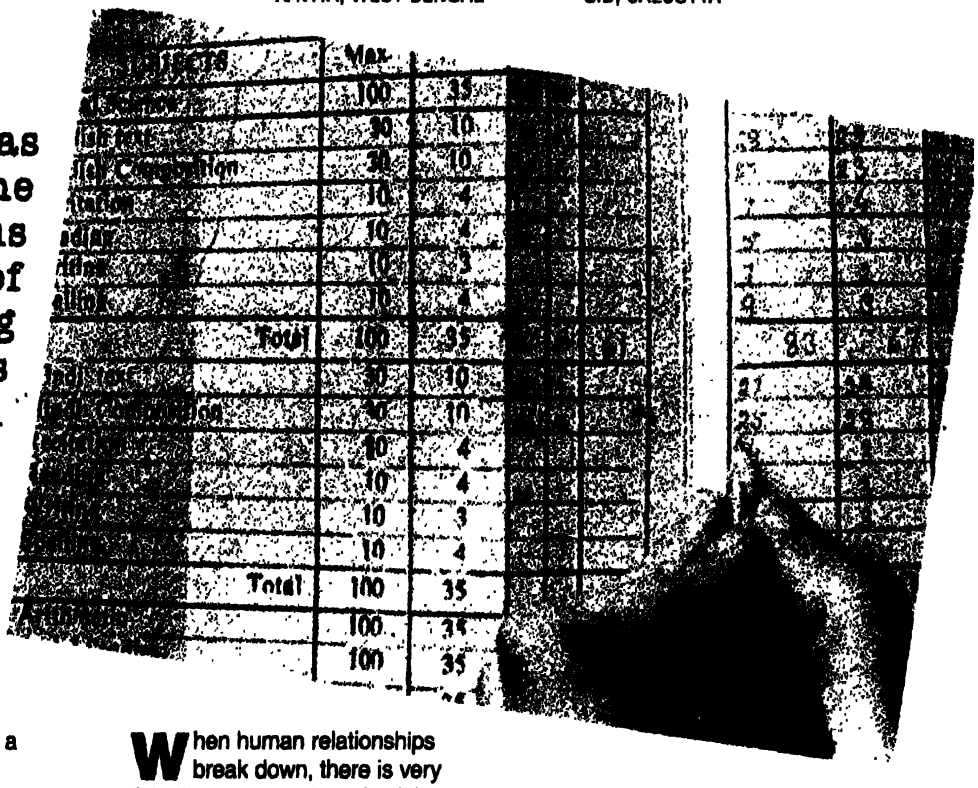
KAVITA, WEST BENGAL

FATHER OF THE BRIDE

Q : I am a 24-year-old man and my girl friend is 23. We love each other very much but whenever I want a commitment from her, she brushes it aside, saying that she wants me as a good friend. Her parents, especially her father, is conservative and knows me as a good friend of his daughter. How do I assuage their feelings for me. Whenever I try to avoid her, she rings me up and breaks down in tears. Please advise.

S.D, CALCUTTA

My cousin has developed the unscrupulous habit of increasing marks in his report card before showing it to his parents



In one's teenage years, love is a game for the carefree and the confidant and a source of heartbreak for the timid and the diffident. Your friends who have hoards of boyfriends are probably sending out happy and joyous signals, whereas your own inhibitions stand in the way of your developing spontaneous friendships.

I would suggest that you work consciously on your self-esteem, concentrate on your looks, your confidence, your grooming. Don't let your mother or anyone else get you down. Feel good about yourself, and above all, don't be afraid to reach out to other people. Watch the magic grow!

When human relationships break down, there is very little that one can do to forcibly revive them. Intense relationships, especially have a way of peaking and then fizzling out.

The way it looks does seem that your boyfriend has fallen out of love with you. The thing to do now is to pick up the pieces and start life again. The hurt from a broken love affair is more often to the ego than to the heart. Be practical about it, and console yourself with other young men and women of your age. Remember, life has an uncanny habit of going on, whatever the circumstances.

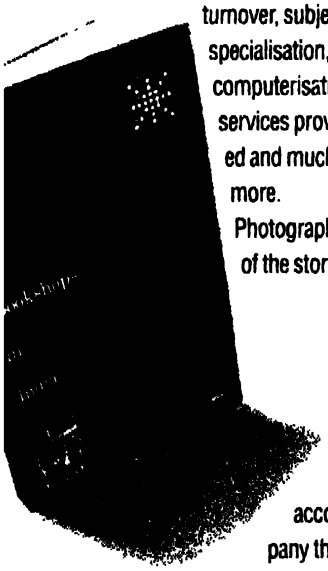
I think your girlfriend is a very wise young lady and I suspect that she is quite fond of you. Why don't you gather up courage and broach the subject of marriage with her parents? There is no reason why she should be hostile towards you, more so if you approach them in a respectful and rational way.

Tell them that you would like to marry their daughter when you complete your education and find a secure job and seek their permission to see her meanwhile. It would be a good idea if you brought up the subject with your parents or family members as well. ■

MIXED Bag

STORE GUIDE

● As part of its 50th anniversary celebrations in India, The British Council recently launched a first of its kind directory titled *'Bookshops in India.'* The directory features a hundred leading bookstores in 17 cities of the country.The listing includes a complete low-down on the shop's covered area, shelf space, number of titles stocked, the approximate number of customers visiting the shop every day, annual turnover, subject specialisation, computerisation, services provided and much more. Photographs of the stores



accompany the details.

Says S. Bhattacharya, editor, "The Indian book-buying public is not aware of the location of bookstores even in their own cities. Besides, armed with the knowledge about what they can expect at the stores, buyers can target their visits better. The directory will also serve as a useful tool for Indian publishers to keep abreast of details on the shops.Besides, our bookstores have never been given international exposure which he hopes will come to them courtesy the directory. While the title generated a lot of interest at the Frankfurt Book Fair earlier this year it is slated to be launched at the London Book Fair in early 1999.

Through a lens

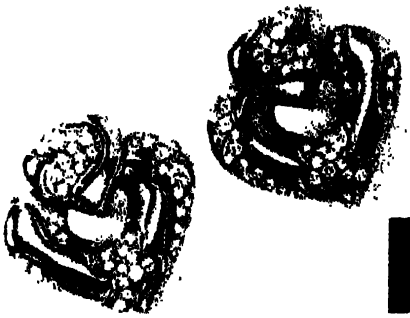


The Sangeet Shyamala Cultural Institute has been propagating cultural education — music, dance and theatre mainly — in Calcutta and Delhi for over three decades. It is now all set to make a foray into the world of art with the inauguration of an art gallery, The Surrendra Paul Art Gallery, in Delhi.

The inaugural exhibition at the gallery will feature some of the better-known names in the world of art. But instead of canvases showcasing evocative works — figurative, abstract or landscapes — the works on show will be insightful photographic impressions by the artists, painters and sculptors.

The participating artists include Anjolie Ela Menon, Anupam Sud, Devraj Dakoji, Gopi Gajwani, Jagmohan Chopra, Jyoti Bhatt, Latika Katt, Rameshwar Broota, and Navjot Altaf. The exhibition, co-sponsored by the Art Indus Gallery and Apeejay Surrendra Group, will be inaugurated by the renowned Odissi exponent, Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra.

FASHION TIP OF THE WEEK: Use a moisturiser with a high U



GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Marina B, the international line of luxurious designer jewellery by Marina Bulgari, was launched in Mumbai recently. The design is brought to India by Finex Distribution Pvt Ltd, Mumbai, distributors of international brands of premium products like Cartier, Corum and Delaneau.

The theme of the evening at the Taj was aptly titled 'Soft Gold', for the decor of the venue, jewellery and gowns worn by the models were co-ordinated to that effect. Finex and Marina Bulgari also hosted an exhibition of the



Sons of the soil

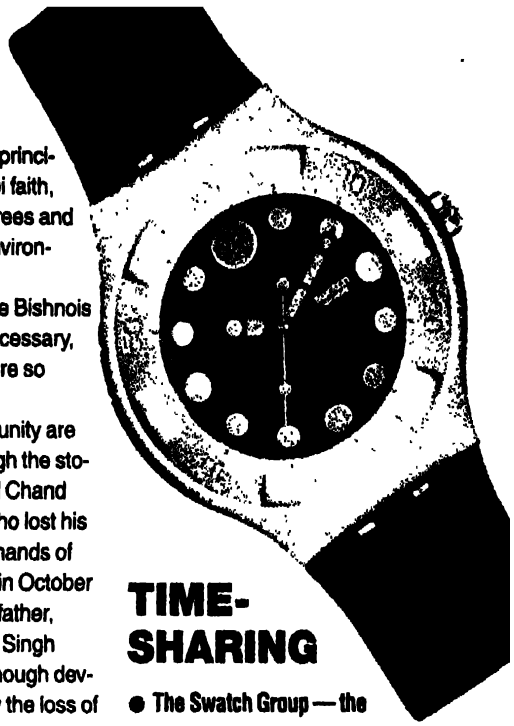
Even as the Salman Khan drama continues over the shooting spree in Bishnoi land, comes *Willing to Sacrifice*, a 25-minute English documentary on a Bishnoi and his community. The film has been produced by Dayakaar Rao and directed by B.V. P. Rao. The documentary reveals the Bishnois' fierce commitment to the environment and could well explain why the killing of the black bucks kicked up such a furore in the community. For, among the 29 principles of life propounded by the Bishnoi faith, two critical ones — not to cut green trees and not to kill animals — pertain to the environment.

The film reinforces the fact that the Bishnois are willing to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, to protect the flora and fauna which are so much a part of their world.

The beliefs and faith of the community are told through the story of Nihal Chand Bishnoi who lost his life at the hands of poachers in October 1996. His father, Hanuman Singh Bishnoi, though devastated by the loss of his young son, nevertheless tells his tale with a touch of pride. For Nihal Chand Bishnoi has become a martyr, a man to be honoured and respected by his community.

Are the shooting stars listening?





TIME-SHARING

● The Swatch Group — the world's largest watch manufacturing company — has announced scholarships and an award for excellence in design studies at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad.

The first of the scholarships will be presented to this year's students at this premier design institute. The winners will have an opportunity to work for a month with Swatch's design team and will gain an insight into how some of the world's most vibrant timepieces are made.

Said Ravi Thakran, regional general manager, South Asia, Swatch Group, "India is a special country for us and we would like to offer it our best. We would like to work with NID in various capacities, by presenting them with our case studies and solutions as well as with the students coming to Switzerland and working with our designers and managers." The company hopes that the colourful designs of Swatch will find expression in the heart of India "peopled as it is with varied cultures and languages."

ctor and bask in the winter sun with a glowing skin

Marina B range of jewellery. On display were an exquisite array of necklaces, chockers, bracelets, earring and watches. Besides 18K yellow gold, Marina Bulgari also works with white, pink and black gold, platinum and silver. The designs to be marketed in India have been so selected so that they go down well with the Indian style of dressing, be it trousers and jackets or sarees and *salwar kameezes*. The designs are sold by appointment to connoisseurs of fine jewellery. "I work with the character of the client," says she. Three ranges were unveiled here: Pardy, Ciao and Medieval, available in yellow and white gold. The Pardy range is priced between Rs 90,000 and Rs 450,000, while the Ciao range starts from Rs 42,000 and scales up to Rs 357,000. The Medieval range starts from Rs 93,000 and goes up to Rs 648,000.





RASOI

The food column



Sweet Somethings

Jiggs Kalra on a date with some exotic Indian desserts

To conclude the Diwali series, Team Rasoi — Pushpesh Pant and Raminder Malhotra are our partners — we bring to you two desserts that featured at our most recent festivals — both at Kandahar, The Oberoi, Mumbai. Badaam ka Halwa during the Festival of West Punjab and Husn-e-Ara at the exotic Awadh Festival.

Husn-e-Ara

INGREDIENTS

The *Rabarhi*
- 1litre/4¼ cups **Milk**
- 3g/1tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 2 drops ***Kewra***

The Bread
- 24 slices **Milk bread (1/4" thick)**
- ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter to deep fry bread**
- 1litre/4¼ cups **Milk**
- .5g/1tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron**

The Syrup
- 400g/14oz ***Sugar***
- 1drop ***Kewra***

The Filling
- 24 **Pineapple rings (canned; dice)**
- 55g/1/4 cup **Sugar**
- 4.5g/1½ tsp ***Daalcheeni*/cinnamon powde**

The Garnish
- 12 **Almonds (blanch, cool, peel and cut into slivers)**
- 12 **Pistachios (blanch, cool, peel and cut into slivers)**
- .5g/1tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron**
- 15ml/1tbs **Milk**
- 12 ***Chandi ka Varq***

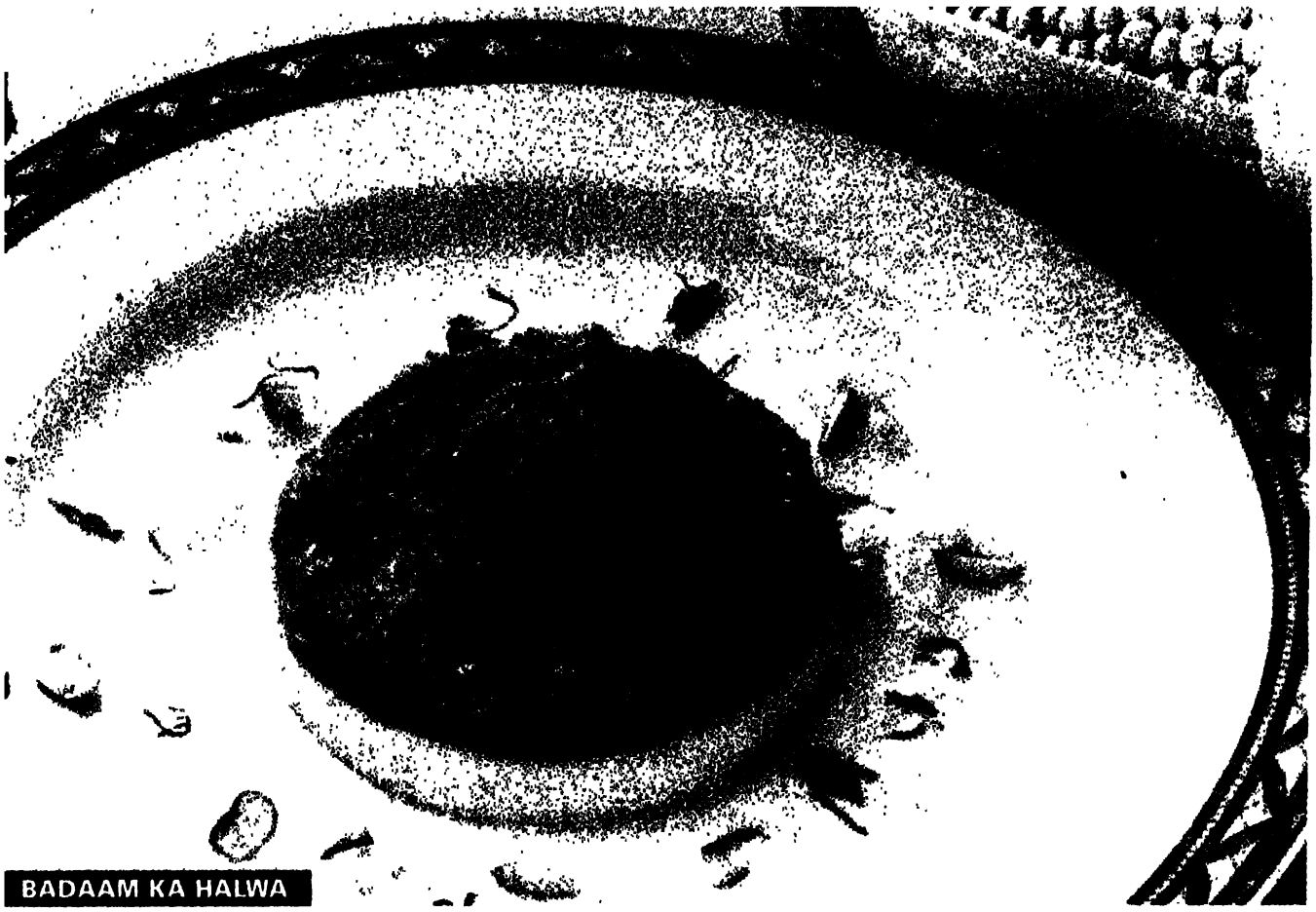
SERVES: 12
PREPARATION TIME: 3:15 HOURS



HUSN-E-ARA

PREPARATION

- The *Rabarhi*: Put milk in a *handi*/pan, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and then cook, stirring constantly, until milk is reduced to 350 ml/1½ cups and acquires a granular consistency. Then pass through a fine mesh sieve into a bowl, add cardamom and *kewra*, mix well and refrigerate. Remove at the time of assembling and divide into twelve equal portions.
- The Bread: Remove the crust and cut into roundels. Heat ghee in a *kadhai*/wok and deep fry the roundels over medium heat until golden brown and crisp. Drain and keep aside.
- The Milk: Break saffron threads



BADAAM KA HALWA

with a pestle. Put milk in a large, flat, thick-bottomed *handi*/pan, add saffron, bring to a boil, remove and keep aside.

● The Syrup: Boil sugar with water (200ml/3/4 cup+4 tsp) to make a syrup of one string consistency, remove scum at regular intervals. Then add the remaining ingredients and stir. Keep warm.

● The Garnish: Crush saffron threads with a pestle or back of a spoon, reserve in lukewarm milk to make a paste and then grind into a paste at the time of cooking.

● The Filling: Put sugar and 45ml/3 tbs of water in a frying pan, add diced pineapple and cinnamon powder, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat and simmer until the liquid is fully absorbed. Remove and divide into 12 equal portions.

● The *Tukhra*: Soak the fried bread in the boiled milk, the roundels placed an inch apart, put the *handi*/pan on heat and simmer until the milk is almost absorbed, turning once, very carefully, with a spatula ensuring that the bread does not break. Then pour the warm syrup and cook over low heat until the syrup is absorbed (approx. 3-4 minutes).

ASSEMBLING

● Carefully remove and arrange one *tukhra* in the middle of each of the 12 individual dessert plates, evenly spread a portion of the stewed pineapple on it, cover with the remaining *tukhra* and evenly spread a portion of *rabarhi* on top. Garnish with nuts, sprinkle saffron, cover with *Chandi ka Varq* and serve warm.

Badaam ka Halwa

INGREDIENTS

- 500g/1lb2oz **Almonds**
- 250g/1¼cup ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 240ml/1 cup **Milk (boiled)**
- 350g/11oz ***Cheeni borha*/castor sugar**
- 1.5g/3tsp ***Zaafraan*/saffron**
- 3g/1tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/Green cardamom powder**
- A few drops **Almond essence**
- 24 **Pistachios (blanch,cool, peel and cut into slivers)**

YIELD: APPROXIMATELY 1 KG/2¼LB
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 10 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The Almonds: Blanch, cool and peel. Remove to a blender and make a coarse paste.

● The Saffron: Crush with a pestle or with the back of a spoon, reserve in 45 ml/3 tbs of lukewarm milk and then grind into a paste at the time of cooking.

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *kadhai*/wok, add almonds and *bhunno*/stir-fry over medium heat until golden. Then add the remaining milk and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove *kadhai*/wok from heat, add sugar and saffron and continue to stir until sugar is fully incorporated. Remove, add cardamom and almond essence, and stir.

TO SERVE

Remove to a silver bowl, garnish with pistachio slivers and serve hot. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I have a lot of hair but it is not manageable. When combed well, it looks smart but becomes unkempt after a few minutes. How can I keep my hair in shape?
PARTHA, CALCUTTA

You must have read about me discussing conditioning and nourishing the hair. Well, that's exactly what your hair is craving for. So how about looking after it? Most people who do have a thick growth of hair, take it for granted that they don't require conditioning and looking after at all, but the fact is they do. Oil your hair with almond and coconut oil mixed together in equal quantities and then apply a pack of the following ingredients like a hair pack: mix in with two eggs—two tablespoons each of *amla* powder, *shikakai* powder, *reetha* powder and powdered fenugreek seeds. This hair pack should be applied from scalp to the ends of the hair and left on for about half an hour before shampooing off normally. You'll soon have not a mop of unmanageable hair but a crown of silk on your head! This should be done at least once a week for results.

I am a 17-year-old boy. My problem is that I have a lot of pimples. At times they increase in number and at times, they are less. I want to get rid of them permanently. Please advise.
RAJAN KUMAR, NADIA

Perhaps, the days the pimples increase are those when you indulge in an erratic lifestyle or you are attacking those forbidden goodies like sweets, colas and fried stuff too often. You may be having late nights and a constipated stomach, for they are, usually, the reasons for acne and pimples. I would suggest that you drink at least 10 to 15 glasses of water daily. Eat lots of green vegetables like spinach, cabbage, *methi*, lettuce etc. These things are all very good for cleaning the system and improving the condition of the skin. Also, keep your skin clean. This is essential for people with pimple problems. The easiest way to reduce excess of oiliness is to put half a teaspoon of powdered camphor in half a litre of rose water and wipe the skin with it. Not only will the skin be toned but the excess greasiness will also be reduced. This can be done several times a day. Along with this, I would suggest that you apply a face pack of fuller's earth, 10 ground cloves and a pinch of camphor. Mix with ice cold water and apply on the face. Wash after it has dried completely. This can be done daily for a month and you will see the difference as the pimples disappear...provided you don't cheat as far as your lifestyle is concerned.

I am an 18-year-old woman and I cannot wear sleeveless tops because of a burn mark on my right shoulder caused by warm water at the age of five. Is there any option other than plastic surgery?
ANTRA, HOWRAH

Most burn marks should ideally be treated as soon as they occur. You can massage the area with coconut oil to which you have added the juice of half a lemon. A regular scrub combined with ozone treatment very often brings back the elasticity to the skin tissue, but this is something that will have to be done daily for at least one month before you can even start seeing the results.

I am a 35-year-old man. I have a dark and oily skin. I play lawn tennis which has made my skin darker. How do I regain my original complexion?
KAWAL SINGH, CALCUTTA

SKIN CLEANSING FOR MEN

It is very important for men and women to know about their skin type in order to select proper cleansing methods. A relaxing facial should ease away the stress and cleanse the skin



For those of you who *henna* regularly, now with winter coming round the corner, oil your hair after rinsing out henna so the naturally drying effect of henna does not come and the colour becomes darker. Happy pampering!



When you perspire, it is inevitable that your skin will become oily. Try and carry a garden spray bottle with you whenever you are going for tennis next. Fill it with rose water and a pinch of camphor and spray the face in between games, whenever you wipe your face. For the tan, you can use fuller's earth, lemon juice and sandalwood powder which makes a very powerful anti-tan pack. When it dries, wash off with fridge cold water and feel your face tingle. Next time, play well and look good, naturally.

I am a 25-year-old man, working in a marketing organisation. After a hectic day, I would like to apply a suitable face wash. I used to apply cleansing milk which had a bad effect on my skin. Please advise a proper cleansing method.

ROHIT DUTTA, BARASAT

Ever heard about different skin types? I personally feel that it's just as important for men to know their skin type as it is for women. Most men shy away from looking after their skin. If there's pollution for women, there is pollution for men, too and the skin undergoes damage with all these external influences. Looking good and well groomed should be an important aspect of every successful executive and entrepreneur today.

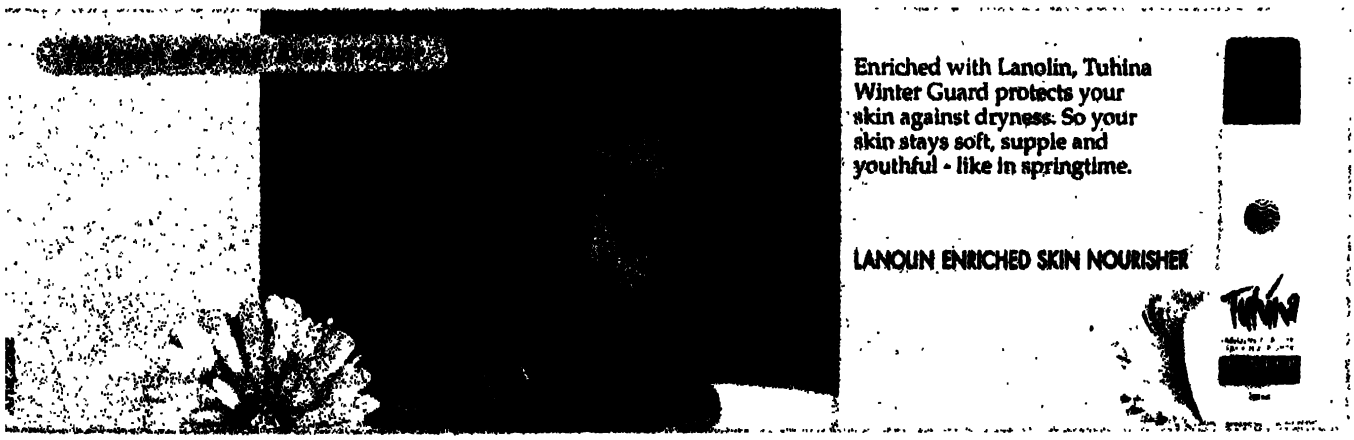
There's nothing quite like a relaxing facial to ease away the stress and cleanse out the skin completely but at home, the best way to cleanse the skin would be to make a natural scrub out of rice powder, almonds, gramflour and lemon juice. Mix the ingredients with milk, if you have a dry skin, and fridge cold water, if you have an oily skin, and scrub the face for about five minutes in a rotating manner. Wash face with cold water and spray with ice cold rose water. Your face will actually feel squeaky clean.

I would like to consult you regarding my one-and-a-half-year-old niece who lives in the US. She has a lot of body hair. What can be done to remove her body hair?

VANDANA IYER, CALCUTTA

Being an Iyer, I would presume you hail from the south of India, widely known for its rich *uptaans* and depilatory scrubs. Many times, young children are born with a thick growth of hair which reduces itself with time. However, if her mother wants to use a daily *uptaan* she can make one at home with the use of gramflour, turmeric, sandalwood powder, lemon juice and fresh cream, make a thick paste like substance and apply it all over the baby and when it dries, scrub it off in rotating movements.

This will not only improve the condition of the skin but will also lessen the hair gradually. But everything, in natural remedies, take time and patience. So be regular for good results.■



Close ENCOUNTER

pipe dreams

Hariprasad Chaurasia has miles to go before he sleeps, says **Geeta Sharma**

He has enthralled millions the world over with the lilting notes flowing from his flute. But public acclaim is not what Hariprasad Chaurasia desires today. What he really wants to do - given the right opportunity - is to give free music lessons to the politicians of today, "who cannot even sing the national anthem properly".

"I am willing to teach politicians and ministers without charging any fee so that they may at least be able to strum the *tanpura* and learn to appreciate *kala*," says Chaurasia, referring to the lack of awareness and appreciation of the performing arts among today's politicians. "You can make out the appreciation level of an audience in the first ten minutes of the concert, in which politicians have the lowest scores."

The flautist who was recently felicitated in the Capital, says the Indian audience has a very casual attitude towards music and *gayaki* (singing). "Often you will find people chatting or strolling around casually. Abroad, the audience comes and sits in pin-drop silence and does not leave till the concert is over, and then claps and even gives you a standing ovation," he says.

Chaurasia has had a couple of milestones to celebrate recently. First, there was his 60th birthday. And to coincide with it was the the launch of *Krishnadhwani* a four-volume edition of his concert recordings by Music Today, which included the *ragas* created by Chaurasia — *Mangaldhwani*, a morning composition, and *Haripriya*, a late evening composition.

It has been a long journey for Hari Prasad Chaurasia from the days when he would sneak out of his house and take flute lessons on the sly to escape his father's wrath. His father, who wanted Hari to become a wrestler like him, did not appreciate his interest in music. But the boy persevered and today, if he is not teaching his art to a handful of students, Chaurasia is busy giving concerts in packed halls right from Cuttack to Copenhagen.

Chaurasia's appeal — and the packed halls his concerts draw — lies not just in his flawless renderings, but also in the fact that his compositions have the feel of light music to them. His renderings of the *ragas* are more romantic than the classical ideal and have helped him reach a wide audience.

About the oft-levelled charge that he has made several compromises as a classical musician, Chaurasia retorts, "Compromises have to be made because with them, you are reaching a far bigger audience, specially the youth who are learning to give *maan* to this music." To drive his point home, the maestro points out that in the days of yore, classical music performances would have a crowd of 50 or 100 people who would not give *daad* but make faces at you.

Chaurasia talks as enthusiastically about his role as a music composer for films. One half of the Shiv-Hari duo (the other being santoor maestro Shiv Kumar Sharma) Chaurasia first composed the background score for the Avatar Kaul film, *27 Down*. After the Shiv-Hari team was formed, the duo has given music to such hits as *Silsila*, *Chandini*, *Lamhe*, *Parampara*, *Sahiba* and more recently, *Darr*.

Amitabh Bachchan sang *Rang barse bhigee chunar wali*, while Sridevi crooned, *Mere hathon mein nau nau churian hai* to their tunes. And these songs, says Chaurasia with a glint of pride, have remained the most popular in weddings till today.

"Compromises have to be made because with them, you reach a bigger audience, specially the youth"

The point was not to be a music direc-
or but to reach out to the mass, which
did," he says.

Chaurasia's experiments with
usic stretch much beyond the realm
f filmdom. In the 1970s, the maestro
erformed in the US with such all-time
reats as George Harrison, Tom Scott,
stad Allah Rakha Khan and Pandit
avi Shankar. The enormous crowds
iat came to listen to them got Pandit
haurasia hooked on to jazz and fusion
iusic. His best-selling albums, *Eternity*
nd *Call of the Valley*, were the result of
iat experiment.

haurasia's affair with the flute
was not an easy or smooth one.
fter learning the instrument on the
y, while mastering the basics of
restling to please his father, young
haurasia summed up the courage to
ve up wrestling when he got a job as a
iusician with All India Radio in
uttack, his home town.

Music became his mission when he
ime under the tutelage of Pandit
hola Nath. Later, seeing his dedica-
on and commitment, the illustrious
nnapurna Devi, daughter of
lauddin Khan of the Maihar
harana, took Chaurasia under her
ing. "It took me three years to con-
nce my *guru maa* of my devotion and
dication to music, while everyone
se raised eyebrows on my insistence
i learning from her," the maestro
calls. The *shiksha* he gained from
nnapurna Devi gave a new meaning
Chaurasia's life and inspired a
rong urge to pass on the legacy.

But, says Chaurasia, "I have had
ry disheartening experiences too,
id was at a time without any guid-
ice." He recalls the time he came to
elhi in 1958 and went to Panna Lal
ose to learn some techniques from
m. Instead, he was told by one of
ose's *shishyas*, Deven Murdeshwar,
at he was busy and could not spare
ne for him. "I was so misguided, that
one point I thought I would go back
pahalwani," he says.

Perhaps, it is because of such expe-
ences that Chaurasia wants to start a
urukul of his own and revive the
icient *guru-shishya parampara*
rough a residential school of music
r talented poor children. The dream
hool, which he plans to call
indavan is coming up on an 800 sq
etre plot in Mumbai, given to him by
the late Rajiv Gandhi.

It will be a place where the students will live and learn music. Visiting musicians would come to the *gurukul* to sing or play for them, and also see their performances. "I have realised that there is a certain decadence in the quality of music now being produced. Both students and teachers have taken to shortcuts that have made their music bereft of any spiritual quality." Given that he will not charge a single paisa as tuition fee from his pupils, — "Does a mother charge her children for the food she feeds them?" — Chaurasia's Vrindavan will indeed be one of its kind. An organisation in San Fransisco, US, has also gifted Chaurasia land.

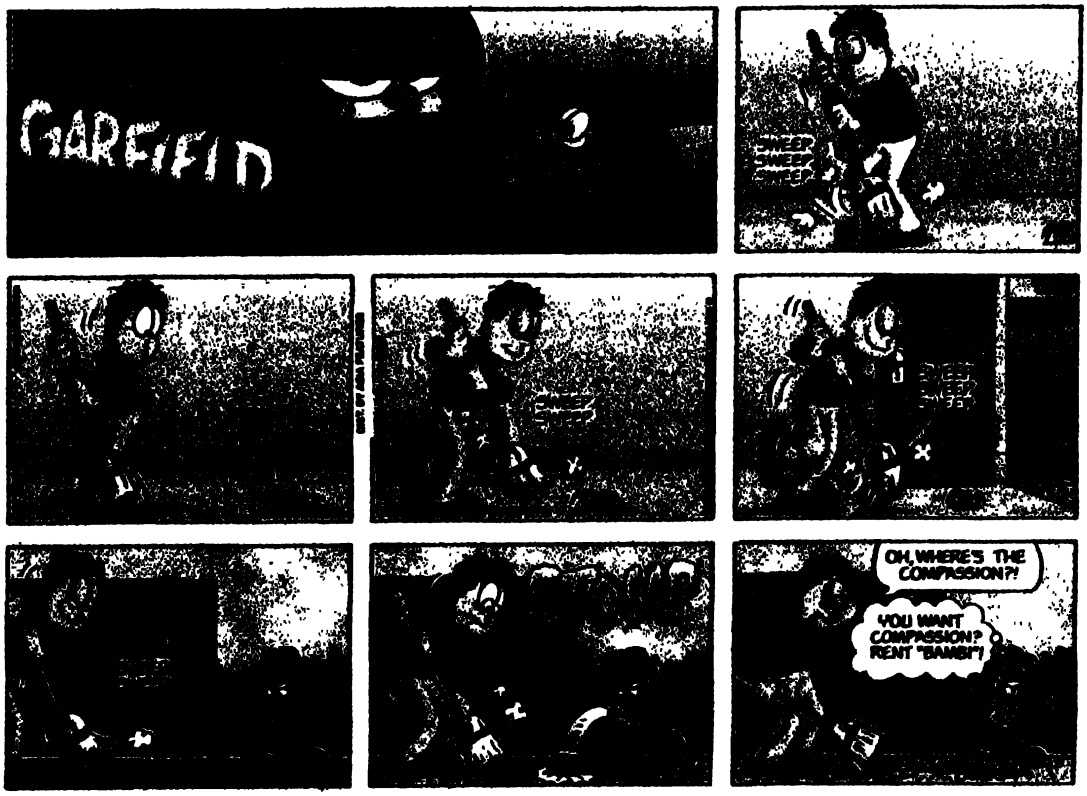
So, Chaurasia is all set to make music wherever he goes. As for those uncouth politicians — well, they'll just have to wait, won't they? ■



BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press one week in advance readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	1240	3	IC 742	1110	2 4 6
IC 811	1100	1	IC 742	1500	1
IC 813	1400	1 5 6	IC 744	1120	1 2 6
IC 743	XL		IC 744	1320	3
IC 744	1400	4 7	IC 744	1620	4 7
AHMEDABAD					
9W 6	620	4 6	CD 68	213	2 4 6
IC 715	1220	3	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
AIZAWL					
2 1	15	2 3 4 5 6	IC 20	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1615	1 3
			IC 702	1440	6
BAGDOGRA					
7	1320	1 3	IC	1625	2 3 5
BANGALORE					
6 7	0615	daily	C 72	1150	daily
9W 511	1345	daily	9W 512	2130	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
C 806	15	4 6	C 805	092	2 4 6
6 7	1415	1 3	IC 78	1410	1 3 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
C 406	715	2 4 6	IC 365	0975	2 4 6
F	600	daily	C 766	2105	daily
DELHI					
IC 703	0700	daily	9W 901	0815	daily
9W 502	0854	daily	9W 68	0920	1
402	1 0	daily	* C 855	55	2 6
* IC 856	1 4	6	IC 401	0855	daily
9W 1	1100	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2040	daily
1 4	17	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
DIBRUGARH					
C	100	1 3 5 7	IC 702	1440	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 15	1100	3	CD-215	1455	3 5
CD 57	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
C 703	0700	4 6	IC 704	1640	3 5 7
			IC 230	1310	daily
IC 201	0 15	1 2 3 4 5 6	9W-612	1240	1 2 4 6 7
IC 221	1000	daily	IC 202	1405	6
			IC 202	1625	2 4 5
			IC 202	1655	1 3
9W 511	0950	1 2 4 6 7	IC 714	1430	4 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 5 1	345	daily	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
IC 777	1815	1 3 5	IC 778	0910	1 3 5
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	9W 512	2130	daily
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD 571	1655	1 3 5
IMPHAL					
CD-256	0630	1 3 5	CD-256	1000	1 3 5
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
IC 713	1000	4 7	IC 714	1430	4 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
JAIPUR					
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	IC 716	2155	3 5 7
JORHAT					
CD 213	0900	2 6	CD-213	1300	2 6
9W 621	0950	3 5	9W-622	1305	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
LILABARI					
IC 201/203	0715	1 3	IC 204/202	1655	1 3
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0645	daily	IC 677	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0910	daily
IC 715	1620	3 5 7	C 716	2155	3 5 7
AI 305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W 212	1945	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 213	1945	daily	9W 211	1905	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI 681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1815	2 4 7	IC 770	0910	2 4 6
PATNA					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
CD-412	1715	1 3 5 6	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2 4 6 7	CD 286	1010	2 4 6 7
RANCHI					
IC 725	1240	2 6	IC 725	1635	2 6
SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2 4 6	CD 254	0820	2 4 6
CD-255	0550	1 3 5	CD 256	1020	1 3 5
TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
VISAKHAPATNAM					
CD 572	1045	2 4 7	CD-571	1655	1 3 5

FLIGHTS — INTERNATIONAL

AMMAN					
RJ 185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 476	0325	7	KL 475	0130	7
BANGKOK					
KB 105	1025	2 6	KB-106	0915	2 3 7
KB 105	1010	4			
IC 731	1015	4 7	TG-313	1235	1 3 6
IC 855	0855	2, 6	IC 732	1610	4 7
TG 314	1350	1 3 6	IC 856	1500	2 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
BG-008	1250	2 5	BG-007	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal**

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-082	0815	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG-082	1150	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	BG-091	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1620	1, 2, 4	IC-724	1850	1, 2, 4
IC-723	1430	6	IC-724	1700	6
IC-723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG-084	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-086	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI-107	2040	3, 6	BI-108	0730	4, 7
KATHMANDU					
IC-747	0930	1, 2, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1255	1, 2, 3, 5, 6
RA-214	1525	2, 6	RA-213	1425	2, 6
LONDON					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1500	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
MOSCOW					
SU-538	1100	4	SU 537	0930	4
SU-538	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB-106	1000	2, 3, 7	KB-105	0940	2, 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI-108	0830	4, 7	BI-107	1940	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1450	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7
TOKYO					
AI-306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1000	3, 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
Up	Time		Time	Dn
2311	10-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
2355	10-10	Amritsar Mail	7-30	2356
2381	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-10	2382
2381	9-10	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi	16-15	2382
		Dep: Wed., Thurs. & Sun		
		Arr: Tues., Wed & Sat		
2303	9-10	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna	16-15	2304
		Dep: Mon., Tues., Fri. & Sat		
		Arr: Mon., Thurs., Fri. & Sun		
2309	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya	10-45	2310
		Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri. & Sat.		
		Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. & Sun.		
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna	12-00	2306
		Dep: Wed. & Sun.; Arr: Tues. & Sat.		
2307	20-10	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2319	8-45	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2320
2371	22-20	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Wkly	11-45	2372
		Dep: Tues., Fri. & Sat.; Arr: Tues., Wed., & Sat		
3045	23-40	Guwahati Samajhauti Express	08-00	3046
		Dep.: Tues., Wed & Sat; Arr.: Tues., Fri & Sat		
2559	23-55	Gorakhpur Express Dep. & Arr.: Thursday	11-35	2560
2547	23-30	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express	4-15	2548
		Dep. & Arr: Sun., Mon., Wed. & Fri.		
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3057	7-45	Utkal Express via Main Line	19-30	3058
3005	21-30	Delhi Janata Express	7-30	3006
3053	16-45	Amritsar Express	10-00	3054
3007	19-15	Kalingadum Express	10-00	3008
3051	16-45	Mithila (Rasaul) Express	10-00	3052
3055	16-45	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	10-00	3056
3011	9-45	Black Diamond Express	20-30	3012
3013	7-45	Coalfield Express	18-30	3014
3015	7-45	Asansol Express	18-30	3016
3017	7-45	Danapur Express	18-30	3018
3019	7-45	Jamalpur Express	18-30	3020
3021	7-45	Santhaldeen Express	18-30	3022
3023	7-45	Rampurhat Express	18-30	3024
2137	7-45	Chambal (Gwalior) Express	7-30	1302
		Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs.; Arr: Mon., Thurs. & Fri.		
3025	7-45	Shipra (Indore) Express	7-30	3026
		Dep: Wed., Sat. & Sun.; Arr: Sun., Wed. & Sat.		
3027	7-45	Shalimar (Cheapest) Express	7-30	3028
2137	7-45	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri.; Arr: Tues.	7-30	1302

Sealdah

3045	23-40	Toofan-Toran Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Darjeeling Mail	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Kanchenjunga Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Gour Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Holiday Special (New Jalpaiguri) Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Dep.: Mon. & Fri.; Arr.: Wed. & Sun.	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Kuliner Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Jammu-Tawi Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	08-00	3046
3045	23-40	Ganga Sagar (Darbhanga) Express	08-00	3046
		Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Howrah	Arrival	
Up	Time		Time	Dn
8048	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	8084
8002	17-30	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	8001
8008	11-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-20	8007
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express	21-00	2022
		Dep & Arr Except Saturday		
8004	20-45	Ahmedabad Express	5-45	8003
8030	19-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	18-00	8029
8042	15-15	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-30	2842
8046	7-00	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	18-40	2704
8018	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8044	8-00	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8016	8-00	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-00	8015
8010	12-05	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-30	8018
8032	6-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	6-20	8031
8038	14-00	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	6-00	8037
8052	7-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-15	8051
7004	7-45	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	16-15	7003
8017	19-40	Purulia Express	12-30	8018
		Dep: Except Saturday		
		Arr: Except Sunday		
2101	23-00	Tirupati Express	4-00	2102
8060	16-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express	5-15	8059
		Dep & Arr.: Tuesday & Sunday		
2121	17-00	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	10-30	2122
2123	11-00	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-45	2124
8048	19-45	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	09-30	8047
8027	11-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only	13-45	8027
8029	19-40	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	13-45	8030
8024	09-30	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	09-30	8024
8028	23-45	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arri. Friday & Monday	13-45	8029
8026	09-30	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	09-30	8026
8025	13-45	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	8025

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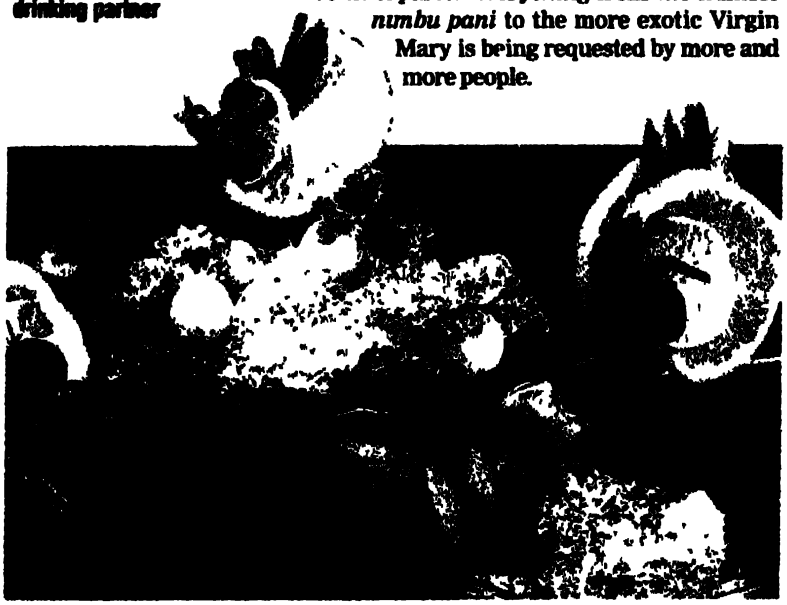


RASHBEHARI DAS

Mocktails can be just as interesting—and tasty—as alcoholic drinks. Sudipta Basu and Roshni Sengupta drink up

CHEERS!
Today, it is quite fashionable to ask for something non-alcoholic, as even a fruit punch will put you on par with your drinking partner

It didn't take long for the simple Ganga Jamuna – a sweet lime and orange juice swirl – shaken up at roadside juice stalls to travel into the smoky portals of pubs and straight laced restaurants. But that's not the only 'tame' drink that does brisk business in both five-star hotels and their middle-market counterparts. Everything from the humble *nimbu pani* to the more exotic Virgin Mary is being requested by more and more people.



Gone are the days when people felt embarrassed about asking for 'something soft' at cocktail parties. Today it is quite fashionable to ask for something non-alcoholic, content in the knowledge that a fruity punch served in a fluted glass will put you on par with your drinking partner. The mocktail is here to stay, and has become a friend in need to many a party animal.

The taste of this pudding lies in the packaging, with clever names and pretty colours lashing about in tall, frosty glasses. Never mind if hard drinkers feel that mocktails are for the fence-sitting drinker. As a pub crawler in Calcutta says, "After all, a regular beer guzzler will never come to the bar for a fruit punch."

Shatbhi Basu, drink consultant and columnist opines, "The restaurants want to rev up their sales and what better way to do this than to make an attempt to put the non-drinkers at ease." And if cocktails are a western import, the mocktail, she says, is very *desi*, as people in the west are quite unperturbed about asking for a simple soft drink when they want to steer clear of alcohol.

SAJID KHAN

TV personality

I don't drink any alcohol. I cannot say much about mocktails either as I have never tried one in my life. But I love fruit punches



DEV ANAND

Filmmaker

It used to be whiskey in the good old days. But over the years, a glass of beer has been the closest I came to an alcoholic drink. These days, however, I have even given that up for fresh lime and soda. I am high on life anyway!



Rakesh Krishna, a student at Mumbai's KC College, is set to do a course in Food and Beverage after he is through with college. For the moment, he is teaching himself to appreciate a good drink. And since he can't handle a stiff drink, what better way than to start with a creamy punch. "My favourite is the lychee and orange punch. I tried it with a dash of vodka last week, but it was too strong. But I will graduate to headier stuff," says Rakesh.

Most people, however, are content to nurse less heady, but tangy stuff. Says Vinay Mahendroo, manager Tanjore, Taj Mumbai, "The mocktail need not make way for stronger stuff, for over the years, there have been so many innovations that this genre of drink has almost carved out a niche for itself. So much so, that the mixes are hardly routine anymore. Bartenders are open to specific choices of the clients."

An old-timer of the Calcutta club circuit would agree with this. "The concept of mocktails started when ladies or gentlemen did not want an alcoholic drink and at the same time did not wish to be left out of the fun. But over the years, mocktails have acquired a snob value. There is also satisfaction in that one is being health-conscious amidst the other 'alcoholics'."

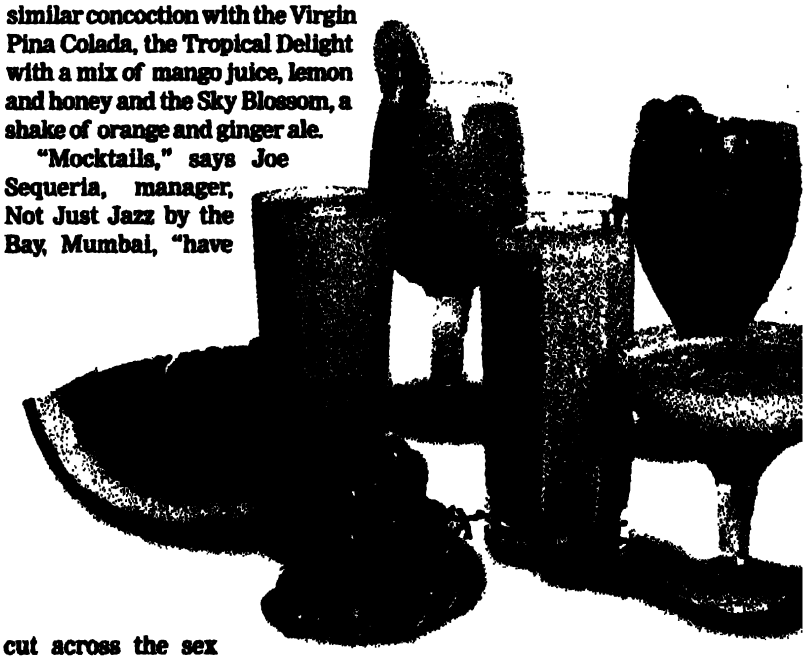
Irfan Ahmed, bartender at The Junction, Taj Bengal, who won the Bartender of the Year award for 1997, feels mocktails go down well with people in Calcutta because they are suited to the weather. "The fresh fruit juices combined with exotic herbs help replenish the system which alcohol can actually dehydrate," says Irfan.

However, a considerable amount of debate exists over the definition of mocktails and cocktails. T.P. Ray, tea planter and a wine connoisseur avers, "In the first place, wine and beer are often thought of as 'soft' drinks abroad and a drink of orange blended with champagne, which would be accepted as a mocktail abroad would definitely not be considered so in India." There is another dimension to the cocktail vs the mocktail story: "After a hangover from the previous night, mocktails can make one feel better because of the refreshing ingredients in them."

Pubs like Razzberry Rhinocerous, Copa Cabana, Three Flights Up, Earthquake and the Fashion Bistro in Mumbai are some of the haunts for mockaholics. Just as their counterparts in Calcutta are Someplace Else at The Park, Chhota Bristol, next to the Metro cinema, the Men's Bar at the Calcutta Club and Antiquity at the Tolly. Priced anywhere between Rs 85 and Rs 380 with enigmatic names like Pink Squirrel, Sex on the Beach, Bahama Mamma, Mint Memories, Sky Blossom and Pink Floyd, this genre of drinks has found a steady clientele.

The most popular mocktails at the Apollo Bar, Sea Lounge and Shamiana, at the Taj, Mumbai, says Mahendroo, are the Cooling Punch, a pineapple/ice cream fruit punch and a similar concoction with the Virgin Pina Colada, the Tropical Delight with a mix of mango juice, lemon and honey and the Sky Blossom, a shake of orange and ginger ale.

"Mocktails," says Joe Sequeria, manager, Not Just Jazz by the Bay, Mumbai, "have cut across the sex barrier. While earlier mostly women would go for the drinks, today one can spot some men ordering a mocktail before lunch. It keeps one feeling light in the afternoons if you have to go back to work."



"It is all a matter of ingenuity and creativity," says Ahmed of Taj Bengal. " I try to understand the clients' personality based on their visage and clothes. For example, if a person is wearing serene shades, I do not experiment too much with colours. On the other hand, when I feel the customer likes bright colours, I ensure that he gets it in his drinks as well!"

His favourite concoction is Kabir's Special, named after a favourite customer that has a mix of pineapple, 7 Up, mint leaves, cloves and cinnamon, and then there is a 'nameless one' — call it what you will — a mix of strawberry syrup, seasonal fruits, orange and lemon juice.

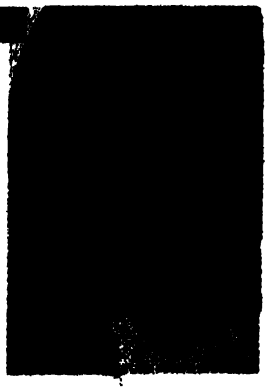
But don't just go by what bartenders have to recommend. If the idea of mocktails appeals to you, just get some fruit juices together and let your imagination take over. ■

WHAT'S IN A NAME?
With enigmatic names like Mint Memories, Pink Squirrel, Sky Blossom, Sex on the Beach and Pink Floyd, mocktails have found a steady clientele

LAILA ROUASS

Channel [V] VJ

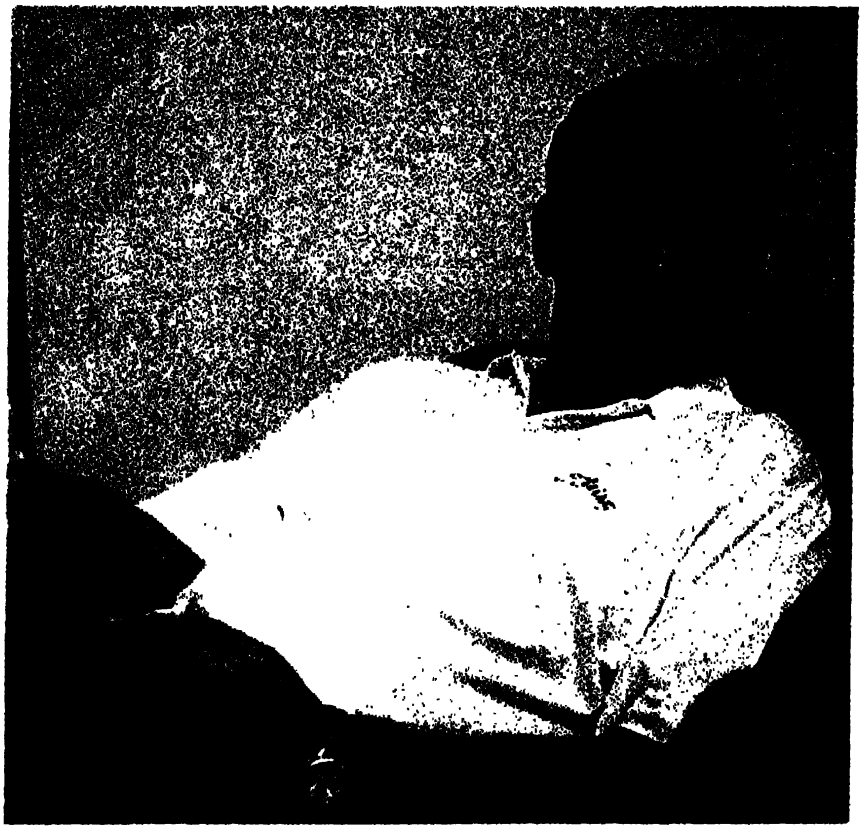
I am completely off alcoholic drinks since they dehydrate the skin. Fresh juices are best for Mumbai weather



MY PERSONAL *Style*

ALL INDIAN FARE

That's what golfer Gaurav Ghei loves to serve



When I am in Delhi I go out a lot with friends. And going out means games and dinners. Not so much of discotheques. Yes, when I was in college I used to go a lot to discos and such social dos but now all that has changed. Maybe, I am a tamed person now. But to be honest, even though I am no longer a disco freak, I like shaking a leg once in a while. These days, what I prefer is going to the Golf Club with a few friends, play for a while, have dinner and return home.

As far as entertaining at home is concerned I keep out of the way as much as possible. I leave everything to people who know more about all this. I suppose that is better than poking my nose in business I have no clue about. I'll just ruin everything. That doesn't mean that I don't party. In fact, we party a lot around Christmas and New Year. But, by and large, these are informal affairs with close friends and family. I don't like having too many people around. It only makes things complicated and difficult to handle.

I don't really fuss too much about entertaining, you know, about what should be served and how. If I have my way, then I'll have lots of drinks and heavy snacks. You know, the *kebab* variety. They are easy to serve and easy to eat. I mean, you don't need to stand on ceremony when all you want to have is a good time. Snacks are something you can eat whilst dancing or just hanging around.

You know, basically I am a typical *Punjabi-Dilliwallah* boy at heart. And that's what I enjoy being. Cool and informal. I don't enjoy fancy food. Nothing continental about my food. Chinese, once in a while is fine, but otherwise my tastebuds are happy with *tikkas*.

Any way, coming back to organising parties, usually, I don't get my way around and it is my mother who organises the parties at home. Sometimes my suggestions regarding snacks are taken. But by and large, nobody wants me to interfere and I don't. Besides, it saves me a lot of trouble.

For formal affairs, I believe it is best to take professional help. Not only do they organise better, they leave you free of all tensions and headaches. You can just be a guest at your own party. What can be a better way of enjoying than that!

AS TOLD TO GHAZALA WAHAB

TIKKAS AND *KEBABS*

If I have my way, then I'll have lots of drinks and heavy snacks. You know, the *kebab* variety. They are easy to serve and easy to eat. I mean, you don't need to stand on ceremony when all you want to have is a good time

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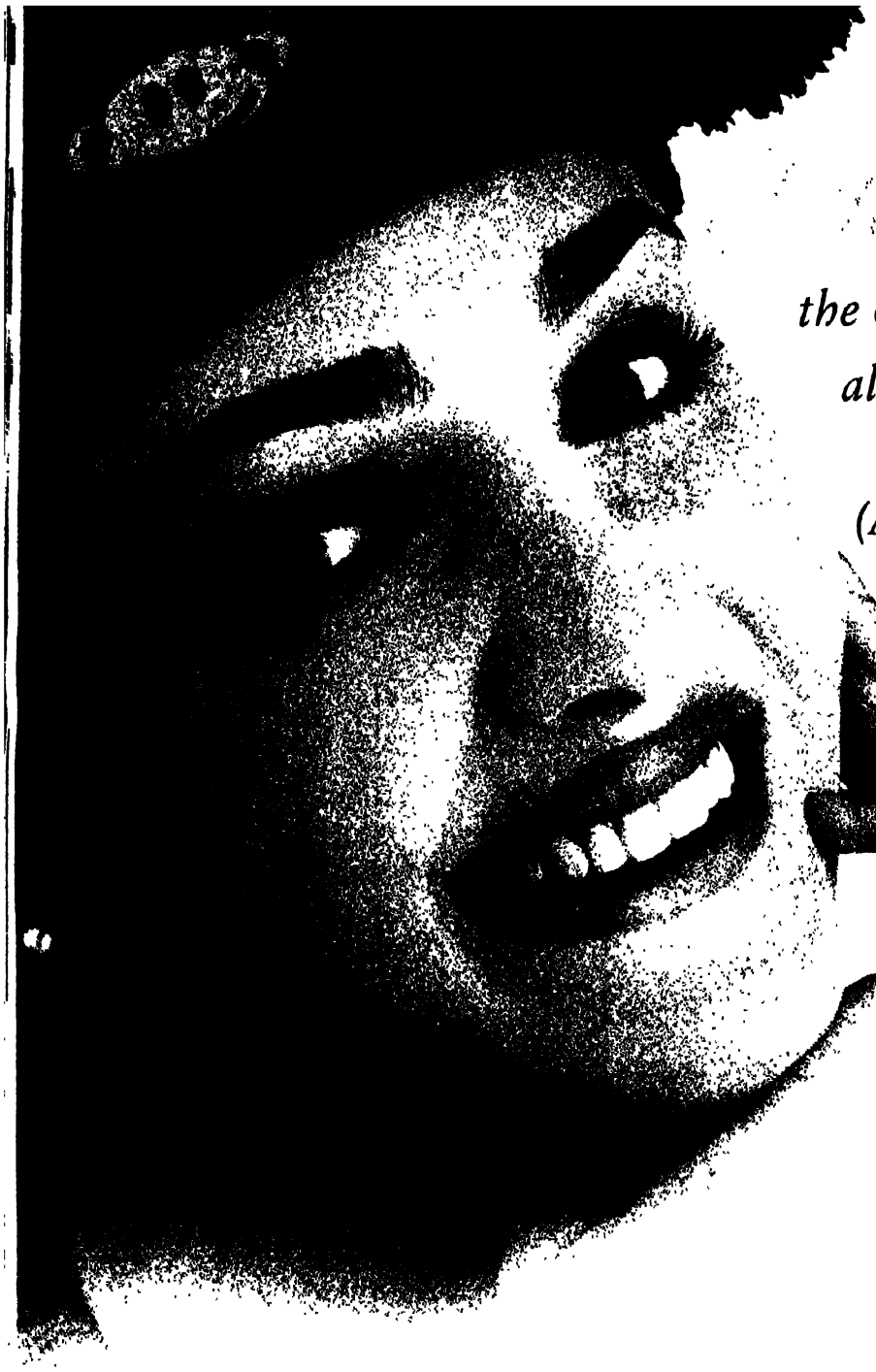
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WEARING HER ATTITUDE

Whatever highbrow critics might say, Shobha Dé manages to come out on top every time ('Memories of Another Dé', October 4). She is one woman who comes across as intelligent, worldly-wise and yes, with loads of attitude. Her new book, *Selective Memory*, is crisply written and she has the intelligence and the guts to realise and admit that she has passed over the the stage of writing high-society tales. We hope to read more about her in *Graphiti*.

CHANDRA SIKDAR, CALCUTTA

DÉ TIME

Any story on Shobha Dé is bound to evoke a fair amount of interest and curiosity. Dé, in spite of being a public figure, manages to veil her inner soul from the world. She is shrewd enough to understand that the enigma about her is her USP. Even in her memoirs, she tantalises her readers by not disclosing all. This ploy works startlingly well as the audience hungrily laps up whatever morsels she has to offer.

Sanjana Chakravorty, Calcutta

Shobha Dé's take on Sanjeev Kumar ("rustic, ill-mannered and uncouth"), Rekha ("the voice of an illiterate washerwoman") and Shatrughan Sinha was in extremely bad taste. Presumably, Ms Dé thinks that she has the last word on "celebrity lifestyle" and everyone needs to behave according to her yardstick. It is also noteworthy that while she will not disclose personal, and even apparently trivial, facts about herself, like the night cream she uses, she must take it upon herself to strip everybody else's reputation in public. Clearly, this lady has two entirely different modes of behaviour and etiquette when it comes to herself and the rest.

Saroj Kumar Rath, Calcutta

COPING SOMEHOW

You have raised a very pertinent question in 'Random Strokes' ('Should women hold two jobs?', October 4). It is true that not much has changed for the Indian woman, in spite of what feminists may have to say.

It is very facile to spout phrases like 'economic independence' which sound very fashionable but probe a little deeper and you will find gross double standards in the dynamics of the relationship between the two sexes. The remuneration that the woman finally gets hardly seems worth it.

Ria Prasad, New Delhi

graphiti ★ 15 November 1998

4 **OUT IN THE COLD** Winter can be fun too. Some celebrities talk about how they enjoy it

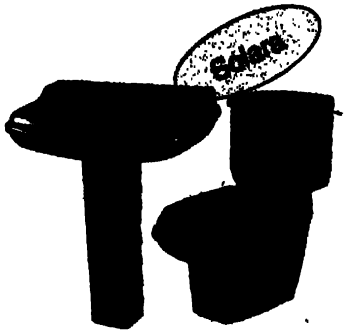
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15 **COLD COMFORT** A winter wardrobe can be practical and stylish

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26 **FREEZING BEAUTY** Skin and hair care this winter

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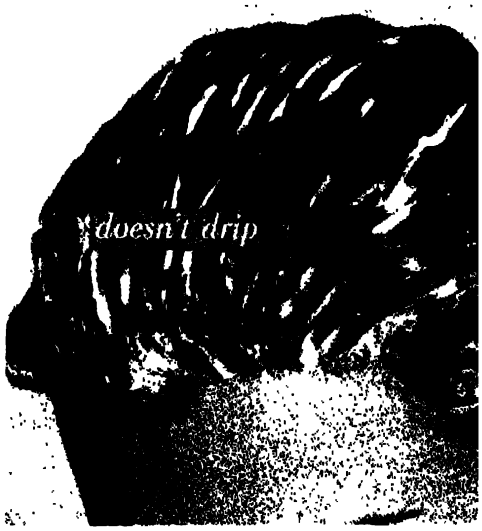


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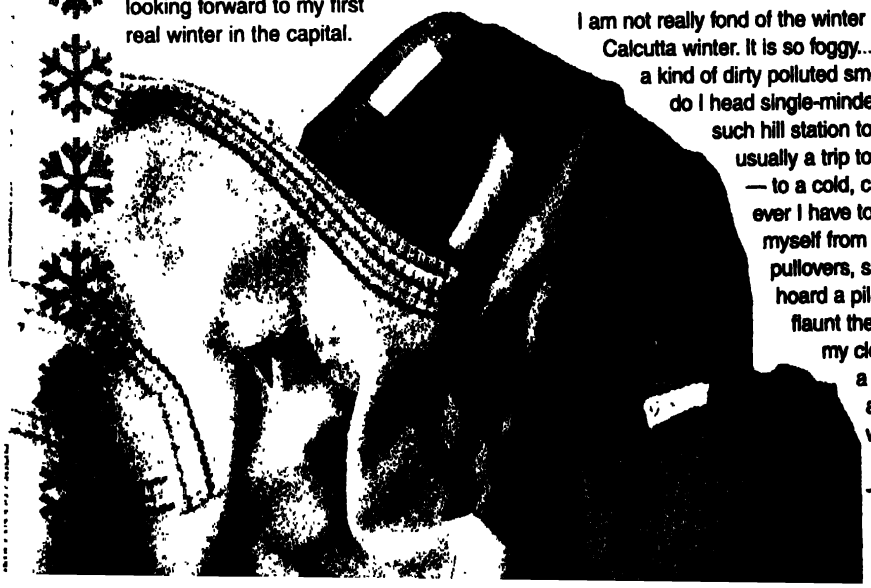
Winters can be a lot of fun. us how they best

COLD



SHABANA AZMI,
Actress and Member of Parliament

I love winters and prefer the season to the stuffy hot summer months and the sultry monsoons. The primary reason I like winters is because the season gives me a chance to wear many layers of clothing — I really enjoy that. The season also brings with it a kaleidoscope of flowers that are available everywhere and that, too, in sheer abundance. And of course, there are those delightful and exotic vegetables — so many of them and in such profusion. I simply love food that one usually associates with winter. I am really looking forward to the coming season because it will be my first long spell in Delhi during the cold months. Having lived in Mumbai there was unfortunately no chance for me to either prepare for the season or enjoy it! So, in a way I am looking forward to my first real winter in the capital.



BIKASH BHATTACHARJEE, Artist



I am not really fond of the winter season — especially the Calcutta winter. It is so foggy...in fact, it's not just fog, it's a kind of dirty polluted smog that puts me off. Nor do I head single-mindedly to Darjeeling or any such hill station to get a feel of winter. So it's usually a trip to my house in Santiniketan — to a cold, clean winter. I carry whatever I have to carry in order to protect myself from the cold — sweaters, pullovers, shawls and leather jackets. But no, I don't buy or hoard a pile of winterwear all through the year in order to flaunt them during the short winter season. They are in my closet out of sheer necessity. Of course, I do have a good collection of Kashmiri shawls. But that's about it all and I am not exactly obsessed with what I wear in winter.

As to how I protect myself from the winter cold — by drinking lots and lots of tea!

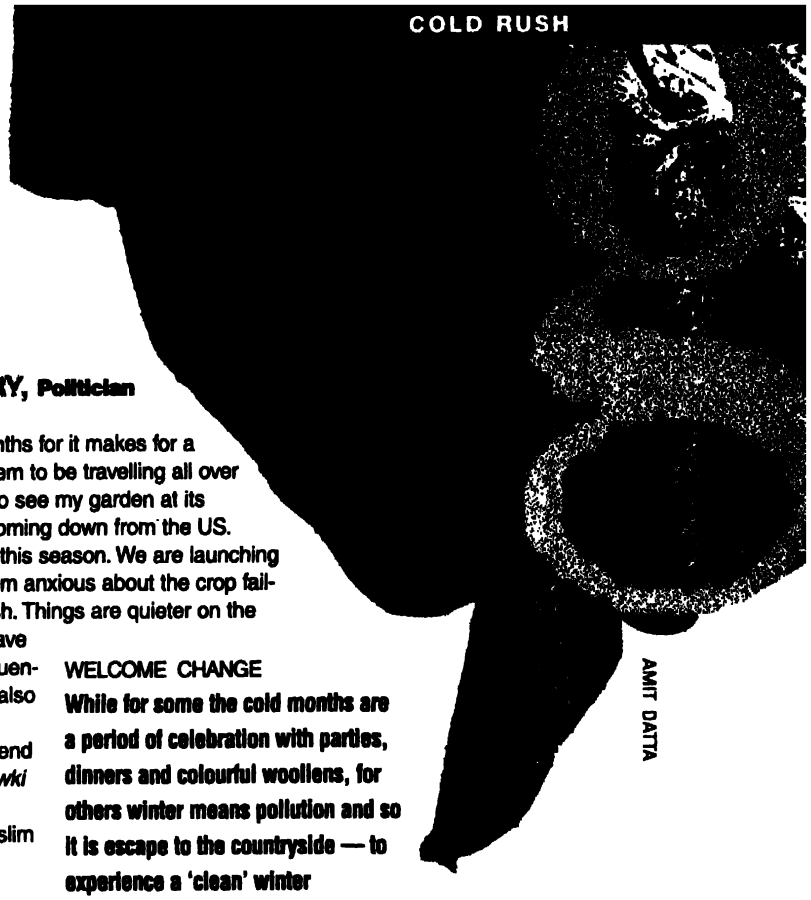
Some celebrities tell enjoy them



RENUKA CHOWDHURY, Politician

We need to have the winter months for it makes for a welcome change. This time I seem to be travelling all over the place. The season is going to see my garden at its best. My daughter will also be coming down from the US. There's much that is happening this season. We are launching a major blood donation drive. I am anxious about the crop failures in my state, Andhra Pradesh. Things are quieter on the political front. That is going to leave me with a little more time with the people of my constituency with whom I can interact at a more personal level. I also intend to do some emotional stock taking and probably change direction. The seasonal parties will go on. We tend to do them in the typical Hyderabadi way — those *chowki* dinners where people sit on the ground and eat off the four-cornered small tables. It is usually a traditional Muslim dinner where *Shikhampuris, shirmals* and *salans* are served.

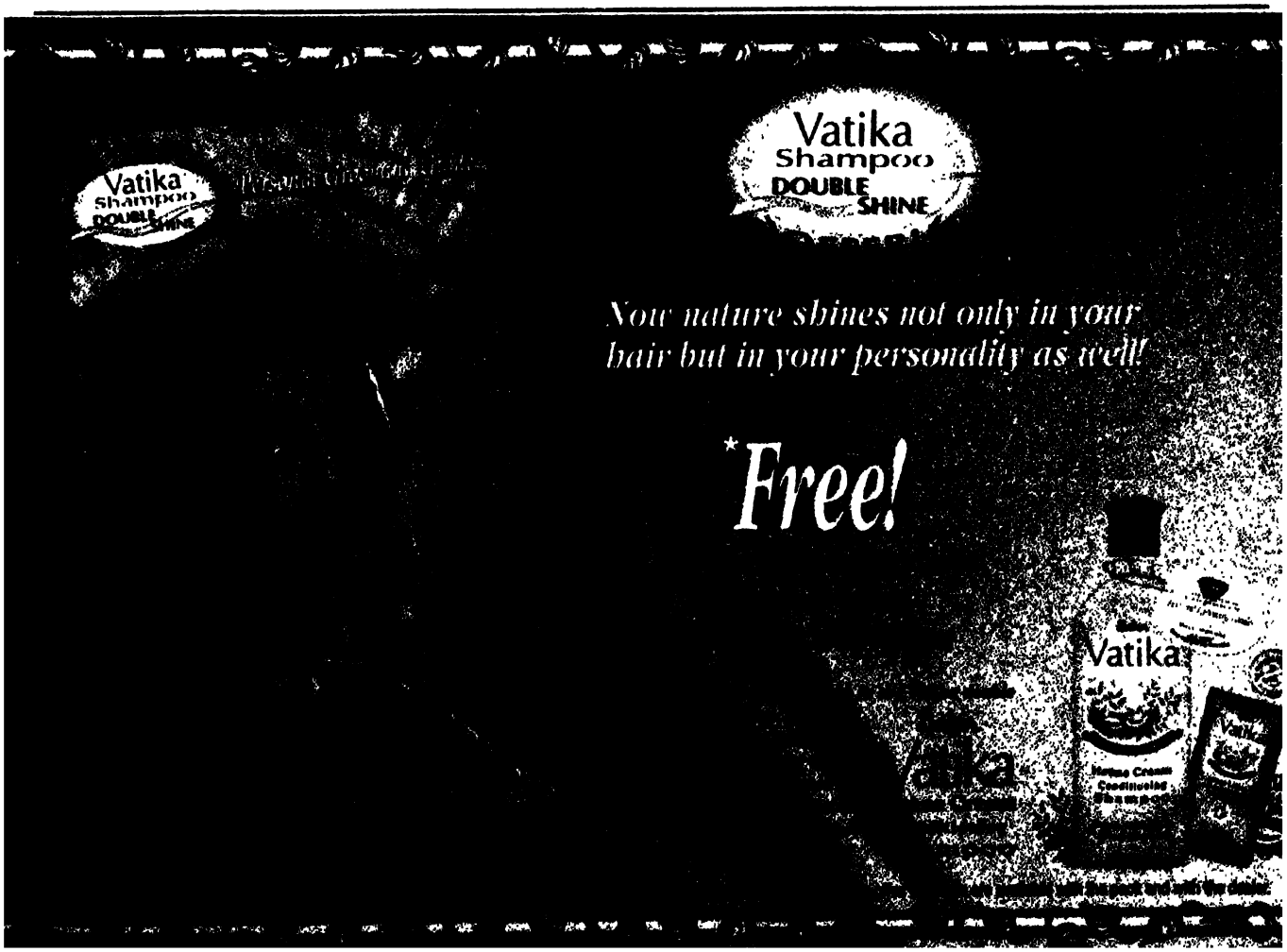
COLD RUSH



AMIT DATTA

WELCOME CHANGE

While for some the cold months are a period of celebration with parties, dinners and colourful woollens, for others winter means pollution and so it is escape to the countryside — to experience a 'clean' winter





belong to that genre of men who need winter care products like moisturisers, lotions and cold creams to keep their skins looking beautiful. I think they are the men you see in the commercials of Digjam and Gwalior suitings.

SUNIL GANGOPADHYAY, Writer



I am looking forward to winter, more so as we had a particularly harsh summer this time. I am also looking forward to it because it is so transient in this part of the world. But even during its short stint it makes its presence felt in the shape of fresh vegetables which flood the markets and also the clean air which permeates the atmosphere. Winter always perks up my energies and I feel less tired.



I have no special holiday plans for the winter. But I will definitely pack my bags and wander off somewhere. I just might give in to the call of the hills and end up either in Simla, Sikkim or even Darjeeling. Why a hill station in the winter? I want to see the snow! Also in winter, hill stations are less crowded and polluted.

Every winter a lot of my friends come from abroad to visit me. I have nicknamed them 'winter birds'. And you should see the marathon *adda* sessions we have once they arrive in India. This year, I am expecting friends from America, France and England. The moment they arrive we will make a beeline for an exotic destination. Preferably an island and then it will be hours and hours of *adda*.

The only cosmetic I need in winter is the humble chapstick for my lips. I do not

MANI SHANKAR AIYAR, Politician and columnist

I will get myself a good *razai*. Through November to early December, I plan to stay as much as possible in Delhi, for that is a lovely time of the year. I would love to get out of Delhi during the worst period — which is mid-December to mid-January— if at all possible.

I am hoping to get a week in Goa. But if I am offered a week in the Arctic Circle instead, I will take it because the centrally heated home in the north pole is warmer than a freezing home in Delhi at the turn of the year. However, if I can't leave Delhi, I'll park the car in the sun with the windows rolled up so that it gets warm and settle inside for an afternoon siesta.



Of course, the one thing that makes the Delhi winter bearable is the weekend bruncheon and fancy lunches at rich people's farmhouses. I am open for an invitation. As a family, we look forward to winters as we are all allergic to the summer heat. Winters are a time for long walks in the afternoon sun during weekends, sitting in the garden swing enjoying the cozy heat and bonfires at night. It's a time for a host of outdoor activities that we don't indulge in during the gruelling summer months. It's also when we plan a family holiday in India or abroad. While we take a break around new year, this year round we hope to travel to Simla and stay at the Cecil. Come winter and we acquire a preference for soup, momos and *parathas*. Besides which one can go for a variety of salads what with the exotic vegetables available in the market. And we live in the hope that either the winter sun will melt the fat we put on or the shawls will cover it.

SIMI GAREWAL, Television anchor

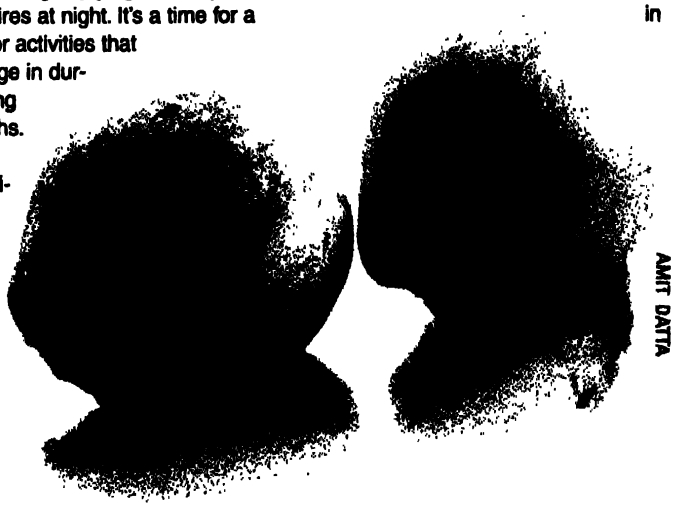


Winter is a misnomer for Mumbai*walas*. There is hardly any perceptible change in the temperatures, so there is no urgency to bring out the winter woolies either. However, this is the time of the year — post-summer, to be more accurate -- that one would have taken their holidays out of the country. Or at least such is the case with me. I look forward to staying put in Mumbai, because this is the time of the year when the city is flooded with several activities just as many of my friends come to town as well.



ARPANA CAUR, Artist

Winter is a season I look forward to for a variety of reasons. There are a lot of cherished childhood memories that are associated with winter. Winter brings to me memories of my childhood and my grandfather's house in



AMIT DATTA

Delhi's Patel Nagar. The time when we'd all sit around the glowing *tandoor* in the courtyard while in the distance the gasoline lamp of the *moongphaliwala* (peanut seller) would glimmer brightly in the dark. We would run to him, buy the nuts and then eat them leisurely by the fireside.

It also brings to me the comfort of cuddling up into a warm *razai* (quilt). Winters also save you from the pain that summer months bring with them — the six to seven-hour-long power cuts and the accompanying water crisis that makes you dislike not just the weather but the city as well.



KARAN THAPAR, Television anchor

I associate winter with sitting out in the garden protected against the cold wind, burning wood, ginger steamed puddings, hot apple pies and annual holidays to the West. I find the cold winters of Delhi bracing though I prefer it when it is just cool.

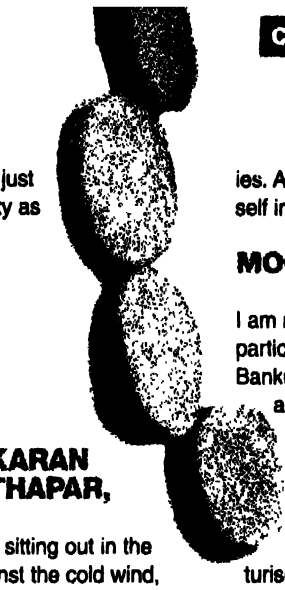
Winter is all about the clothes I love to wear — jackets and ties, jerseys and mohairs — and a season for fine cuisines (not that the season makes any difference to my voracious appetite).

I look forward to winter for that's the time of the year when I do a disappearing act and head for London or Switzerland. I revel in the freezing cold of London and the ski resorts of Switzerland, though I really can't ski too well. This December, too, I plan to head for London and New York to recharge my batteries. After which it's back to immersing one's self into the grind of daily routine.



FRESH 'N' LOVELY

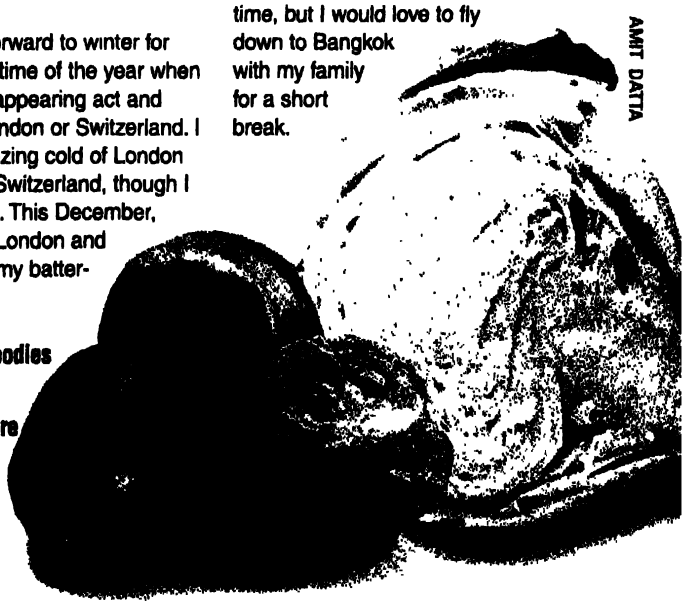
Winter is a season all foodies love because this is the time whenthe markets are flooded with exotic vegetables and fruits — all fresh and so very colourful



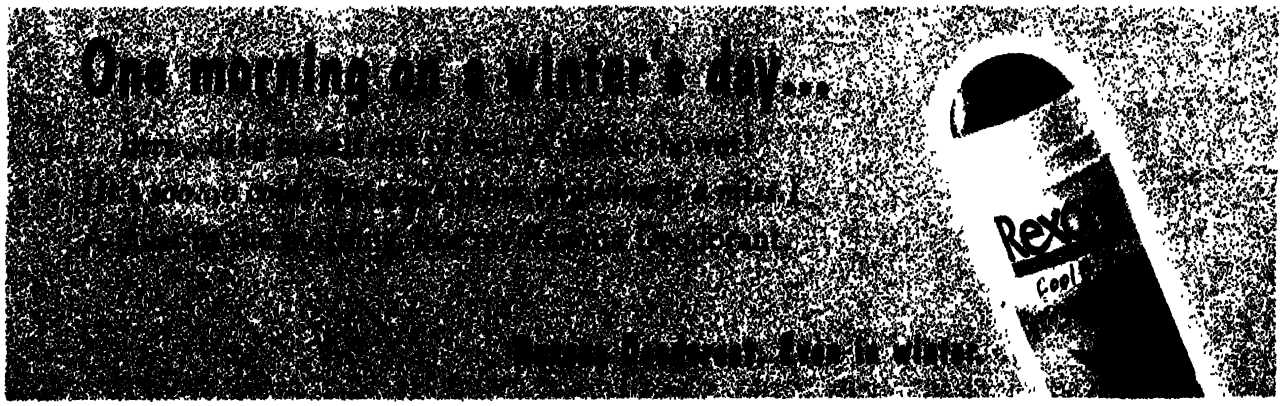
MOON MOON SEN, Actress

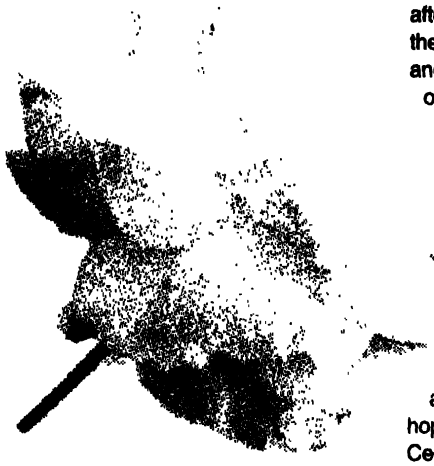
I am not looking forward to winter as I am participating in several *jatra* shows in Bankura, Burdwan and Murshidabad. So I am seething with envy at the thought of everybody else curled up in their warm homes while I shiver!

The only change in my health and beauty care routine will be that I might use double the quantity of moisturiser that I normally apply. Besides, I always carry hot water with me wherever I travel. In my wardrobe, synthetics and woollens will start making their presence felt. I know I sound insane when I say this, but some of my favourite items for winter are synthetic slacks, a quilt jacket that I bought from Jaipur, my husband's socks and a suede cap that my daughter presented me with. I wonder whether I will have the time, but I would love to fly down to Bangkok with my family for a short break.



AMIT DATTA





KIRON KHER, Actress



I always associate winters with north India, particularly Delhi and Chandigarh. For this is also the time of the year that I visit my parents in Chandigarh. I look forward to lazing in the sun in the afternoons in Chandigarh, munching on *gur* and groundnuts, and if it is Delhi, sprawling on a *chatai* on the lawns on balmy afternoons. The nights are for building up high bonfires and wild parties. This is also the time when one likes venturing into the hills for a few days, never mind the harsh winds and the general chill.

This is definitely the time of the year to fish out your boots and winter woollies and thick *razais* to brave the nights. The splurge of the sweater*walas* all along the streets of Delhi and other places of north India add so much colour to this season. One misses all of this in Mumbai. One's lifestyle undergoes a change only when away from the city. Otherwise, here it is the same old story of sweat and grime.

UMA GAJAPATHI RAJU, Television anchor

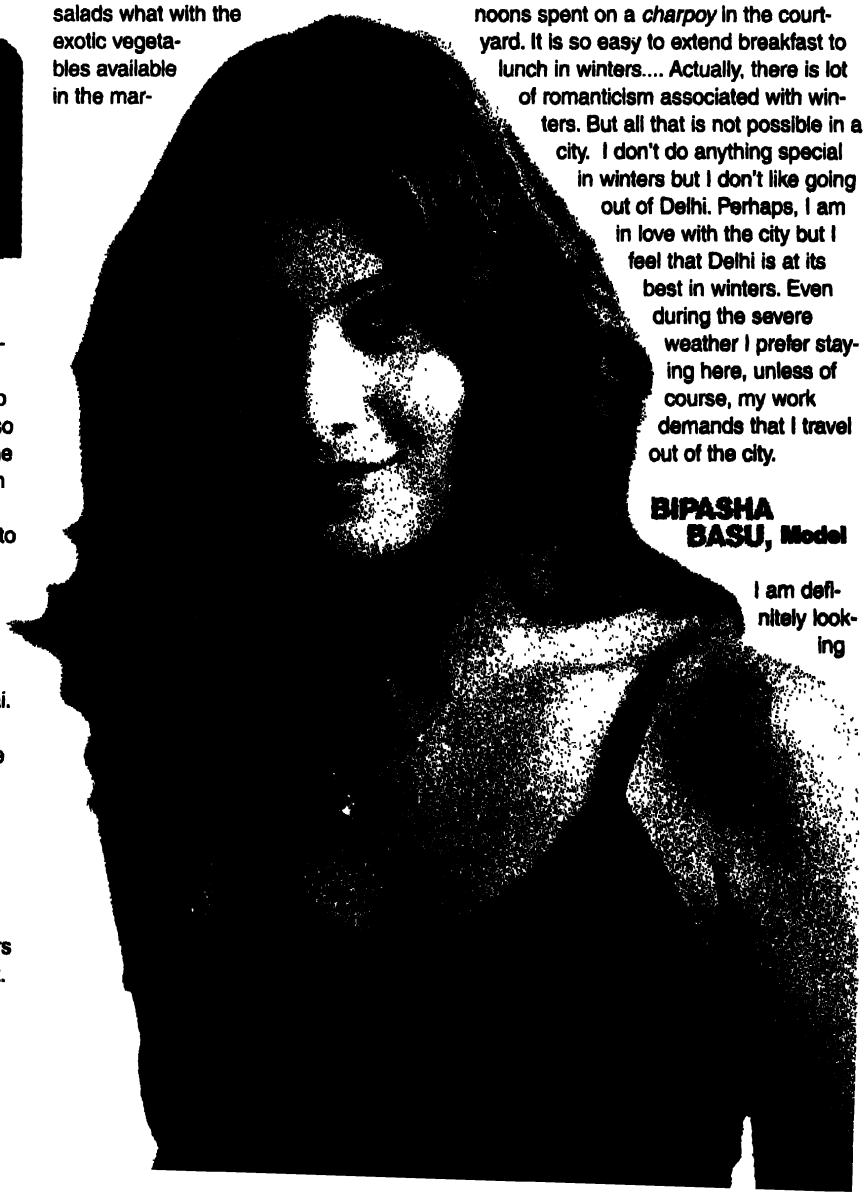
As a family, we look forward to the winters as we are all allergic to the summer heat. Winters are a time for long walks in the afternoon sun during weekends, sitting in the garden swing enjoying the cozy heat and bonfires at night. It's a time for a host of outdoor activities that we don't indulge in during the gruelling summer months. It's also when we plan a family holiday in India or abroad. While we take a break around new year, this year round we hope to travel to Simla and stay at the Cecil. Come winter and we acquire a preference for soups, *momos* and *parathas*. Besides which one can go for a variety of salads what with the exotic vegetables available in the market. And we live in the hope that either the winter sun will melt the fat we put on or the shawls will cover it.



DALER MEHNDI, Singer

Though I like winters better, I am the kind of a person who enjoys all seasons. They all have their own charm and array of fruits and foodstuff. I associate winters with piping hot mutton *biryani* and *paya* curry. Cooked on a slow fire with lots of spices, it is just the kind of food one can relish in the cold weather. Late mornings gradually melting into lazy afternoons spent on a *charpoy* in the courtyard. It is so easy to extend breakfast to lunch in winters.... Actually, there is lot of romanticism associated with winters. But all that is not possible in a city. I don't do anything special in winters but I don't like going out of Delhi. Perhaps, I am in love with the city but I feel that Delhi is at its best in winters. Even during the severe weather I prefer staying here, unless of course, my work demands that I travel out of the city.





BIPASHA BASU, Model

I am definitely looking

forward to winter, since I was born in winter in cold Delhi. But to be more specific, after the sweat and grime of the last few months here in Mumbai one could do with some cool breeze. I rather like Mumbai winter, for it is neither warm nor too cold. So you don't necessarily have to bundle yourself up. I don't like wearing heavy sweaters or even cardigans. I will be in Dubai next month from where I hope to pick up some stuff. In any case, my wardrobe changes every month, so getting fresh clothes is not really a novelty anymore. In the winters I like wearing long woollen skirts and other knitted clothes.

I have a dry skin, so I have to keep moisturising my skin every hour. Which can never happen since I barely have the time to have a bath twice a day. I do not have any holiday plans but I want to go to the Maldives over the New Year.

RITUPARNA SENGUPTA, Actress



Winter fascinates me. When I was in school, we used to eagerly await winter vacations as well as the festivities associated with Christmas and New Year and would have a lot of fun.

Speaking professionally, this is the only time that the studios and outdoors don't feel like a furnace. This is also the ideal time to take a breather but, unfortunately, I will be too busy for such indulgences.

I have a huge collection of winter clothes in the form of woollen garments, coats, leather jackets and sweat shirts. So I intend making my winter very colourful. The only problem with me during this season is that I have to take more care of my skin to prevent dryness. I apply a lot of moisturiser and cold cream at night as they impart a fresh look in the mornings.

Applying glycerine on the body also helps. I also love eating lots of citrus fruits that are available in plenty in the winters.

MRINAL PANDE, Journalist

Since I belong to the hills I have a close affinity with winters. Not only do I like winters more, my body also responds better to the season. I don't suffer from stuffiness or persistent cold or anything of the sort. Despite having lived in the plains all my life, I think, my bond with the hills remains as strong as ever. I remember, in my childhood, our winters were spent in the hills which had an almost surreal quality to it. They were extremely quiet, one listened to a lot of music, read a lot, heard and told a lot of stories. But city life has changed all that. Here, winters mean work, work and more work.



In Delhi, I don't do anything specific during winters. Yes, foodwise, one has a lot of choice with all the wonderful vegetables, even though, my husband and I are not great foodies. Another reason I like winters is because of the burst of cultural activities in the city. It is the season for music, theatre, exhibitions and so on.

ASHOK BANKER, Writer

Since Mumbai has no winter, my lifestyle hardly goes through any drastic change in these months. I like the fact that this city is not limited by cyclic factors, it makes it an all-year place. On the other hand, I miss the romantic imagery of the northern winter, this whole warmth of huddling indoors around the fire and looking forward to a white Christmas.



Compiled by our Calcutta, Mumbai and Delhi bureaus

RIOT OF COLOUR

Winter is also the time when gardens are in full bloom — lavishly displaying varied varieties of flowers in bewitching colours and shapes

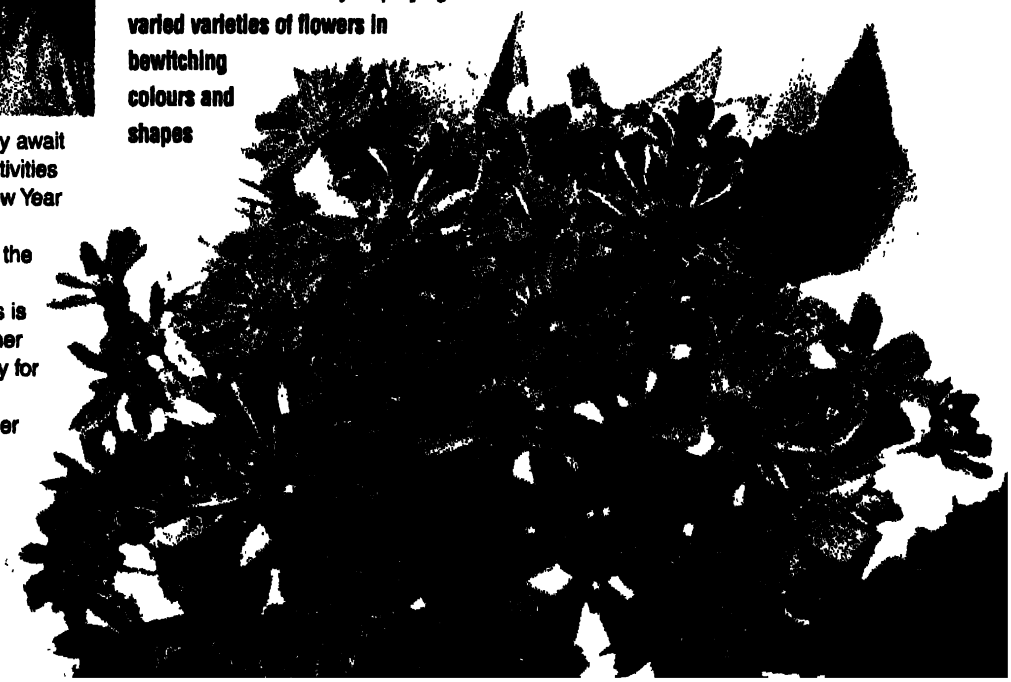


TABLE Tops

A THOUGHT FOR FOOD

Winter brings its own culinary delights, says **Geeta Sharma**

So what if the humble onion and the plain potato are acting pricey? With winter round the corner, you can turn your nose on them and opt for the surfeit of seasonal vegetables and fruits that the grocers are going to be flooded with.

From carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, peas, spinach, *sarson*, *methi*, horse grams (plain *channa*), mushrooms, lettuce, beetroot, *parvals*, cabbage, radish, sweet potatoes, strawberries, *kinu*, custard apple, *chikus*, grapes, apples, oranges - - they are all there, waiting to be devoured.

In fact, it is the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables that, among other factors, endears winter to many of us. It also explains why most people want to try out their culinary skills more adventurously around this time of the year.

Winter is the time when the earth blossoms, the air is cool and crisp, and it is time for some serious partying. Also, the change in food habits becomes discernible. And why not. If the ancient *Vedic* texts and the wisdom of the *hakims* is to be believed, the digestive fires are at their strongest during the winters and spicy food is best digested at this time.

A lot of dry fruit is consumed, *tandoors* are lit up and grills kept ready to make different kinds of *kebabs*. These aren't just good to eat, but also keep the body warm, according to Salima Husain, director, Hospitality, with the Jamia Hamdard University.

But what is so special about seasonal vegetables, you may well ask. After all, these days you get whatever you want through the year, thanks to the deep freeze.

Ask culinary experts and they will tell you that the soul of any food is in its freshness. "It is the quality of the ingredients used that decides what the dish is going to taste like. So if fruits and vegetables are fresh, half the battle, in terms of taste and nutrition is won," says Arvind Saraswat, director, Food Production, the Taj Group of Hotels. "Comparing the round-the-year availability of frozen variations of foods to fresh ones is like comparing the fun of eating a fresh mango in the summer to a frozen one in the winter!"

Paneer Cholia, he suggests, is winter specific and a special dish, that is worth trying and relishing.

FRESH AND SPICY

With a vast range of seasonal vegetables available in the market, one can try out fresh and spicy winter dishes like *paneer cholia*



Paneer cholia

INGREDIENTS:

- *cholia* 125gm;
- *paneer* 200gm (diced);
- oil 30ml;
- whole *garam masala* 3gm. (Cloves 3; cinnamon 1 inch; small cardamom 2); cumin seeds 3gm;

- onions (chopped) 100gm;
- garlic (chopped) 4gm;
- Green chillies (chopped) 5gm;
- tomatoes (chopped) 100gm;
- red chilli powder 4gm;
- turmeric powder 3gm;
- salt to taste;
- *garam masala* powder 3gm;
- coriander (chopped) 1tsp;
- ginger (juliennes) 18-20 strips.

METHOD:

- Heat oil in a *kadhai*. Add whole *garam masala* and cumin and stir. Add onions and sauté until light brown in colour. Add garlic, ginger, green chillies and stir for a minute. Add tomatoes and cook till the *masala* leaves the oil. Add red chilli powder and turmeric powder and cook for a minute. Add *cholia* and cook for five minutes. Finally add *paneer* and mix. Add salt and *garam masala* powder. Serve hot, garnished with chopped coriander and ginger juliennes. The dish serves two.

The *Charak Samhita*, an ancient manuscript, also lays emphasis on the science of Dietetics or *Aharatattav*. So from mid-November to mid- January, the *Charaka* advises the use of sour and salty dishes, variations of mutton, new rice, poultry, dry fruits, milk products and their confections. Hot foods (food with *garam taseer* or warm impact) are also strongly recommended.

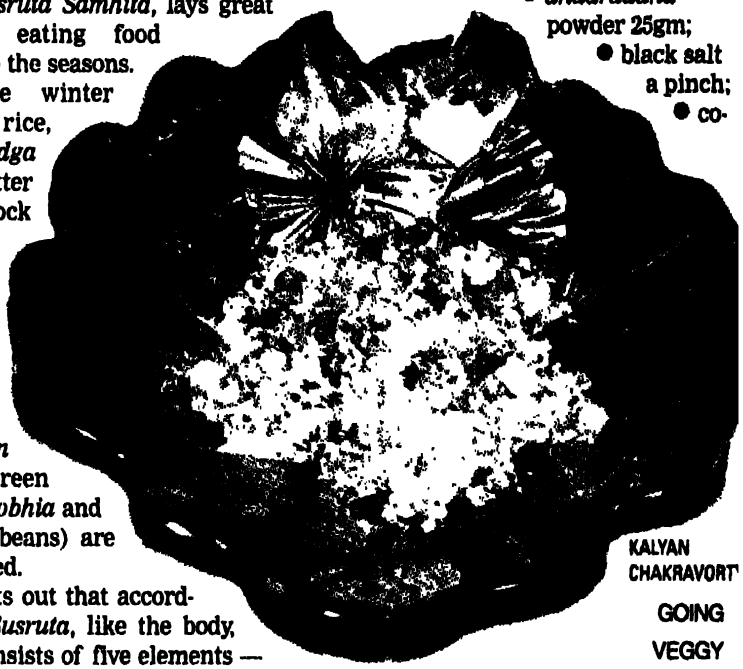
Coconut and copra-based items, delicacies like *badam*-milk and sweets like *laddoos*, rich in fat, are also preferred. Husain says meats also get their ratings in terms of seasons. Fatty meats are for the winter and game is the choice of the summers.

Manjit Gill, senior executive chef, Corporate, with ITC's WelcomGroup, has done extensive research into *Vedic* texts to incorporate their basic tenets on food into the recipes of the WelcomGroup hotels. He too maintains that an indistinguishable digestive fire is indispensable for health, strength, growth. As long as it rages, the person remains healthy but when he loses it, he becomes susceptible to diseases. "The digestive fire, then needs to be fuelled constantly," Gill says.

He says the fourth century *Vedic* text, the *Susruta Samhita*, lays great stress on eating food according to the seasons. During the winter months, rice, barely, *mudga* (*moong*), butter *amlaka*, rock salt and honey are recommended. A good intake of lentils and horse grams (*plain channa*), green peas, *urad*, *lobhia* and *rajma* (red beans) are also suggested.

Gill points out that according to the *Susruta*, like the body, food, too, consists of five elements — Earth (*Akasu*), Air (*Vayu*), Light (*Tejas*), Fire (*Agni*) and Water (*Jal*). And each body element is nourished by the corresponding elements of the food.

But these, days, Gill laments, *rasa* (flavour) and *swad* (taste) have come to dominate the eating choices and patterns and in the process, common sense has been forgotten. For the winter, Gill recommends a simple recipe of cauliflower that can be put together without much ado.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

GOING VEGGY

One can steer clear of meat or fish and gorge on cauliflowers, carrots, tomatoes, peas, broccoli, cabbage, radishes and more in the form of salads or other yummy dishes during winter

Phool gobhi achintya

INGREDIENTS

- cauliflower florets 500gm;
- cauliflower leaves 100gm;
- cauliflower stems 8-12; oil 100ml;
- *heeng* a pinch;
- cumin 3gm/1/2tsp;
- turmeric 5gm/1tsp ;
- rock salt to taste;
- red chilli powder 3gm/1/2tsp;
- sesame 30gm/3 tsp;
- almonds 75gm;
- sugar 25gm;
- *amchoor* 6gm/1tbs;
- *anaardaana* powder 25gm;
- black salt a pinch;
- coriander (finely chopped) 15gm.

PREPARATION:

- Get cauliflower with the fresh green leaves. Remove leaves and wash well and cut finely. Remove stems, wash, peel and cut into small dices. Cut cauliflower into small florets. Dissolve in two tablespoons of water and leave.
- **Sesame:** Broil on a *tawa* until it begins to crackle, remove and keep.

- **Almonds:** Take a little oil in a *kadhai*, add peeled almonds and stir fry to light golden, remove and keep.

METHOD:

- Heat oil in a *kadhai*, add cumin, stir

until it begins to crackle on medium heat. Add dissolved *heeng*, stir once or twice, add stems of cauliflower and stir. Sprinkle turmeric, salt, red chilli powder and two tablespoons of water. Cover and let it cook on low heat until almost cooked. Add florets, stir and cover and cook on medium heat until the cauliflower is 3/4th cooked. Add leaves and stir. Let it cook without a lid on medium heat until the cauliflower is cooked.

Add sesame seeds and almonds in cauliflower and stir carefully so that the cauliflower does not break. Sprinkle *amchoor*, sugar and black salt. Stir once or twice and remove. Serve with chopped coriander on top.

The concept of hot and cold food is more strongly entrenched in the north which witnesses extreme temperatures, says food columnist Preah Narang. According to her, in the north of the country, even today, foods are chosen on the basis of these beliefs. In winter, hot foods are the rule, such as dry fruits, almond based delicacies, like *badaam* (almonds) milk, and *badaam halwa*.

The majority of spices, especially mustard seeds, are regarded as hot as are jaggery and *ghee* and pulses like *rajma*. Come winter and one can literally smell the *sarson ka saag* and *makki di roti* in the north, and of course, the irreplaceable *gajar ka halwa*.

This traditional dessert, is best eaten piping hot. Since it keeps very well in the fridge for about two weeks, one can easily make it in large quantities, says Narang.

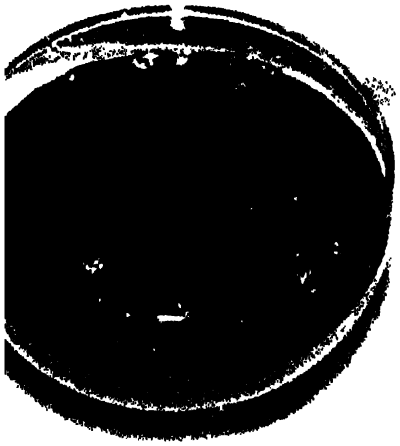
Gajar ka halwa

INGREDIENTS:

- carrots 1kg;
- full fat milk 1.2 litres;
- sugar 125gm;
- ghee 30-40gm;
- ground cardamom 1tsp;
- almonds 12 (flaked).

METHOD

- Peel and grate the carrots. Bring the milk and carrots to the boil and continue to cook till most of the milk has evaporated. Stir in the sugar till it melts. Most of the moisture should have evaporated and the carrots should look glossy. Stir in the *ghee*, ground cardamom, half the almonds and half the raisins. Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with the remaining almonds and raisins. Serve hot.



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

JUICY AND FRUITY

The surfeit of fruits such as strawberries, oranges, grapes, apples, berries and plums, makes winter a baker's favourite season for fruity delights

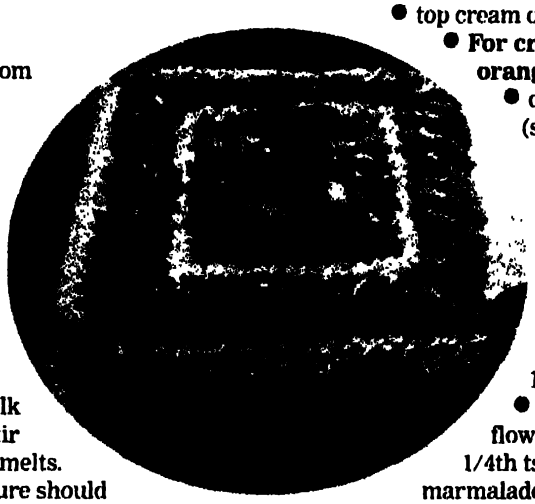
The surfeit of fruits in the market makes winter a festive time for bakers, specially since the season is synonymous with Christmas. Claire Dutta, who runs a bakery shop in the plush Santushti Complex in Delhi, says winter is the best time for bakery delights as just the right varieties of fruits — strawberries, apples, oranges, plums, *kumaras* (sweet potatoes) and *kumquarts* (small variety of oranges) are available in abundance.

A winter favourite that Claire recommends strongly is *Fresh Orange Gateau*, which is quite quick and easy to make.

Fresh orange gateau

INGREDIENTS

- **For cake:** flour 2½cups;
- sugar 1½cups;
- baking powder 1tbs;
- oil 1/2 cup;
- egg yolks 7 (large);
- orange zest 2tbs (grated);
- vanilla 2tbs ;
- egg whites 9;
- top cream of tartar 1.
- **For cream and orange icing:**
- orange 4 cups (segmented);
- cream 2 cups;
- *Grande Marnier* 3tbs;
- orange zest 2tsp;
- sugar 1/4th cup;
- orange flower in water 1/4th tsp; orange marmalade 2tbs.



METHOD

Sift flour, 3/4th sugar and baking powder into a bowl. Whisk together oil, egg yolks, orange juice, zest, vanilla and whisk again into the flour mixture. Beat egg white till foamy, add cream of tartar and continue beating. Add little sugar at a time and beat till glossy. Stir into the batter and fold gently but thoroughly. Spoon into a 10 inch round pan and bake at 325°F for one hour. Slice the cake horizontally into three. Leave to cool completely.

Frosting: Whip the cream with sugar and *Grande Marnier* and orange flour and water. Fold in two cups of segmented oranges. Spread cream between layer and around top and sides of *gateau*. Arrange remaining two cups of orange around the top of the cake. Melt marmalade with two tablespoons of water over fire and brush over oranges. Chill *gateau* for at least three hours.■

cold comfort

A winter wardrobe can combine both practicality and style, says **Samita Bhatia**



Innumerable fashion houses have come clean with their offerings for the season. The styles are international, colourful, dynamic but on the whole practical. The attempt has been to keep in tune with changing trends with a commitment to researching innovative materials.

The fabrics are mostly practical, easy-to-wear and in some cases crease, fire and water-resistant. If Digjam flaunts the Teflon easy care collection -- the innovative new suiting that's stain and water-resistant — hot from the Benetton factories comes a seamless tubular fabric.

This winter the colour palate for men is dark. Deep hues of prune (plum), burgundy and blue dominate. There's room too for flamboyant cardinal reds, velvet greens, papal purples and grey-blues while natural whites and beiges too find favour. But what definitely doesn't is the staid, stiff look of the grey suit.

The colour swatch for women has also undergone a major change. It cleverly develops infinite variations of grey, beige, black and white, dusty pastels, bordeaux and dark blue, green and warm mustard.

The winter fabrics meanwhile veer towards the 'ultra-light but superwarm'. Women's clothes this season are casual, bright but not

PRETTY MAIDS

The hemlines are tight-fitting or flared while the miniskirt is omnipresent in tartans and checks. The emphasis this season is on comfort and on an informal image

loud, and with a slightly masculine yet elegant take. Shirts are big this winter, and are all set to become the staple of a modern woman's wardrobe. They come in such fabrics as satin, quality jacquard, jersey and non-run knits. Pockets and other forms of embellishment are rather popular as well.

Every season some key words and feelings act as hubs around which the collections revolve. Says F. A. Naqvi, vice-president, marketing, Madura Garments, "Stylists and designers around the world use these key words and themes as anchors and interpret and adapt them to the specific requirements of the core markets."

Comfort and wearability come from Madura Garments, which has brought such international labels as Louis Philippe, Van Heusen, Allen Solly and Peter England to the Indian male. Says Naqvi, "Heritage, nostalgia, neo technology and touch are some of the key words followed by us this winter."

Peter England and Allen Solly bring "the back-to-basics look this winter," says Naqvi. Minimalism is enhanced by technology while high quality standards are adhered to. "Over-decoration and kitsch is out. A relaxed yet powerful contemporary version of the traditional corporate look is in, a look that embodies the new professional." It's a season of fabrics that are soft, supple and natural. Sometimes the surfaces are raised ever so slightly for a powdery or suede feel.

Described as a brand that's "affordable, contemporary and corporate", Peter England offers a range of deep colours while checks emerge as the label's direction for the season.

The originator of the Friday Dressing concept in the country, Allen Solly, makes yet another pitch for the young at heart. "To be successful in business, be daring, be different, be the first," is the maxim that today's corporates and Allen Solly live by. 'Comfort without sacrificing appearance' is the motto, thus the clothes veer between the formal and informal with insouciant ease.

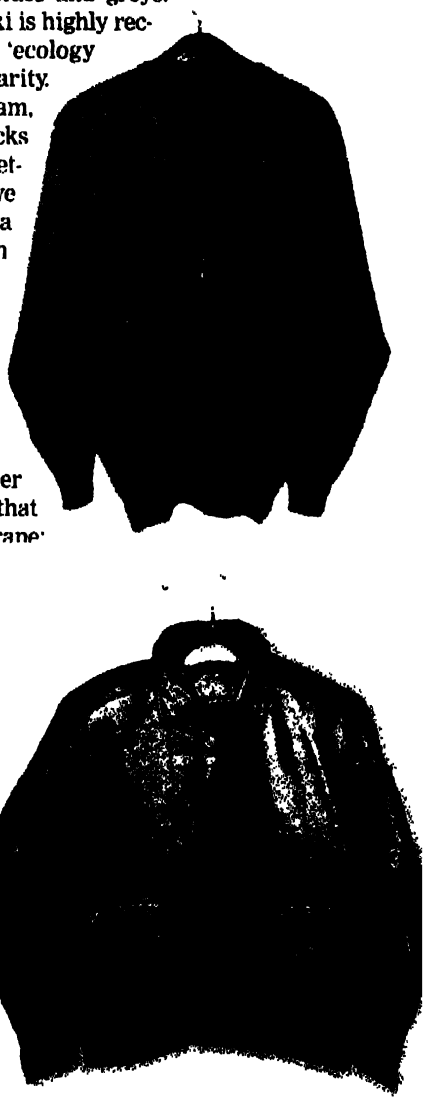
Feather Finish fabrics from Allen Solly bring to men's wardrobes various weaves in twill, and dobby which are as soft as feathers. "Taking its cue from the key word 'touch', the collection uses the latest technology to produce a 90s collection for the new professional," says Naqvi.

Louis Philippe, for its part, adopts the blaze of the 70s man for a neo-90s look. Poised as a premium menswear line, Louis Philippe's lead offering is 'Wine' - a collection that takes its cue from the French passion for wines. The collection is a take-off on a varied palette of wines, combining the nuances of burgundy and rose with the hues of Chablis. The fabrics used are cottons and polyester cotton blends.

There's much more in the stores for men. From Digjam come the blues and greys. Browns are out while khaki is highly recommended this winter while 'ecology green tints' catch on in popularity. Says B.S. Chandiramani of Digjam, "The designs are subdued checks which are more popular in the metros and mini-metros. However, we find that in other cities there is a preference for co-ordinates with bold checks."

Since high prices find few takers, Digjam has diversified into a collection that falls in the medium price range. Buyers are opting for the fabric that is available from Rs 450 to Rs 750 per meter.

The brand's staple this winter includes plenty of merino wool that gives jackets an impeccable drape there's also a wool and polye range they call Topline. Tuscana offers subdued fabrics in superfine wool and pol lends men colour and a t warmth. Digjam's flamboyant of colours are available in th lection called Milano wh blends polyester and fine wo and then, the all-time classic - dark pinstripes. Silks for the winter have been crafted for the Marquis collection that offers a range of silk wool and superfine jacketing fo less formal occasions.



Women can look just as glamorous in woolly sweaters and choose from contrasting dian shapes, irregular diamond b diminishing stripes, edging and trims in different colours. Leather and velvet is also a popular look this season.

Earth colours, maroon and blue are doing well in the most visible accessory for men — the ubiquitous tie. Yarn-dyed fabrics and small classical prints are the hot sellers this season, while floral and animal designs focus attention on nature. Zorex Ties (so called in the 60s) metamorphosed into Bentley in the late 80s which has since offered the Indian man variations in fabrics and styles.

According to R.K Bhatia, chairman and managing director, Bentley, "Paisleys and geometrics continue to be the favourites among businessmen. Shaded jacquard, which was popular a decade ago, has made a comeback this season. We have recon-

COLD VIBES

Woollies and jackets are here to vibe with everyone's taste and budget. So go ahead and take your pick from the varied brands flooding the market

E COMPLETE MAN
'To be successful business,be daring, be different, be the first' is what today's corporates live by



structed the tie so that it is possible to have a perfect fall while knotting." The ties are priced between Rs 395 to Rs 2,000.

Ready-to-wear international brands are also set to take on winter. Lacosté, which operates in the premium segment of 'smart casuals', combines soft colours and the basic reds, yellows and greens for the winter. The fabrics for men are heavy twills with trousers in warmer polywool. There are an array of track suits (Rs 1,300- Rs 3,200), ladies full-sleeve shirts and bright stripes in long sleeve T-shirts. Neatly stacking Lacosté showrooms are the legendary Lacosté polo shirts, jogging pants, shorts, ladies tights, and bermudas.

While most of Lacosté's fabric is now manufactured on the outskirts of the capital, the label continues to import some accessories. Mother-of-pearl buttons, some interlining, thread and, of course, that little crocodile that goes on every Lacosté product, continues to be imported.

Vibrant knits and weaves also come from Woodland, hitherto known for its range of footwear. Lambswool pullovers (Rs 600-1,200) in earth tones, sporting round and V necks, front open or jacquards, are flying off shelves. The sweatshirts for winter '98 come in fleece, interlocks and reserve twill and with tags that range from Rs 495-895.

Trousers and shorts come in twill, canvas and wrinkle-free chinos. New additions to the collection are jackets (Rs 895-1,800) in canvas, *tussar*, twill, denim and the newly introduced water repellent Korean ar Japanese fabrics. Leather jackets (Rs 3,495-5,00 and accessories round off the collection.

But high prices obviously don't deter buyer "As Indian customers are more exposed to luxu and high quality brands they are able to recogni a superior quality product. Besides, it is quali and not high prices that distinguish the Lacos brand," says Atul Nayar of Lacosté.

While Lacosté essentially makes unisex ga ments, its women's line is slated for a winte launch. This will contain tops and shirts in knit The signature Lacosté clingy dress will now b available in several colours along with the sleev less and half-sleeve tops (Rs 900-1,200).

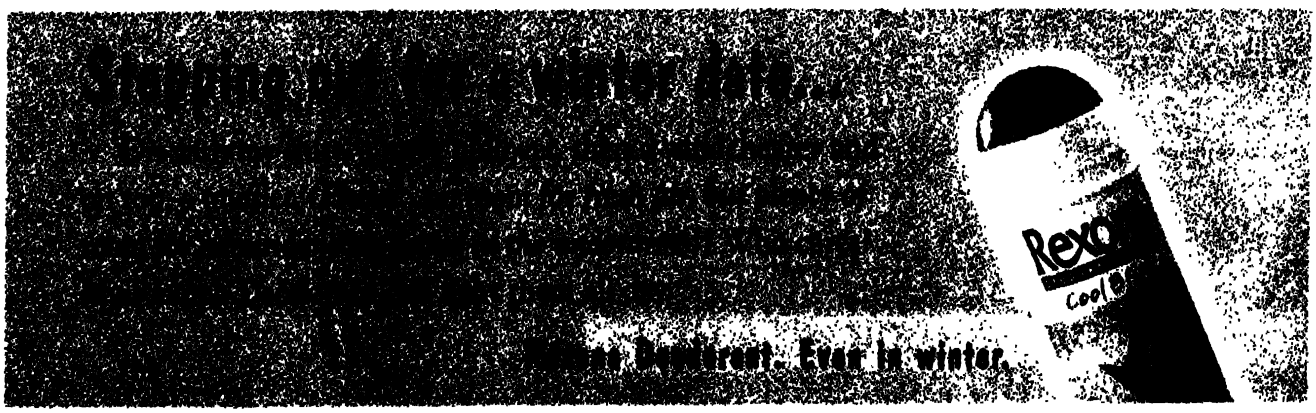
Another brand that attempts to add colour t everyday life is Benetton with its range of 206 fal rics. There are the 30s-style skirts in embroidere satin combined with long, casual cardigans an velvet jackets. The brand marks the popularity c pullovers with unusual necklines — some ha way between V and polo shirts.

The hemlines are tight-fitting or flared whil the miniskirt is omnipresent in tartans an checks. You can take your pick of jackets i leather and velvet that are long and loose fittin or go for three-quarter length sweaters.

A new line of garments in close-fitting, seam less, tubular fabric — but in one size — is avai able for every type of woman. The speciall mixed polyamide-cotton fabric that was launche about a year ago in the undergarments collectio has now been extended to the women's appare The possibilities that this fabric offers ar tremendous: from clingy garments to T-shirts dresses, vests and shorts.

From Benetton, the colours for winter rang from brown to grey, black and dark blue witl touches of plum and bright green. "There's noth ing unusual about the men's range but it concen trates on ideal materials and cuts in search o greater comfort and of an image that is mor informal than ever," says a Benetton spokesper son.

Winter is here and the brands are celebratin it by providing clothes that would vibe witl everyone's taste and budget. So, whether it's a work or at leisure, you can go in for a completely different look this season.■



TIME *Out*

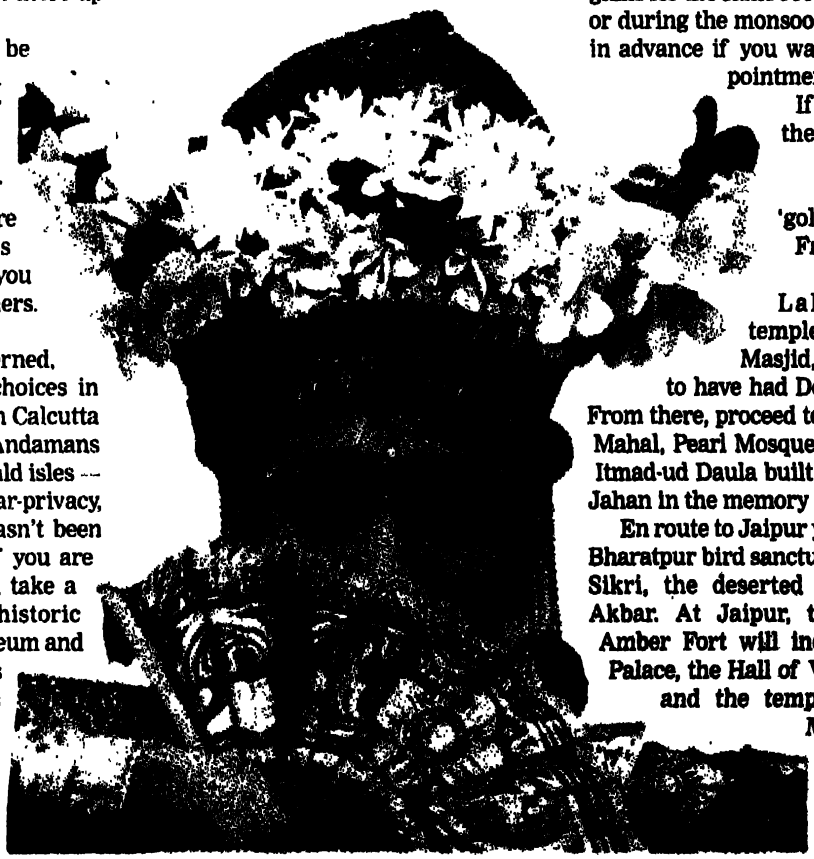
GREAT ESCAPES

When it comes to winter vacation options, you'll be spoilt for choice this season. **Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya** reports

Now that winter's here, can a vacation be far behind? No chance, if you and your travel agent have anything to do with it. There's something about the balmy breeze of this season which makes you want to take off for faraway exotic locations -- and if that's not possible (for reasons of either time or money) then even the nearby beach resort will do.

But while choosing a vacation spot, keep some things in mind. Most important are your own inclinations. If you like the sun, then a beach holiday may be more to your liking. But if the cold appeals to you, then a getaway in the hills may make more sense. If you are imbued with a sense of history, however, then palaces and ruins may be more up your street.

Most important of all, be adventurous. Don't be scared of moving away from familiar haunts and tread the less-popular paths to scenic delights. If you feel apprehensive of doing that on your own, there are plenty of package deals available that would enable you to do so in the company of others.



Where beaches are concerned, you will be spoilt for choices in India. A short flight away from Calcutta are the virgin beaches of the Andamans --- an archipelago of 321 emerald isles -- where you can frolic in near-privacy, given that this destination hasn't been overrun by tourists as yet. If you are tired of sunbathing, you can take a sightseeing tour to the historic Cellular Jail, the Marine Museum and the mini zoo, which houses some of the animals and birds native to the islands.

If you need to lose yourself in a tropical fantasy -- especially recommended for honeymooners — why not consider Lakshwadeep? A coral paradise, the 36 islands are encased by a vast expanse of blue sea with varying shades of turquoise blue translucent water lashing against the sands of the beaches.

If you prefer the familiar, then Gopalpur-on-Sea or Puri could be an option. Venture further out and Goa becomes a possible destination. There are hotels aplenty here. If you have kids you can hardly do better than the Taj Holiday Village, which is especially geared towards their needs. Or you could opt for Cidade de Goa, or the cheaper hotels that dot the beachline. Consult your travel agent for the best possible deal.

But stay warned. Goa is expensive in the winter; you could get amazing bargains for the same rooms in the summer or during the monsoons. And book well in advance if you want to avoid disappointment.

If it's the north, there's no beating the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur 'golden triangle'. From the Qutab Minar to the Lakshminarayan temple and the Jama Masjid, you will be glad to have had Delhi as your base. From there, proceed to Agra for the Taj Mahal, Pearl Mosque and the Tomb of Itmad-ud Daula built by empress Noor Jahan in the memory of her father.

En route to Jaipur you could visit the Bharatpur bird sanctuary and Fatehpur Sikri, the deserted ghost capital of Akbar. At Jaipur, the excursion to Amber Fort will include the Marble Palace, the Hall of Victory, Jai Mahal and the temple of Kali. The Maharaja's City Palace, a stupendous complex of exquisite palaces, gar-



dens and courtyards, decorative art and carved doorways is a world apart. One could also drive past the Hawa Mahal, so named because of the latticed screens and arches which allow for an unbridled flow of air currents.

If you are on the Jaipur-Jodhpur-Jaisalmer trail, it would make perfect sense to extend your trip to Gujarat as well. Kundu Special has one such package. Most of their tours are mainly conducted through special trains and local tourist buses. Food (only Bengali cuisine) is cooked by Kundu Special's own chef. The total package includes all costs — accommodation, food, train/bus fare. Sightseeing charges for the entire trip work out to around Rs 600.

A vacation that does not empty your wallet is the Kathmandu-Pokhra-Nagarkote holiday experience. A melting pot of Himalayan culture, "mortals mingle with deities" there. The Soaltee Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Deluxe package offers Rs 10,000 worth of free casino coupons to set your gambling instincts spinning.

Want a wilderness vacation? A beach/jungle camp organised by Mercury Himalayan Explorations can take you through a slew of activities: Tarzan swings, Burma bridging, rock climbing, nature walks and bird watching. You could then top it off with a five-day rafting expedition from Rudraprayag to Rishikesh on any of the following dates: December 21, '98; January 4, '99; February 1, and March 1, '99.

Closer home, you could look towards Bhutan, Land of the Thunder Dragon, though it does get quite cold at this time of the year. Wedged between giant neighbours and secluded by some of the highest ranges in the world, it is not surprising that over long centuries of its history, Bhutan has remained a little-known land.

This unspoiled country with majestic mountains is full of friendly people who go out of their way to make their guests happy and comfortable. A package to Bhutan might include three nights at Paro valley — the centre of two of the most important trade routes to Tibet. Today, the new road south of Phuntsholing on the Indian border runs through the valley, amid a patchwork of rice paddies, wheat fields, trout-filled streams and scattered settlements.

You may have stayed all your life in Calcutta but never quite had the inclination to visit Santiniketan, the seat of Bengali culture. While your friends may have talked about Uttarayan, the university campus, the Sangeet, Kala and *Cheene* Bhavans, you may have looked the other way in embarrassment. Take a short break during *poush mela* to witness the *bauls* strumming their folksy tunes. There are lots of *batik*, leather accessories, and strings of terracotta and bead jewellery that you could buy at the fair.

Cochin, Periyar and Munnar would any day win our vote as the ideal winter sabbatical, unless you have already been mesmerised by the magic of Kerala. At Cochin, stuff yourself with plenty of seafood, then move on to Periyar, a jungle of evergreen forests and elephant grass which provides shelter for a variety of fauna. If you are lucky, you can actually see the rare tiger or leopard. The Spice Village Resort at Periyar has cottages with thatched roofs which blend beautifully with the surrounding greenery of pepper fields. Munnar, a hill resort in the midst of tea and cardamom plantations with folds and folds of gently rolling hills,

TRAVEL PLANS

SOME PACKAGES ON OFFER

Sita World Travel (India) Limited, 3B Camac Street, Manasarovar, Second Floor, Calcutta-700016 Tel: 299769/297187.

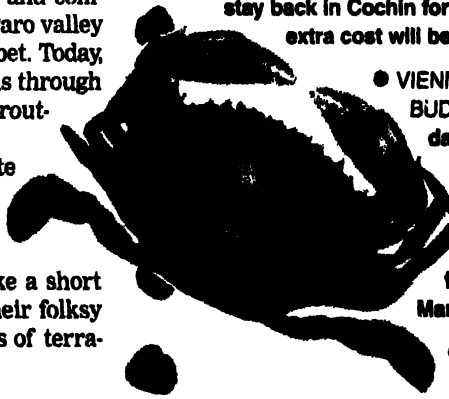
- HERITAGE VILLAGE CLUB: **Goa airport transfers, half day sightseeing tour, dolphin chase, special Gujarati vegetarian meals on request. Price: Rs 6,500 per double room, per night for two people.**

- DELHI/AGRA/JAIPUR: **1 night Delhi/1 night Agra/2 nights Jaipur.**
Valid up to March 1, '99. Per person on twin sharing basis: Rs 10,000.

- BHUTAN PACKAGE: **2 nights Thimpu/1 night Punakha (famous for its fruit trees)/3 nights Paro.**
Price: Rs 24,500 per person on twin sharing basis. Tour price does not include air fares.

- LAKSHWADEEP: **4 nights/5 days**
Validity: December21-January 20, '99 at Rs 24,000 per person.
January 21-March 31, '99 at Rs 18,500 per person on twin sharing basis.

- KERALA: **1 night at Cochin/3 nights at Munnar/2 nights at Periyar.**
Validity — October 1, '98-March 31, '99 at Rs 18,500 per person on twin sharing basis. Due to flight connections in case passenger needs to stay back in Cochin for an additional night, the extra cost will be Rs 1,450 per person.



- VIENNA-PRAGUE-BUDAPEST: **6 nights/7 days.**
Tour cost — Adult sharing room — US $700. There will be a travel surcharge from October 1, '98-March 31, '99.

- CHINA: **7 nights/8 days.**
Tour cost: US $1,450 (adult) sharing room. A travel surcharge will have to be paid from November 1, '98-March 31, '99.

- SEYCHELLES: **6 nights/7 days**
Tour cost: Adult sharing room US $1,090, plus a travel surcharge to be paid from November 1, '98-March 31, '99.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

MORE PACKAGES ON OFFER

Kundu Special, 1 Chittaranjan Avenue, Calcutta-700072, Tel: 271785/67; 40/1, Strand Road, Calcutta-700001, Tel: 2431247.

- RAJASTHAN AND PARTS OF GUJARAT: **(Dwarka, Porbandar, Somnath) for Rs 7,195 per head; Rajasthan trip with the above mentioned places in Gujarat with Delhi added for Rs 5,995.**
- KATHMANDU-POKHRA-NAGARKOTE: **(8-day package by air) for Rs 9,145.**

Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza India Private Limited, C/o HM Plaza, Circular Court, Ground Floor, 8 AJC Bose Road, Calcutta-700017; Tel: 2475136, 2475069.

- SOALTEE: **For 3 nights/3 days for Rs 9,999 on a twin-sharing basis and Rs 14,999 on single occupancy.**

Mercury Himalayan Explorations Private Limited, Everest House, 46C, Chowringhee Road, Calcutta. Tel: 2423513, 2424217.

- SHIVPURI, RISHIKESH: **2 nights/3 days escape; Rafting per person (accommodation and meals) Rs 2,890.**

Peerless Travels (P) Limited, 1 Chowringhee Square, Calcutta-700069, Tel: 2487181/7197; 6A, AJC Bose Road, Calcutta-700017, Tel: 2479974/2403262.

- SINGAPORE: **(only city tour) Rs 18,300+US $115.**
- SINGAPORE, BANGKOK, PATTAYA: **Rs 19,560+US $350**
- ANDAMANS: **3 nights, 4 days for Rs 6,499 per head.**
- KATHMANDU: **7 nights, 8 days for Rs 7,499 per person.**
- BHUTAN: **3 nights, 4 days for Rs 3,999 per person.**

Mark Meadows, 48A, Dr Sundari Mohan Avenue, Calcutta-700014, Tel: 2448254.

- SANTINIKETAN: **(2 nights for 2 at Rs 2,222, including one meal. 3 nights for 2 and 1 child for Rs 6,666 inclusive of meals and train transfers.**

is known for its overwhelming tranquillity.

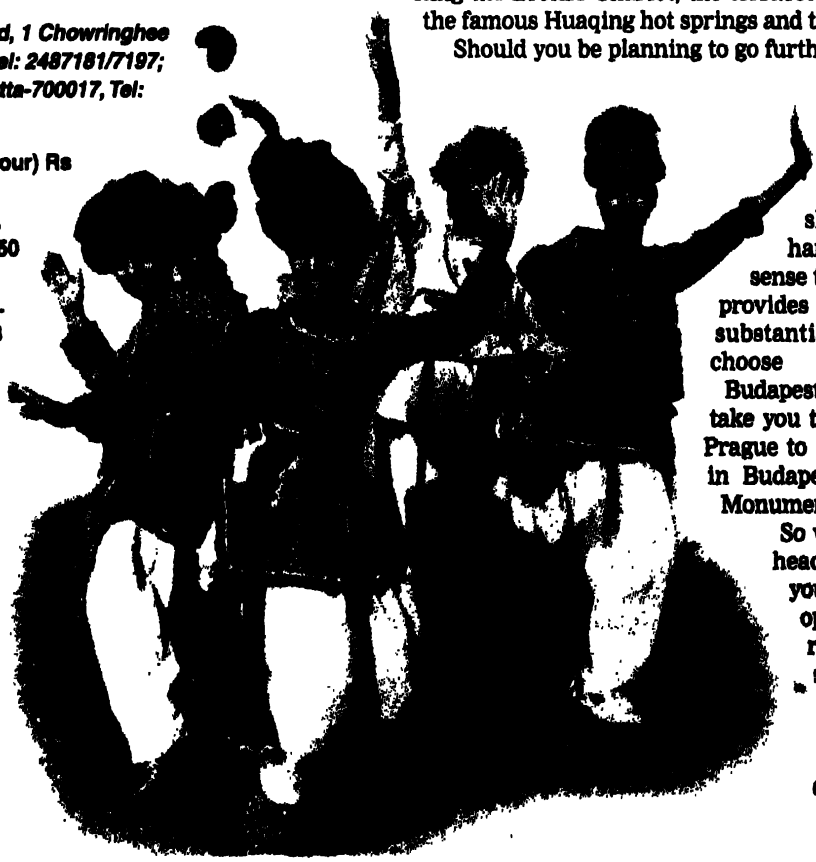
Ever since Diana Hayden won the Miss World crown at Seychelles, the rich have been flocking to its picturesque beach resorts. Fly in to be dazzled by turquoise lagoons and snow white beaches. The tour operator can take you to the hustle and bustle of Victoria, the botanical garden, craft village and the model boat building factory. A reef safari is a visual feast of corals and abundant fish. Indulge your 'Baywatch' fantasies through a wide choice of water sports: skiing, parasailing, snorkelling, wind surfing, canoeing or water polo on the ocean deep.

Interest in the Far East has never really waned. A look at the profusion of packages to Singapore, Pattaya and Bangkok gives a traveller the best of everything: from scrumptious cuisine to a surfeit of shopping and sightseeing. The Sentosa Discovery Tour includes a breathtaking and scenic cable car ride which provides a bird's eye view of one of the world's busiest ports. The ride takes you to the resort island where you can see the images of Singapore, the underwater world or Volcanoland and the Maritime Museum.

Zoom off on a monorail for an overview of Jurong Bird Park where over 8,000 birds roost. A night safari to spot more than 1,200 exotic nocturnal animals which roam freely over 40 hectares of lush tropical forest is the first of its kind in the world.

At Pattaya, you could go coral gazing in a glass-bottomed boat. And unwind at Bangkok by roaming the colourful floating market at Damnoen Saduak in Ratchaburi province. The canals become clogged with *sampans* loaded with fruits and vegetables as the day wears on.

America's first family (the Clintons) might have made China the hot spot for international celebrities when they visited the country last summer. At Beijing, you get to see one of the most astonishing feats of human endeavour: the legendary Great Wall. A Peking duck banquet awaits you at Hotel Beijing Sheraton. The trip takes one on a visit to the Temple of Heaven, the Forbidden City from where the emperor Ming and Qing ruled China and Tian-an-man Square. Once at Xi'an, a full day's excursion could be spent visiting the Bronze Chariot, the terracotta warriors and horses, the famous Huaqing hot springs and the ancient city wall.



Should you be planning to go further, to the Continent, for instance, look for the cheapest options, as travel in this area is rather steep. When combined with the sky-rocketing value of hard currency, it makes sense to opt for an option that provides comfort, efficiency and substantial savings. You could choose the Vienna-Prague-Budapest trip. At Vienna, they take you to Beleverere Palace; in Prague to St Vitus Cathedral and in Budapest to the Millennium Monument.

So where is it that you are headed this season? Take your time, mull over your options — but do make reservations before you set out.

Additional reporting by Gargee Bhattacharjee

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press two weeks in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC-741	0845	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-742	1500	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-743	1240	daily	IC-744	1110	daily
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1430	2 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 4, 5	IC-722	1620	1, 2, 4, 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1405	daily	9W-512	2140	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC-778	1300	1, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1630	daily	IC-766	2135	daily
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
■ DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0810	daily
9W-902	0845	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	1055	2, 6
* IC-856	1900	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2010	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2025	daily
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-890	1200	4, 7	IC-889	1545	4, 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1450	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	2, 4, 6
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 7	IC-230	1310	daily
IC-890	1200	4, 7	9W-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-889	1545	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1405	daily	IC-770	1300	2, 4
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC-778	1300	1, 5
IC-769	1400	2, 4	9W-512	2140	daily
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6
■ IMPHAL					
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
IC-890	1200	4, 7	IC-889	1545	4, 7
■ JAIPUR					
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
■ JORHAT					
9W-621	1000	3, 5	9W-622	1315	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0625	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0920	daily
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	2000	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1950	daily	9W-211	1915	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1400	2, 4	IC-770	1300	2 4
■ PATNA					
IC-725	1000	2, 6	IC-725	1355	2, 6
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD-285	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-286	1005	2, 4, 6
CD-285	0630	7	CD-286	1105	7
■ PUNE					
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1000	2, 6	IC-725	1355	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1020	• 2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0415	7	KL-475	0230	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1006	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	1155	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1810	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

*** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal**

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a tall, fair and reasonably slim 23-year-old girl. I have a very bad posture and although I try to sit straight, I soon start slumping and this looks very ungainly indeed. Please suggest ways in which I can improve my posture.

REEMA SHAH, CALCUTTA

It is essential that you become conscious everytime you start to slump. In fact, whenever you are with friends, I would suggest that you ask them to keep a check on your posture and point out whenever you are going wrong. Another way is actually an old method. Start by keeping two heavy books on your head and walk straight, balancing them properly. Whenever you are at home, I would suggest that you sit with the books on your head. You could be watching TV or just sitting quietly alone. A slumped back woman is extremely ungraceful to look at, for at 23, you should be as graceful as a swan.

I have very thin, fine hair and also get split ends very easily. My hair is very oily. Please suggest ways to maintain this type of hair. I want to grow my hair really long but it just does not seem to grow.

JANAKI KRISHNAMURTHY, DHANBAD

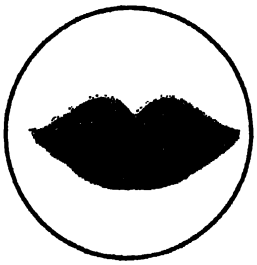
Your basic problem is undernourished and unconditioned hair. Firstly, it is important for you to get a split end treatment done regularly for the next month or so. Get your hair trimmed, there is no point in having long, thin, unkempt hair. In spite of having oily hair, oil your hair with warm almond oil and leave on for an hour. Steam your hair and shampoo within two hours of keeping the oil in your hair. *Henna* your hair. Not only will this give your hair body and promote better growth, it will make your hair look thicker as well. Always remember that any recipe for better, more luxuriant hair takes time and effort. The recipes may be mine but the efforts have to be entirely yours.

I have heard that applying *haldi* and cream is beneficial for the skin but I have never heard you including any of these in your face packs. Is *haldi* really beneficial? If so, how?

M.L. GHOSH, BURDWAN

LIP-CARE FOR THE WINTER

Eat dairy products such as cheese, *paneer* and yoghurt. Apply a mixture of almond oil and sesame oil on the lips at least five times a day





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Winter dryness is setting in very fast. Create your own oils for the season by mixing either sesame seed oil with rose water or coconut oil with sandalwood oil. Not only will you feel good, you will smell fabulous as well



What you have heard is correct but why I have not mentioned it in any of my skin care recipes is that a lot of people feel uncomfortable with the slight yellowish stain that *haldi* very often leaves behind on the skin. Yes, cream is very beneficial for the skin especially because it is very moisturising. *Haldi* is a very powerful antibiotic for the body when used internally to treat digestion problems and that is why it is used for most Indian cooking. It is also used as an antiseptic. Creams are used in a variety of *uptans* or scrubs and have a depilatory action as well as toning effect. If you have dry skin, then you can mix both *haldi* and fresh cream and use it on your skin. This will result in a radiant and glowing complexion.

Why is it that, in winters, there is a greater tendency to have dandruff-prone hair? I apply curd and lemon juice on my scalp but the problem still persists. Also, my scalp does not smell very nice even though I shampoo my hair quite regularly. Please advise.
T. BHATTACHARJEE, ASSAM

Discontinue the use of curd as this may be the cause of the smell in your hair. Winter months imply more nourishment for the hair and this should be done with the use of warm coconut oil followed by the application of lemon juice and then steaming. This done twice a week will reduce the dandruff. *Henna* your hair as this is known to dissuade dandruff and condition the hair naturally.

Dandruff is dangerous and I associate it with an internal problem. Drink plenty of water, eat plenty of raw foods, both fruits and vegetables and avoid fried, sugary and heavy, gravy foods. Stress, lack of sleep, prolonged illness, lack of exercise and bad diet, all can be leading factors for dandruff. So check yourself out and see where you are going wrong.

Winters pose a real problem for me with regard to my lips. Not only do they become absolutely dry, the skin also tends to peel and it becomes very painful besides looking ugly. I have tried to apply lip balm but it does not solve the problem. Please suggest some natural remedies.
LABONI LAHA, BALURGHAT

Take plenty of dairy products, milk, cheese, *paneer, ghee* in your *dal*, and yoghurt. Also start taking a vitamin tablet once daily for two weeks and then later, you can discontinue it. Apply a mixture of almond oil and sesame oil on the lips frequently. Do this at least four to five times a day and soon you will find your lips smooth and unchapped. You can apply glycerine and almond oil on your lips at night just before going to sleep so that it does not taste bad. ■

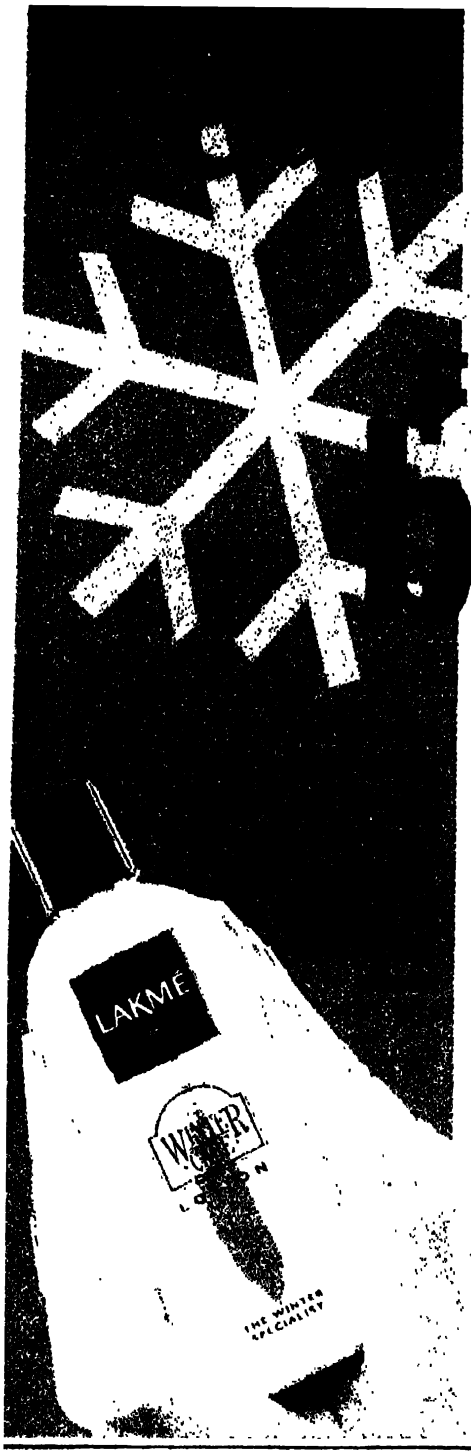
Soaps have harsh alkaline ingredients that can strip your skin of moisture. New Pond's Moisturising Face Wash is 100% soap free It locks in precious moisture and deep cleans gently without drying. Leaving your skin soft and beautiful wash after wash. Try it once and you'll never touch soap again.



POND'S
MOISTURISING
FACE WASH
DEEP CLEANS *GENTLY*
WITHOUT DRYING

How can you best look after you skin and hair in the winter' **Ghazala Wahab** finds ou

FREEZING beauty





Winter is the season that most Indians look forward to. After the sweltering heat of summer, and the damp discomfort of the monsoon, winter comes like a breath of fresh air.

And unlike in Europe — which looks bare and forlorn in the cold months — winter is not a desolate time in India. It is, instead, the most colourful of seasons. Exotic flowers bloom everywhere while fruits abound in the marketplace.

Winter is the time for romanticism, nostalgia. It is also time to reach out for jars of cold creams as lips crack and wrinkles make a sudden appearance.

Explains Geeta Kassal, country manager, sales and marketing, Oriflame, "The cold makes the skin dry due to a lower moisture level in the environment." This dryness usually leads to fine lines and wrinkles. I very cold climates, the skin also ge chapped easily thereby lookin cracked and patchy. And if one doesn use a good winter care lotion, the dr ness can get aggravated making th face and body look scaly.

Adds Jyoti Shirali, senior marke ing manager, Samara, "The drynes also leads to a dull complexion and los of skin flexibility and suppleness."

However, dryness is not the onl problem. According to Suparn Trikha, a cosmetologist and a colun nist with *Graphiti*, "Winter is the tim when everyone welcomes the sun. Bu this is also the time when the sun i strong and can lead to an increase i pigmentation and scaliness."

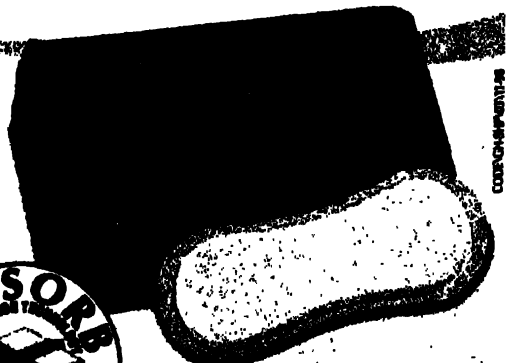
Pond's has its own solution to thi problem. The company recommend the use of its soap-free face wash, an

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hence does not dry out the skin. There is also a deep cleansing milk that gets rids of deeper impurities, and a cold cream that keep the skin soft and supple.

Some skin-types are more vulnerable to harsh weather conditions than others. Says a dermatologist for Lakme Lever, "Our skin has sebaceous glands that secrete oil which acts as a natural lubricant for the skin. The amount of oil generated varies from person to person and from season to season. During the winter months, the sebaceous glands secrete less oil leaving our skin feeling dry and patchy. Furthermore, drier skin types are more susceptible to changes in humidity levels in the environment."

Adds Trikha, "Oily skins look their best at this time as the natural greasiness is least due to less perspiration. Dry skins suffer the most as the winter months bring dry cold which saps the skin of its natural moisture."

It is very essential, therefore, to provide the skin with nourishment by way of creams, lotions and oils. Since the problem is not just of lack of oil but also of moisture, one has to make sure that one is supplementing both. As the spokesperson for Lakme says, 'It is important to nourish, moisturise and protect our skin. A cold cream acts as a top layer and protects the skin externally from the environment. A moisturiser is also required as it penetrates the skin cells and moisturises them from within."

But excessive use of cold cream leaves behind a sticky, greasy layer on the top skin which attracts dirt and pollution. So, you have an additional problem of blemishes and pimples. On the other hand, only moisturisers are not enough to beat the cold. The ideal thing to do would be to mix cold cream with moisturiser or look for a lotion in the market which combines both.

If this sounds like a tall order then you only have to take a look at the shelves at any cosmetic or drug store. In this age of consumerism, you will be spoilt for choice, especially in the area of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs).

Lakme's Winter Care Lotion professes to be a non-greasy way of fighting the cruel winter months as it combines cold cream with a moisturiser. As their spokesperson says, "The Winter Care Lotion's formulation includes Nalidone, which provides better moisturising, and cold cream ingredients enriched with beauty esters give ideal skin protection."

Lakme also has Winter Care Lip Gel with a balanced formulation of petroleum jelly, lanolin and vitamin E.

Curiously, creams like Boroline from G.D. Pharmaceuticals, and Boroplus from Himani, which are essentially antiseptic, all-purpose creams become very popular in winters as they help chapped lips and elbows.

Oriflame's Moisture Base is made for normal to combination skins. It is a light, non-greasy lotion that helps prevent moisture loss.

Calcutta Chemicals' Tuhina is another popular cream for the winters, and sells well in the east. "The lanolin, its main ingredient, helps counter dryness of skin," says Debashish Saha, an associate with the company.

However, not everyone believes in

PAMPER YOURSELF

With face washes, cleansers, body oils, moisturisers — with or without UV protection — and cold creams during the winter months





Enriched with Lanolin, Tuhina Winter Guard protects your skin against dryness. So your skin stays soft, supple and youthful - like in springtime.

LANOLIN ENRICHED SKIN NOURISHER

Tuhina



instant beauty. Samara believes in a complete winter care routine which includes their Cleansing Face Wash enriched with honey and lanolin, a Revitalising Toner to be followed by a Moisture Rebalancing Cream.

People with dry skin obviously need more, because their problem is not just of loss of moisture but also of vital body oils. Lakme's Nourishing Cold Cream offers extra protection and nourishment for very dry skin.

Himani believes in the natural goodness of almonds to protect the skin against the cold onslaught. Their Emami Cold Cream with almond oil is ideal for people who suffer the most during winter as the cream not only protects but also nourishes the skin from within. Himani is also planning to launch a Himani Naturally Fair Cold Cream soon. Says Bipul Damani, "The herbs used in this cream will help clear the skin and the other ingredients will take care of dryness."



Oriflame's Moisture Concentrate is creamily textured, with a rich blend of emollients, moisturisers, humectants and a sunscreen. According to Kassal, "This combination forms a fine film on the surface of the skin to lock in precious natural moisture." So, it serves a dual purpose. It not only relieves the skin of dryness, it also prevents further loss of moisture.

Samara has a cold cream with carrot oil for normal to dry skin and a winter nourishing lotion with aloe vera for oily skin. They also have a body massage oil which is a combination of sandalwood oil, almond oil and purified butter oil. Keo Karpin body oil from Dey's Medical sells throughout the year but in winters it becomes a hot favourite.

Says Sandip Basu, assistant manager, advertising, Dey's Medical, "The body oil with vitamin E was introduced because oil is a traditional favourite, especially in eastern India, as it has nourishing qualities. Even people in northern India who tend to bathe less in winter and yet have to keep their skin nourished opt for our body oil."

Skin is not the only problem area during winters. "In winters, hair tends to become rough, dry and brittle. It requires extra care and nourishment," say Shirali of Samara.

Dandruff also rears its ugly head in the winter months. Calcutta Chemicals' Mahabhringol oil with its ayurvedic formula nips the problem in the bud.

Samara offers special hair oils to provide nourishment to hair roots as well as hair fibre. To fight dandruff, it suggests a two-step treatment with the use of natural ingredients like *neem* and *methi* combined with safe ingredients like ZPT. Apart from this it also has a revitalising hair oil to check hair loss. Apart from winter-specific hair oil, a few brands have more or less captured the Indian hair oil market as their appeal is year-long. For instance, Dabur, with its array of hair oils like Dabur Amla and Dabur Vatika, which is a combination of *henna, amla*, lemon and other herbs like *brahmi, beahera* and *kapurkachari*.

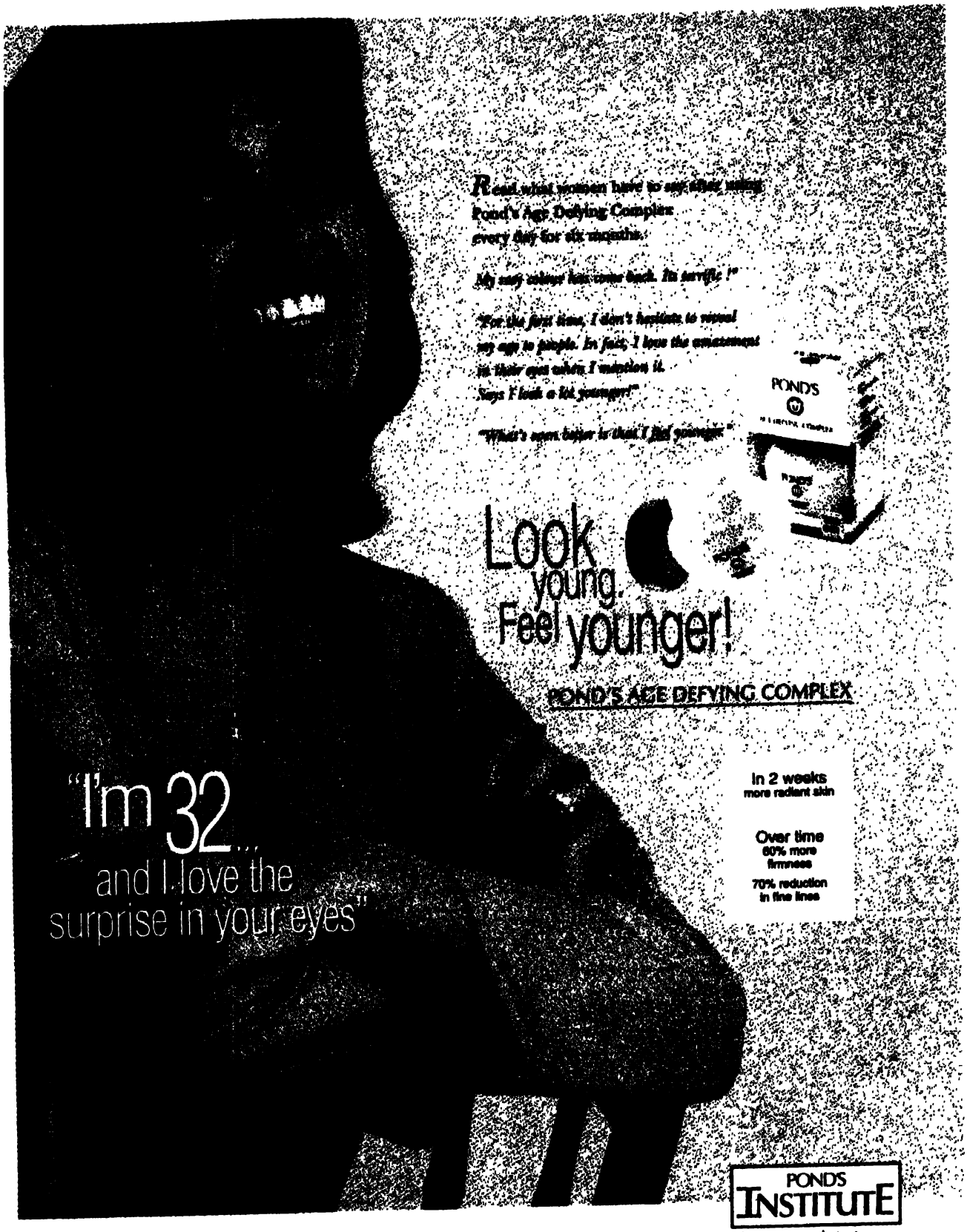
Apart from the hair oils, there is Keo Karpin Hair Vitaliser - a multipurpose product which promises hair growth and check dandruff. But hair problems seldom end with the right oil. A right shampoo is equally important.

Oriflame has a dandruff control shampoo with panthenol as its main ingredient which leaves the hair with added volume. Samara's Anti-dandruff hair wash and Thickening and Strengthening hair wash promise to clean hair in a natural way.

But skin and hair care is as much external as it is internal. It becomes absolutely necessary to balance the diet in such a way that one maintains the water and fat levels in the body.

Once that is done, the external routine of looking after the body becomes all the more simple. Just dab a little moisturiser (which has a sunscreen) on the exposed parts of your body and let the sun envelop you in its golden warmth. ■

Additional reporting by Trina Mukherjee



the screen at our Consumer Interactive Centre* at major retail outlets in your city

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our Helpline *(See below for numbers)*

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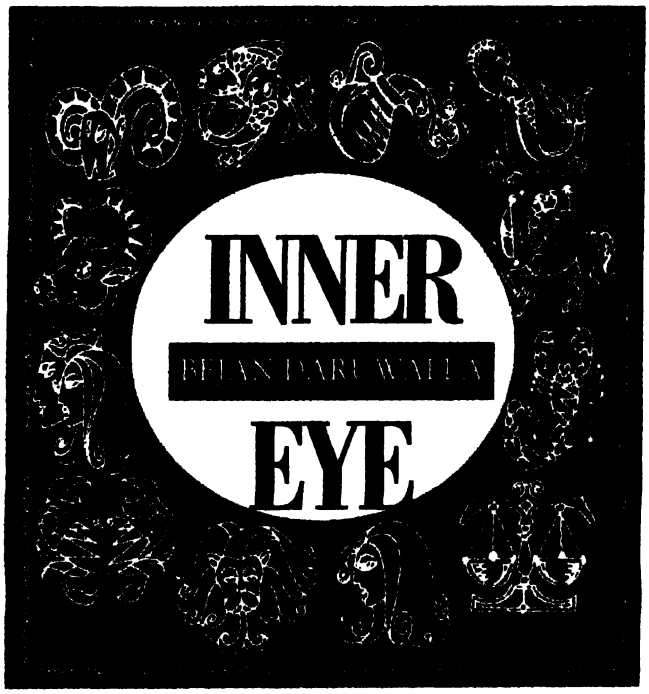
ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Time to take a few vital decisions, that too within a stipulated time. But you will do it as you should have already weighed the pros and cons by now. Try building up a good and strong backup support system. Of course, you will also find some time to relax with friends and family members. So make the most of it.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) A hectic week ahead to socialise, interact and communicate. Expect important phone calls, letters, faxes, e-mails or even notices. You may have to take a few quick decisions. Time to buy/sell, collect, dispose and also renovate. Try to fuse business with pleasure. Or just ensure that you have time enough to take a short break.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Last week's trend of slogging and sweating continues. If you have to decide upon certain crucial issues like property, business, job-change, hiring or firing, just wait a while before taking a plunge. An eventful week involving a lot of meetings, conferences, exchange of ideas and opinions. Try to work to a purpose.

CANCER, (June 21- July 20) The time is ripe for some serious introspection not just regarding yourself but also other members of the family. If you think ahead, you will be able to solve quite a few problems in due time. This week should also see you delving into books, papers, files, notes and references as work will demand more than its ususal share of attention. So try to keep a level head and plan ahead.

LEO, (July 21- August 21) Enough of entertaining and now it's time for work. So it is action tme, dear Leos. Organise your resources, chart out your plan of action and march ahead. Demanding work schedules require meticulous planning and you should have no problems if you have already done all the above. Health may cause concern and even minor aches.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) A thought-provoking week ahead. Get your priorities in the right order and all will be well. Try to keep some time apart to socialise, relax and visit friends. Your visits may lead to some important people and even places. Take care of your health as you might have to travel soon. So it's better that you undertake a journey in a healthy frame of mind and body.

LIBRA, (September 23- October 22) The high-voltage sparks of last week continue and you carry on juggling with your work, home, family, children and hobbies all at the same time. Give yourself a breather if you can as time spent in isolation of work may also provide food for thought and fodder for the brain. Expenses continue to increase if you don't curb them now.

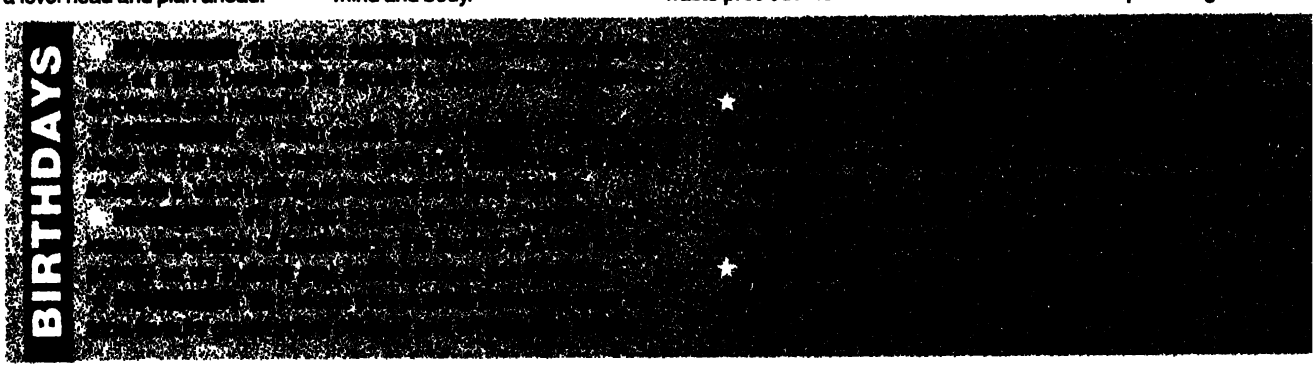
SCORPIO, (October 23- November 22) You have been doing your bit and more for the last few weeks. Now is the time to reap the benefits of your toil and taste the sweet fruit of success. Fame and limelight may elude for sometime but not for long. So go for it, do your own thing and the rest will be taken care of. However, it is not time yet to relax and socialise and waste precious work time.

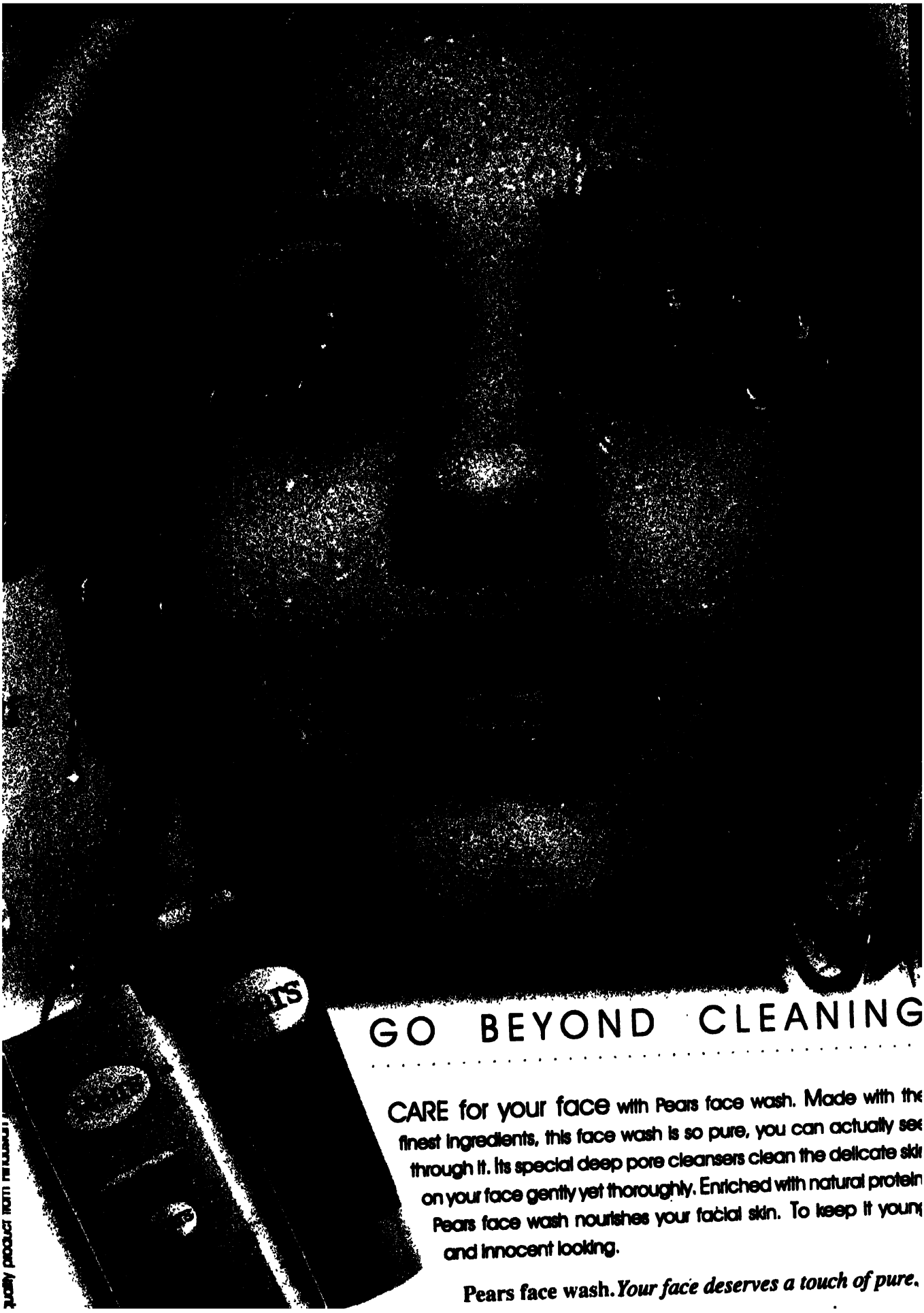
SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) The focus shifts from the microscopic to the macroscopic, from abstarct to concrete and the real. So there is going to be a lot of activities, dear Sagittarians. Some of you may be pressed down with immdiate concerns and day-to-day problems. But the rest have to deal with more complicated issues.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) Continue the good work of last week. Try to find some time for yourself instead of constantly being at the beck and call of others. A week of renovation, decoration, overhauling and even shifting are on the cards. Life has its share of joy and sorrow and it would be wise to take it in your stride. Do not expect the unexpected .

AQUARIUS, (January 20- February 18) All will be quiet on the homefront provided you do not stir the hornet's nest by bringing up unresolved issues. So be the peacemaker and the amiable Aquarian for this week and you will have very little to worry about. On the professional side, matters will run their own course and if you have done a good job in advance, you need not fret.

PISCES, (February 19- March 20) It's the home ministry this week, too. Family, especially older members of the family, require more attention. Try to give as much quality time as possible to all those who will be thirsting for it. Some unforeseen adjustments have to be taken into account but you will cope wonderfully. Also keep some time for pending work and incomplete assignments.



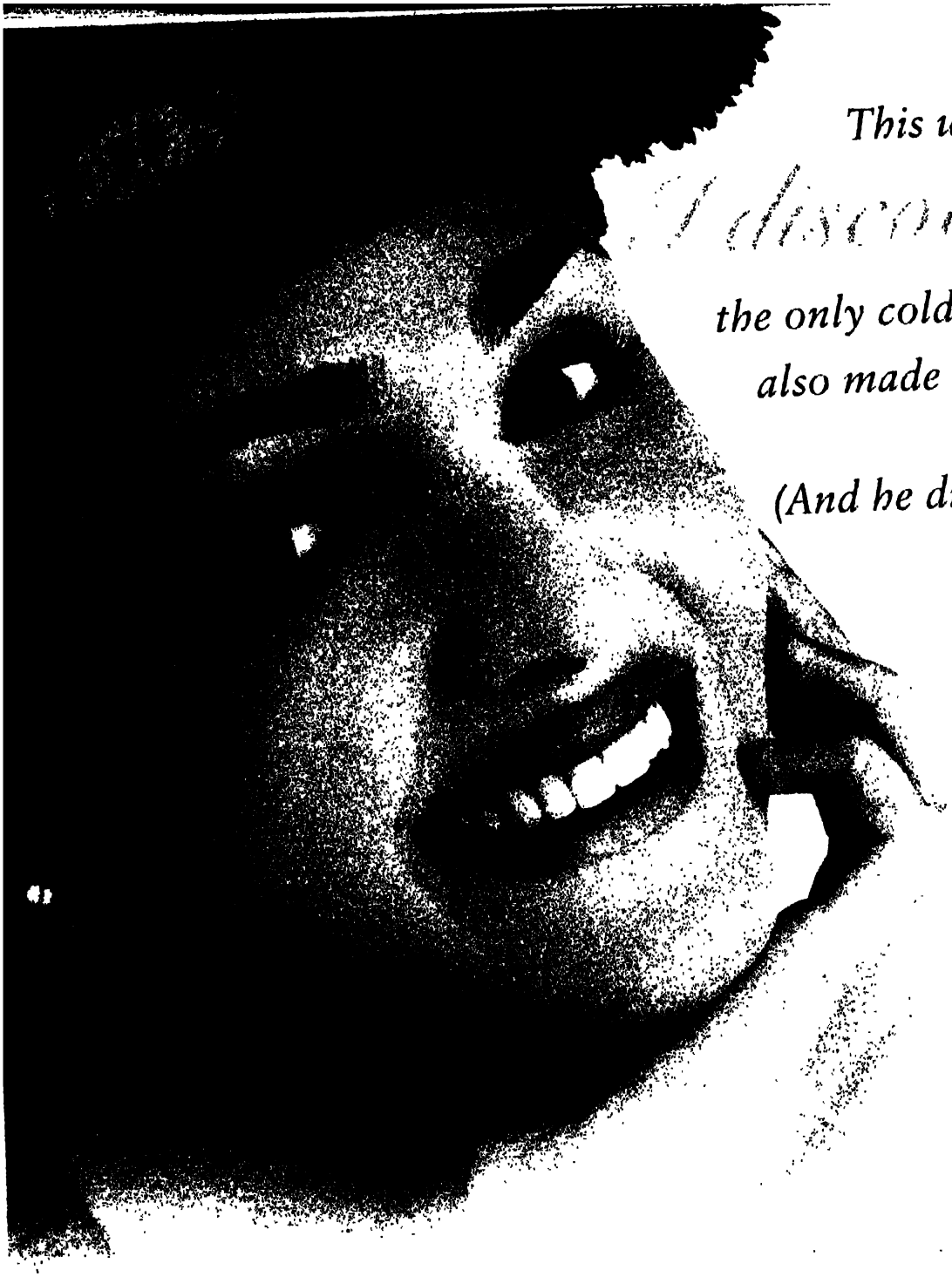


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This winter

I discovered

the only cold cream that

also made me fairer.

(And he discovered me

I N T R O D U C I N G

New Fair & Lovely Fairness Cold Cream. It's not just an ordinary cold cream. It is the only cold cream enriched with Special Fairness Vitamins and double sunscreens which give you noticeably fairer skin - in just six weeks. While ordinary cold creams only relieve winter dryness, New Fair & Lovely Fairness Cold Cream has a double action. The gentle cold cream action leaves you with baby soft skin and the Fairness Vitamins work from within to add a touch of fairness to your complexion. And a touch of romance to your winter.



NEW FAIR & LOVELY FAIRNESS COLD CREAM

THE ONLY COLD CREAM THAT MAKES YOU FAIRER

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WRITE IN



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AMAZING HOMES

The cover story on some of the unusual residences in the country ('Naming In', October 11) was quite fascinating. The article showed that aesthetics and symmetry are indeed things of the past. Worrying about these age-old concepts would only mean not following one's instinct to create one's own dream home.

LOPA BURMAN, CALCUTTA

WORK OF ART

One has to have the monetary means to be able to give free rein to one's imagination. And once that is achieved, your home could well end up being a work of art. It's true that to have a house like that, one has to be adventurous as well. I guess you've got to be daring and of course, willing enough to experiment. People with unconventional outlook could well try out some of these interiors while planning their new homes.

Chandrima Dey, Calcutta

Who is interested in these celebrity homes anyway? Some of the photographs of the homes featured in your magazine look like gaudy film sets. For a house to be a home, it has to radiate warmth and look lived-in. These interiors are anything but beautiful — they're bizarre, to say the least. But yes, they're definitely unusual. With half the nation facing a price crunch, I wish the rich wouldn't just fill up their coffers, but work towards a socialistic society so that everyone could have a roof over their heads.

Neelam Raj, Calcutta

SPLIT PERSONALITY

Shobha Dé has indeed been very selective in her memoirs ('Memories of another Dé', October 4). Such selective amnesia is not becoming of Ms Dé. The high priestess of pulp is brutally honest with other people's lives but why such double standards when it comes to her own?

Indira Sundareesan, Patna

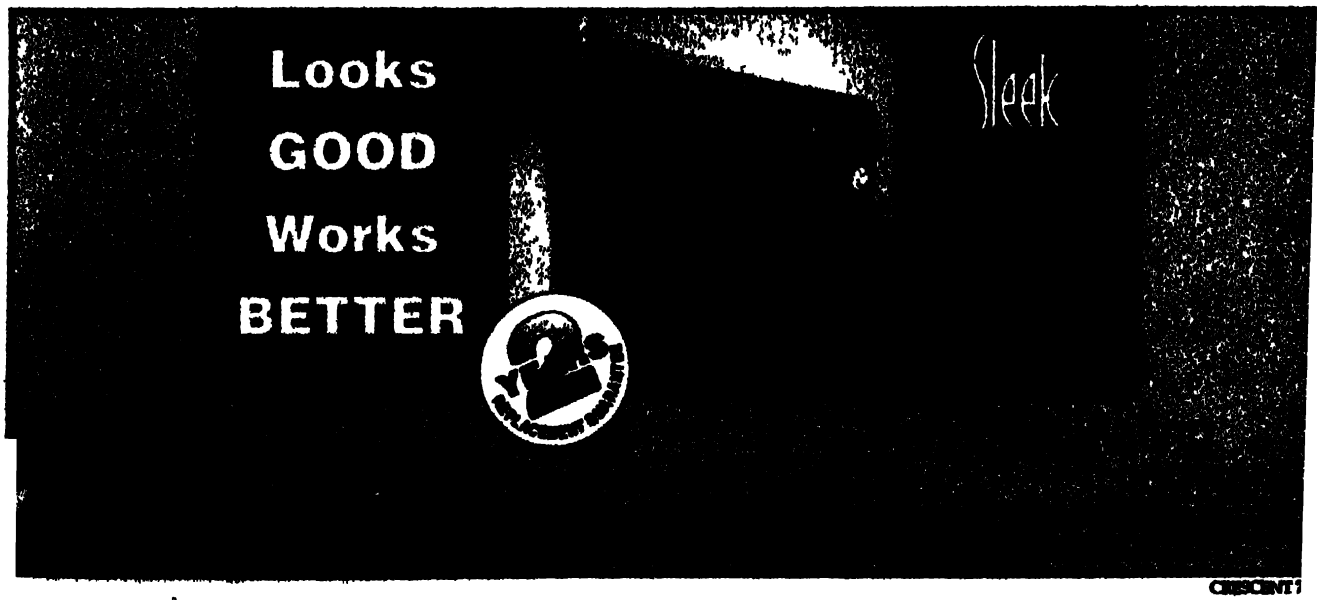
HUMAN INTEREST

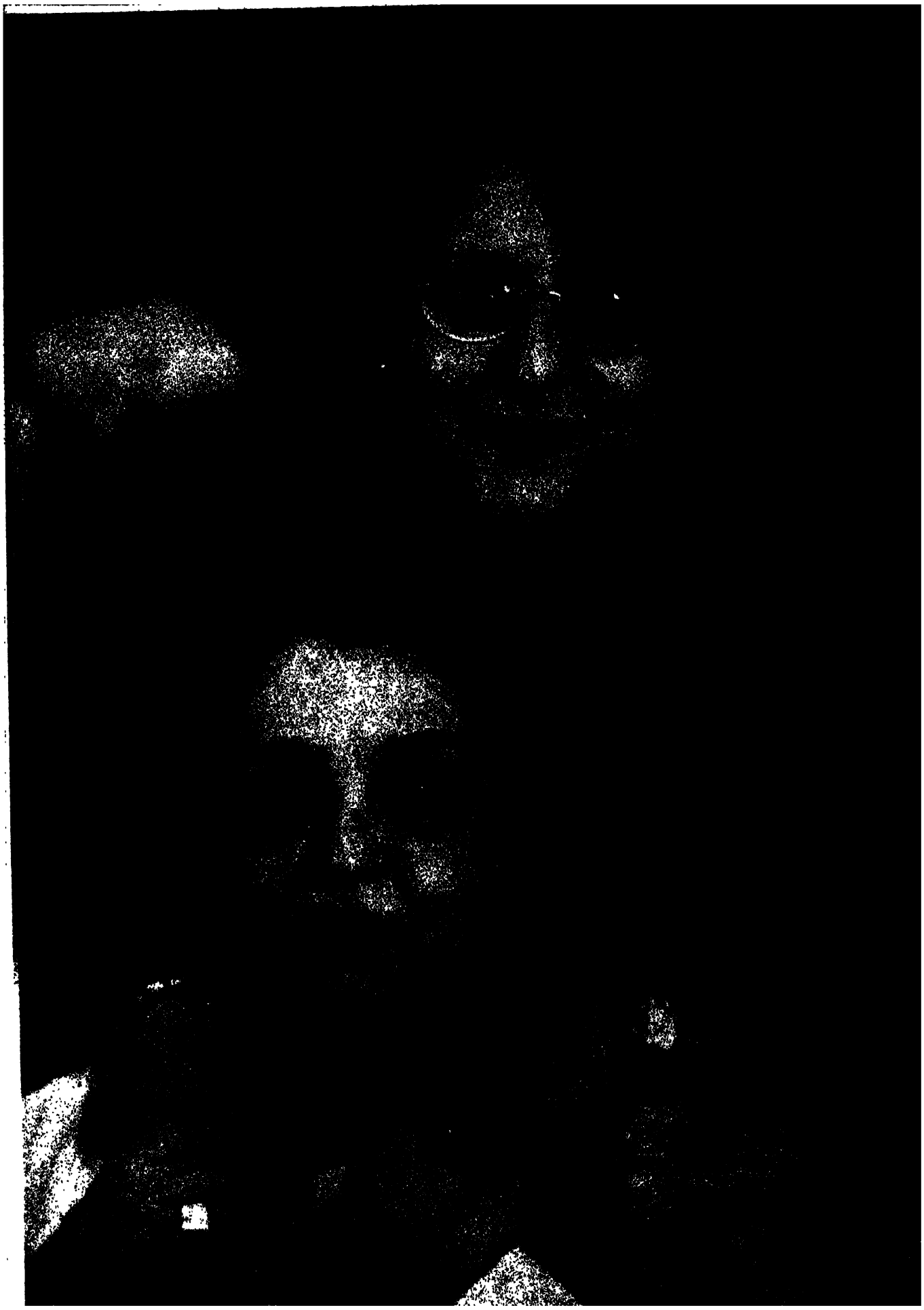
As an ardent reader of *Graphiti*, I'd like the magazine to feature more thought-provoking human interest stories — a welcome change from the usual fashion write-ups. Could we also have book extracts, please?

Ashu Mehta, Calcutta

graphiti ★ 22 November 1998

4 HIGH CONTRAST The mother-daughter duo of Pallavi and Bhairavi Jaikishan are as different as chalk and cheese 13 SMALL TALK What has been the fall-out of the income tax raids on fashion designers? 22 DESIGN CORNER Ready-made kitchens are the new buzz-word 30 MY PERSONAL STYLE Nafisa Ali's life is encapsulated in her house





Pallavi and Bhairavi Jaikishan may be mother and daughter, but they are as different as chalk and cheese, says SUDIPTA BASU

HIGH CONTRAST

The mother-daughter duo of Pallavi and Bhairavi Jaikishan is to contemporary fashion what *malai pedas* and chocolate croissants would be to the urban Indian palate. Tank tops and culottes are fine, but which lady would be caught dead without a *zardozi lehenga-choli* or a hand-embroidered saree on Navratri, Diwali, or a regular wedding? Then, one also has the option of teaming one garment with the other: frayed denims and beaded *choli* can whip up loads of oomph when carefully accessorised with junk jewellery and *bindis*.

Bloodlines may tie the two generations of Jaikishan women, and Bhairavi may have learnt a stitch or two from mother Pallavi, but beyond their eye for fabric, they are cuts apart from one another. Their designs provide ample evidence of this fact: check out Pallavi's ethnic ensembles in silks and metallic tulle, and contrast them with

TWO MINDS
Bhairavi may have learnt her craft from her mother, Pallavi, but they are starkly different from each other as their creations would show

Bhairavi's flowing jerseys, chiffons, and her slender silhouettes. Also, while Pallavi comes out with a collection every season, the last time her daughter did a show in the city was "so many years ago that I can't really remember".

While the mother sticks to ethnicwear and brings out a festive collection annually, her daughter is content to have recently found a potential market in Japan, apart from a loyal clientele among contemporary women in the country for whom the colours of Milan and Paris must synergise with locally available designs.

tionally traumatic times for some years before Pallavi found some solace in her children and work. Her older sons, Chaitanya and Yogesh, are today running successful express food line and soft furnishing businesses respectively, while "the baby of the family" Bhairavi takes after her mother.

"It's amazing how these days most people work for 10 years and then decide to pack it in, and here I have been at it for the last 30 years," says Pallavi. Dressed in a white *salwar kameez* in her tiny office at Phoenix Mills, an industrial estate in Mumbai, she looks work-weary. Her crop of thinning



Pallavi entered the world of fashion quite by accident. A Kutchi by birth but a thorough Bombay*wallah* at heart, she met the late Jaikishan (one half of the Shankar-Jaikishan music director duo) at a cricket match at the Wankhede stadium in Mumbai. Love was soon in the air, which was only to be expected since Pallavi was already a great fan of his music. Gaylords at Churchgate and the Chowpatty were cosy nooks.

But the family was opposed to the match, so the two eloped to marry. "Today, however, I speak to my people thrice a day," says she, putting to rest any doubt about dissension in the family.

That was many years ago, and Pallavi's eyes acquire a lost look as she remembers those days. But she stops herself from dredging up memories and raking up old wounds. The couple had three children — two sons and a daughter — before Jaikishan passed away 26 years ago. What followed were emo-

> "Ethnicwear is the only genre in women's fashion which will never die out...simply because old becomes classic"

auburn hair does little to brighten her visage. The phones ring incessantly. She has asked for some tea which hasn't arrived. There's a meeting with exporters in half an hour, the files aren't ready. And the air-conditioning is too high.

The only spot of order around this office is the sight of a team of *kaarigars* calmly working with beads and *zari* on a wine-red bridal outfit. But Pallavi has to periodically oversee their work — "they are paid per shift, you see, so one can't have them lazing," says she. And then it's the day for their payment...and it's just a little past one in the afternoon.

for ethnicwear. "This is the only genre in women's fashion that will never die out. It is not because they are familiar, but simply because the old becomes classic," says Pallavi. She plays with muted and subdued colours, although in her recent collection unveiled last month, she brought in the bright colours and motifs of Rajasthan. "But baby pink and peach remain my all-time favourites. These colours lend a certain glow to a woman's face," she adds.

Pallavi prides herself on being part of that batch of women who have had to work hard to create a lifestyle,



VIKAS KHOT

HARD DAY'S WORK
Between the two, they have things well worked out. While Bhairavi dresses up smartly turned out contemporaries, Pallavi concentrates on keeping society ladies happy with enchanting ethnicwear

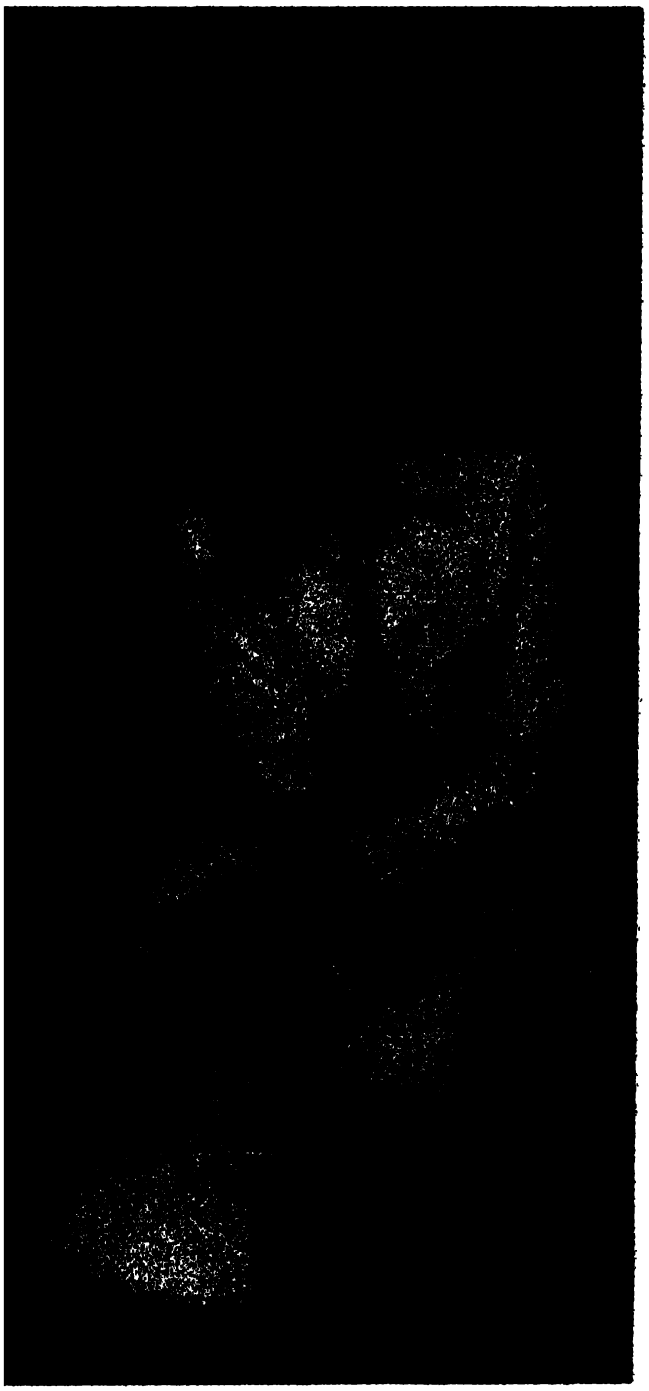
Bhairavi's office in Andheri's Ghanshyam Industrial Estate, on the other hand, wears a rather somnolent look in the morning of a working day. Husband Rajiv Tara, who looks after her exports, quietly works away at the computer and Bhairavi fiddles with pieces of black and white gauzy materials that she is considering for her forthcoming line. Sepia-toned pictures of Noyonika, Madhu and Sheetal in Bhairavi's loungewear and smart eveningwear designs are displayed prominently. Lemon tea is served promptly.

Pallavi learnt her craft by herself, on her own sewing machine at home. She was sold on design since early youth, which later received a boost after her marriage when she began hobnobbing with the best in Bollywood. Yet, she resisted getting typecast in that mould, much as she admired Saira Banu's style and Waheeda Rehman's grace.

What she has carried over from those days is a penchant rather than those who work to fill in time. Naturally then, the current crop of young designers dishing out assembly-line garments under their own labels would only evoke her ire. "These days any woman who can afford a *durzi* and an interlocking machine goes ahead and launches her own line," says Pallavi.

"The sad part is that design schools add to this misery. Everyone comes out of here with dreams in their eyes, but barely a handful can make it eventually."

Copycats, however, are amusing. When she finds lesser designers have ripped off her designs, she gives herself a silent pat on her back. "Fifty per cent of my sales are attributed to people who buy to imitate my stuff," she states. Soon after my show a couple of years back, I found imitations of my designs just a few blocks away from my store. So long as they keep coming back for more to copy, I shall not complain. I'd rather feel proud."



BLOW *HAUTE*, BLOW COLD
Bhairavi's flowing jerseys, chiffons and slender silhouettes have found a steady clientele among contemporary women in India; and (right) a model shows off a design by Pallavi

> "I prefer sticking to one direction, and that is catering to basics for the contemporary woman"

With the Indian look selling well in the West, Pallavi has valued customers abroad as well. And while Mumbai is home, she shuttles between it and Delhi. The capital cannot hold her for long. She takes the morning flight out and is back home by the evening. The diminishing number of fashion shows these days do not not bother her, and she is firm in the belief that the fashion capital of the country is not likely to shift to Delhi, just because there have been more shows there recently.

"The Delhi woman does not have the right attitude to carry off high fashion. I have seen this often down the years, that when they want to spend on an outfit they immediately ask to buy a complete look with it as well, rather than looking for the right accessories to go with it. And then they are unwilling to experiment as well. A Bombay girl would give up her husband if that cramped her style," she says.

Bhairavi is not bogged down with the question of belonging. While she admires her mother's designs — "I always show all my stuff to Bhairavi, but I have noticed she doesn't necessarily do the same," says Pallavi — she believes that there is a huge urban middle-class market in India that no one is willing to tap.

"And their demands are pretty streamlined. The need for these women about town are well-cut, honest, non-fussy casuals and smart clothes in cottons," says Bhairavi.

Bhairavi's earliest memories of her mother are of a woman who was always surrounded with colourful fabrics. She was fascinated with design, but it was not until her seventh or eighth grade in school, her mother says, that she showed any real aptitude. "That was the time that she would come up with sundry suggestions in design for me," says Pallavi.

After school, Bhairavi graduated with honours from the government board of textile design at the Sophia Polytechnic, Mumbai, which was followed by a course at the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los

Angeles.

Back in India, she sold out of Glitterati in Mumbai, and retailed a high fashion line at Ogaan in Delhi and Ffolio in Bangalore. Two years ago, she was one of the first batch of 10 designers chosen to represent India at the Igedo Fair held at Dusseldorf, Germany.

It was around this time that she launched her own line named Budd Basixs, named after her favourite pet dog. It is at this fair that she met her Japanese client, and currently she is the only Indian designer who is selling in the country. "The Japanese are sticklers for quality and sizing. But the greatest effort towards providing for this market has been veering away from my favourite whites and blacks, and consciously working with familiar Japanese colours like navy, browns and beiges," says Bhairavi, who travels to Tokyo twice a year for work.

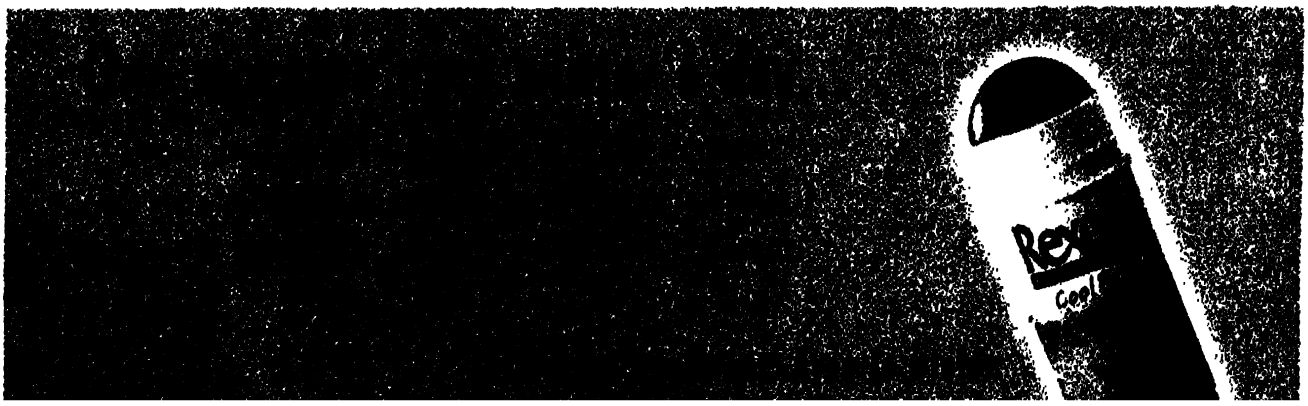
On her sundry jaunts abroad, she soaks in the ambiance of international fashion and the basic feel of fabrics, and much as she likes travelling within the interiors of India, she hopes she will be able to use these experiences in her work as well. "Although I do not like the term, Indo-West fusion, since most of the work in this genre of fashion are carried out with very little subtlety," she says. "I prefer sticking to one direction, and that is catering to basics for the contemporary woman."

She hasn't really decided on the colours for her next line, but if the samples strewn on her table are any indication, black will make a strong statement. As a young designer, doesn't she hunger for the *haute couture* slot? "What's the need?" she asks. "And anyway, the term itself is a misnomer in the country. High fashion, yes. But even high street designers in Paris cannot make a living out of creating one customised outfit in a year."

Between the two of them, mother and daughter have things well worked out. While Bhairavi will dress her smartly turned out contemporaries, her mother will keep society ladies in ethnicwear for many years to come. But there are some things that mother and daughter have in common: a love of good food.

And while she may not dig her mother's rich designs, Bhairavi doesn't mind digging into her mother's experimental cooking. As Pallavi, the gourmet of the family, confides, "Right now we are into miso soup, sushi and Middle-Eastern cooking." ■





OUT OF THE *Closet*



RAJESH KUMAR

Saris are the pride of her wardrobe

RENUKA CHOWDHURY

What I would like to show you is my sari cupboard. What I have here in Delhi is a truncated version of my wardrobe as I am in the process of shifting. In any case I don't have a very large wardrobe as I have only two cupboards, one here in Delhi and another in my house in Hyderabad. The saris I have in this closet here have seen me through the 12 years I have been in Delhi. And believe me, my friends here are so fed up of them that every time I repeat a sari, they say: "No Renuka, not again!"

I think saris are among the most unique, untailored pieces of clothing that one can come across. It not only drapes gracefully but also reflects the cultural ethos of India. The combinations and permutations they come in, are mind-boggling, each lending a sense of grace to the occasion they are worn for. And of course, let me add here, nothing becomes a fat woman like me more than six yards of a sari!

My favourites are handlooms and silks. I hate synthetics. I think the least we can all do is to wear and promote handlooms because these

weavers, who sit miles away from towns and cities, churn out excellently woven works. It is a pity that they make such beautiful fabrics but are never able to wear them.

For instance, there is this white silk *telia roomal sari*, with a double *ikkat* border which is woven after the yarn is kept dipped in oil for a while. It is the kind of weave that is used as a prayer cloth by some communities.

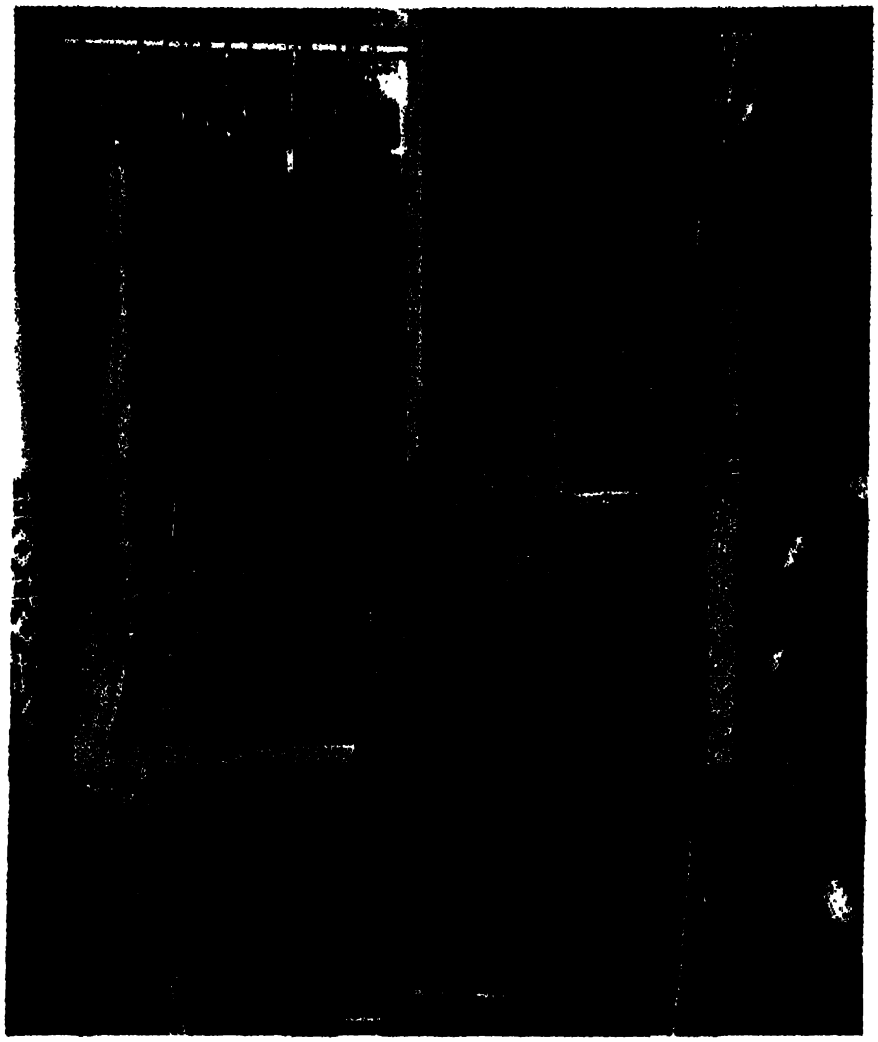
Another kind of work that I love immensely and have in my collection of saris is the Ganga-Jamuna sari. The embroidery on the double-coloured borders is simple and yet exquisite — something that I have not been able to get over all these years.

In fact the embroidery patterns that are woven on to the fabric are lyrical and endearing and have a universal and lasting appeal. Take, for instance, the paisley design — the mango motif that is so common and so simple. And yet it has been woven into 1001 imaginative designs and combinations!

I wonder why with such a rich choice of designs and colours, we should look outside for inspiration. These designs and weaves are an intrinsic part of our culture. And even the colour combinations are so well thought out. For instance, there is this sari that I have in a dark pink-and-white combination. And it looks so stunning as one colour supports and highlights the other.

Another lot of saris that form an integral part of my collection is the temple variety. Each of the temple borders is unique by itself. And each pattern tells the story of a temple, a deity, a village and so on. I am also particularly fond of *Pochampallis*. Made in the lesser-known Hindupur village, the craftsmen here do one of the neatest works in thread-weaving. The thread-work on both the sides is so even and clean that one cannot tell which is the straight side. It is a laborious process and is worth all the reverence one can treat it with. What horrifies me is the garish combinations in which these designs are copied by the powerlooms in most horrendous colour tones.

Venkatgiri cottons are another weakness of mine. The superfine cottons, complimented with real good *zari* borders that are typical of the



Andhra coastal areas, have a special sheen that are unparalleled.

As for my old favourites, I have an old georgette sari that was handed down from my great-grandmother's time. It is in ivory with small gold checks and a delicate *zari* work border. It is still in a wearable condition, doesn't get crushed or creased easily. Then there is this sari in black, with long paisley designs matched with a *zari* border. The *pallav* has an elaborate *booti* weave.

Another very special sari which is not here but in my closet in Hyderabad is a sari from my wedding collection. It is in a deep traditional *kumkum* colour. It has a huge temple border while the rest of the sari has threads of gold woven into it. I have kept it nicely wrapped and packed in my cupboard there. It is among my most cherished saris. ■

AS TOLD TO GEETA SHARMA

SILK AND WEAVE

My favourite in saris are handlooms and silks. I hate synthetics. I think the least we can all do is to wear and promote handlooms because these weavers, who sit miles away from towns and cities,...make such beautiful fabrics but are never able to wear them

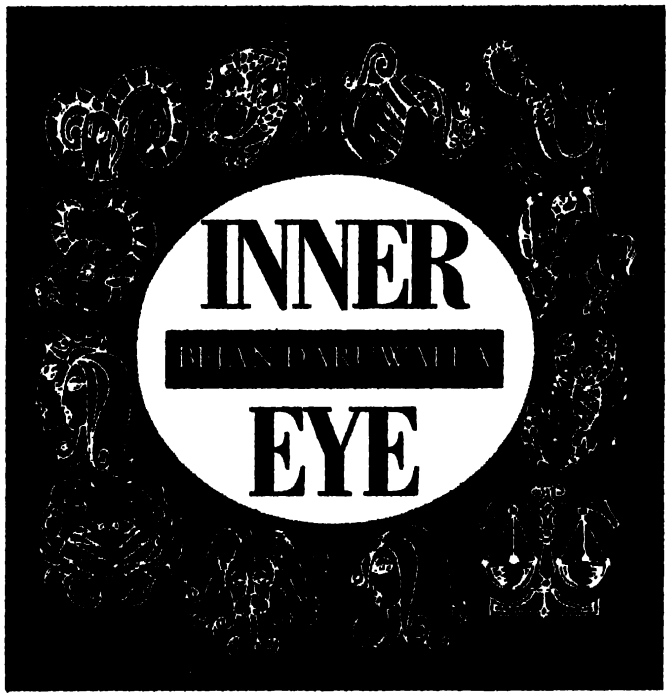
ARIES, (March 21 - April 20) You will turn to *tantra* and *mantra*, meditation, religion and ritualism. Or sex, passion, an attempt to awaken your *kundalini*. Equally, you will concern yourself with funds, finances, investments and even get-rich quick schemes. You will actually be searching for mental and physical well-being. Health may cause concern.

TAURUS, (April 21 - May 20) A keen desire to get more out of life will possess you. It seems that the mood of happiness and contentment is a thing of the past, but you just have to align your priorities afresh. You will have many demands on both your time and energy. Responsibilities will not only have to be accepted but fulfilled as well. Romance foretold.

GEMINI, (May 21 - June 20) A touch of class, of style in all you do helps you cope with parents, elders, in-laws, family and neighbours and also with house/home/office renovation and improvement. A fair amount of partying and socialising will be there, and will contribute to making you happier than you have been for some time. Children will be a source of joy.

CANCER, (June 21 - July 20) This week is a strange phenomenon. It swings back like a pendulum to almost all the activities and pursuits of the Moon quarter. Family, neighbours, socialising, partying have the adds-on of interviews, meets, collaborations, conferences, ceremonies, publicity, higher studies and research. With the blessings of Ganesha, you will go places.

LEO, (July 21 - August 21) The moon brings in an island of peace and quiet into your life. Introspection, psychic ability, philosophical questionings and insights keep you in a mood of contemplation. Though there is a lot of fraternal and social life, it is concern for others in terms of healing, tending to the sick that help strengthen and inspire you to conquer yourself.



VIRGO, (August 22 - September 22) You give full expression to your own creative talents, in your quest for greater personal liberty and self expression. You may, however, fail to protect your own rights and may have some strange ideas and fancies. Ganesha advises that you keep them firmly in check to avoid losing the affection of your kindred. A frenetic, action-packed week.

LIBRA, (September 23 - October 22) The upheavals and turmoil of September will gradually peter out. Finances come to the fore along with work, in varying degrees of intensity. But intense work is definitely there. Of course, there will be matching rewards and that's what life is all about surely. Health will improve. Be positive and pleasant. Romance foretold.

SCORPIO, (October 23 - November 22) Financial tangles are smooth now and office procedures, new projects, dependants and family will all vie for your concentrated attention. Your efficiency will increase manifold, both at work and at home, and you will get the willing cooperation of those who matter! The pace of work will be fast, lively and achievements will follow suit. Travel is on the cards.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23 - December 20) You now have the time to sit back and think, also give in to a sense of having done a job really well. This is not to say you will rest on your laurels. Far from it — you are now determined to improve your public and private image till it shines like burnished gold. Be positive, alert and optimistic. Many of you will be in for ties.

CAPRICORN, (December 21 - January 19) Your concern with your new image finds you concentrating on family, house and home trying to make it an altogether happier place to be in. You will spend on comforts, luxuries and the finer things that make a home. Try to go that little extra bit that makes life such fun and such a joyous celebration. Health may cause concern.

AQUARIUS, (January 20 - February 18) Strange other-worldly interests will compete with more down-to-earth matters. ESP, psychic phenomena, para-psychology, life after death will attract you. You will be dealing with ties, attachments of home, family, loved ones, elders and will overcome all hurdles with restraint and self-control.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) You will need to sort out funds and finances, especially on the work front and there is a lowering of stress and tension. In fact, it is time for party, recreation, relaxation and rest. You are drawn strongly to thoughts of love and romance; and if already married, to greater closeness, caring and affection for your spouse/mate/live-in companion. Success foretold.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

Seema Goswami examines the fall-out of the recent income-tax raids on fashion designers

Question: What is the most creative thing about Indian fashion designers?

Answer: Why, their account books of course!

But jokes aside:
The recent country-wide raids on designers — including such stalwarts as Ritu Kumar, Tarun Tahiliani, Suneet Varma, and such small-timers as Aparna Goenka — have shaken up the fashion industry like never before. Designers who used to thrive on hype and publicity now dive for cover the moment they see a journalist. Nobody is even willing to talk about the raids, let alone give their version of events. In fact, such is the degree of apprehension that even Rohit Bal — the most convivial of souls, especially late in the evening — isn't his usual exuberant self these days. But then, who can blame him? Rumour has it that Bal has cancelled his Delhi show this season for fear of attracting too much attention. Now his clothes will only be displayed in Mumbai, kind courtesy Omega, which has hired him as its Indian ambassador.

Cancelling a show? Isn't that a little excessive?:
You may think so, but designers know that you can't be too careful these days. After all, you never know where those nasty income-tax guys may be lurking with intent. No sooner have you hosted cocktails for a few hundred people at a five-star hotel, than they're knocking at your door and threatening to go through your lingerie/knicker drawer. So, it's best to assume a low profile for a while, and sell quietly from the few tony stores that are in business.

Good strategy, right?:
Wrong. The stores are still in business, but given that the more successful ones were raided along with the designers, they are doing abysmal business these days. Reason: the buyers are staying away in droves, for fear that they may be the next to be raided. The theory doing the rounds is that the designers weren't the only targets. The IT sleuths were also after their client lists, which would give them a fair idea of who was dropping lakhs in cash every month. Those whose spending patterns seemed a little suspect would be next in line for a little special attention.

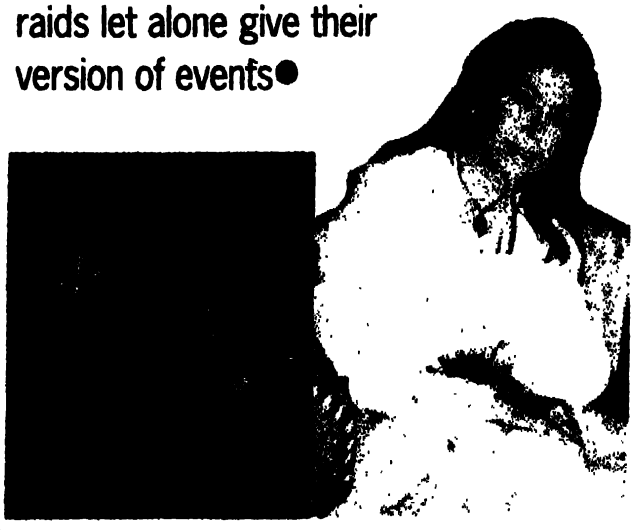
Result:
The designer stores remained deserted as the socialite brigade decided that lunch was better — and safer — than retail therapy. They discussed the latest collections threadbare over salad and soup, but refused resolutely to put their money where their mouths were. And as for those fat cats who used to order entire trousseaus from the designer brigade, spending money as if it were going out of fashion, they hurriedly switched loyalties to the high street stores and Chandni Chowk retailers, who provided the same services at a fraction of the price.

Are you surprised then:
That the designers are crying foul. According to them, they are just victims of hype — killed by the very publicity they had sought out so eagerly in better times. After all, everyone knows that turnovers in the Indian fashion business are a bit of a joke. Sure, the mark-ups on the clothes are astronomical, but the volumes aren't high enough for them to be rolling in filthy lucre. As one designer put it, "If they had raided any trader in Karol Bagh they would have found more money than they did with us."

Not that anybody was listening:
Instead, rumours abounded. How crores were recovered from one venerated designer; how the account books at various stores had been tampered with; how some designers were calling on several influential friends to get them off the hook. Of course, there was no truth to most of these stories, nevertheless they were impossible to kill off.

But they did teach our designers one important lesson:
Styling other people may be easy, but repairing your own image is another ball game altogether. ■

Nobody is even willing to talk about the raids let alone give their version of events●

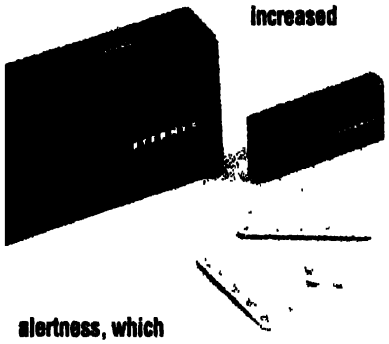


MIXED Bag

• SLEEPING BEAUTY

Do you get up far too often during the night? Dabur Pharmaceuticals may have just the answer to all your waking-up woes. After extensive research and clinical trials at Apollo Hospital's Sleep Lab, New Delhi, and the National Institute of Occupational Health, Calcutta, Dabur has developed Eternex: a magic pill which claims to provide one with quality sleep.

Patients who were given Eternex, which is a combination of melatonin and pyridoxine, experienced better quality of sleep and increased

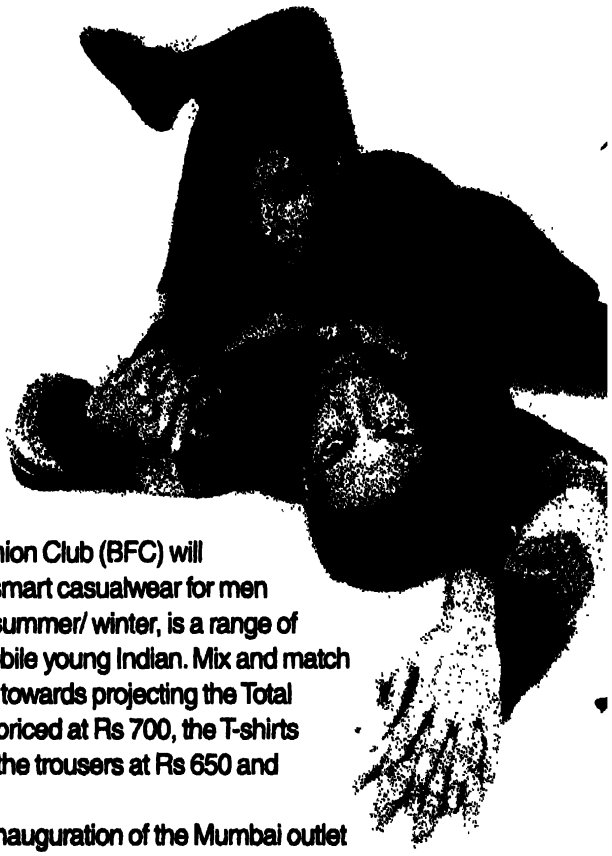


alertness, which eventually improved their performance at work. According to researchers, melatonin is a natural substance produced during the night by the pineal gland situated at the base of the brain.

The reason older people sleep badly is because, with age, levels of melatonin decline. And as sleep is related to beauty and youth, people often take melatonin to be an anti-ageing drug, which is only partly true. Melatonin provides quality sleep which in turn adds to alertness and makes one feel youthful.

But this is not the only benefit of Eternex. Priced at Rs 3 and available only through prescription, Eternex also works as an antioxidant and protects the cells in the body, including vital brain cells.

Young Ones



The recently launched Burlington's Fashion Club (BFC) will retail a range of smart casualwear for men and women. Featured this summer/ winter, is a range of casuals for the upwardly mobile young Indian. Mix and match is the buzzword which goes towards projecting the Total Look. The classic shirts are priced at Rs 700, the T-shirts start from Rs 195 onwards, the trousers at Rs 650 and ladies blouses at Rs 400.

At a ceremony to mark the inauguration of the Mumbai outlet at the Oberoi Towers recently, Andre Kapur, chairman and managing director, Burlington's Fashion Club, said, "The youth segment has now become more expressive with the advent of music channels and the MNC brands are targeted towards them. In this 'new age' of youth culture in India, our outlet aims to provide the youth with a new form of expression."

Fashion tip of the week: Use beer for the last rinse wh

FOUNTAIN



Goddess 2000, Europe's leading institute in beauty and therapeutic care, has made an Indian debut, with the intention to go beyond beauty that's skin deep. The venture, christened Millenea, comes with a package of beauty-enhancing treatments through non-surgical toning of facial muscles as well as dedicated skin treatments that are geared to improve cellular regeneration. To achieve best results, the company has brought with it state-of-the-art



Culture Club

The Prithvi Festival in Mumbai this month was one of those times in the year when die-hard down town culture vultures were driven by the droves to the suburbs to savour good theatre. And good food, as well, washed down with the famous Irish coffee at the Prithvi cafe.

This year, the theme of the annual festival was European theatre. The festival, spanning 21 days, commenced on November 1 and ended on November 21. This year, incidentally, Prithvi also celebrated its 20th anniversary. This was the theatre's 14th annual and 6th International festival. Six theatre groups from Italy, Hungary, Germany, UK, France and Poland performed.

The performances included Ton Und Kriachen's *Pyramus and Thisbe* from Germany, Project Underdog's *Underdogs* from UK, and Merlin International Theatre's *Bluebeard Castle* from Hungary. To offer the audience a perspective of the different aspects of European theatre, there were platform performances before each show.

Pyramus and Thisbe was a tragic love story, adapted from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which was also the basis of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. It made use of masks, music and comedy to tell a story with plenty of visual poetry. *Underdogs* was a 60-minute play about four strangers who came together in an Italian restaurant in the heart of London and then went on to share their stories with the audience.



Bluebird Castle, on the other hand, was a powerful translation of a tense psychodrama inspired by the mysterious seducer-murderer's ancient legend.

• SOUNDSCAPES

Satish Gujral may have booked gallery space at the Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai, three years ago for this season, but art lovers in the city will revel in the happy coincidence of hosting his first exhibition after his restored gift of hearing. So euphoric is the artist these days that he keeps a cup and



spoon at his bedside to test its sounds first thing every morning. Needless to say, his latest collection, titled *Fantasy*, reflects the euphoria of hearing again after several decades.

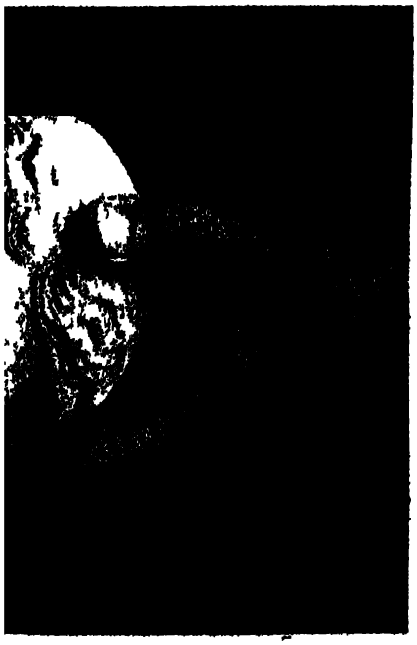
Merely hearing my voice makes a great difference to me. And this light-heartedness I think reflects in my works now,' he said at the opening of the exhibition. The colours are brighter and playful as his canvases bear cheerful imagery from the animal world. 'Every time I hear a sound, I ask my wife about it. It is like learning all the sounds in the universe all over again," adds Gujral.

Gujral's first Mumbai connection came about in the late Fifties when he came to the city with a collection of his works which didn't sell at all. So much so, he had to scrounge around to pay for his return rail ticket Delhi.

This year two-thirds of his works were sold out even before the exhibition opened to the public.

you shampoo your hair for added bounce and vigour

OF YOUTH



machines that have been successful through out Europe. And the good news is that the institute is slated to set up shop in all the metros. Says Kiran Jaiswal, director, Millenea, "There is a lack of awareness about the correlation between looking good and having a healthy skin. So the institute will tackle problems related to facial aging and body toning."

Besides, Millenea can help you learn about your allergies through the Responder RB 1000 food and environmental intolerance test. A sports injury and arthritis pain relief programme is an easy way to get rid of all joint aches and to reduce soreness. And there's more — you can get yourself a set of perfectly sculpted nails with the help of the very hip soft gel system that's flexible and transparent and guarantees nail durability and natural looks.

RASOI

The food column



Desert Delights

Jiggs Kalra on some authentic Rajasthani dishes

Team Rasoi's exertions have borne fruit. The arid desert has yielded a rich culinary harvest. Pushpesh Pant, Raminder Malhotra and Mohammed Ilyas helped develop the recipe of *Handiwale Murgh ke Pasandey* — by playing around with gastronomic genes collected from royal Rajasthan. The Festival of Rajasthan was held at Kandahar, The Oberoi Bombay.

Handiwale Murgh ke Pasandey

INGREDIENTS

- 12 **Chicken thighs**
- ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**

The Marination

- 30g/1oz ***Taaza dhania*/coriander paste**
- 20g/3¼tsp **Ginger paste (strain)**
- 15g/2½tsp **Garlic paste (strain)**
- 10g/1¾tsp **Green chilli paste**
- 45g/1½oz ***Chakka dahi*/yoghurt cheese/hung yoghurt**
- 45ml/3tbs **Lemon juice**
- 3g/1tsp **Black pepper powder (freshly roasted & coarsely powdered)**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Lavang*/clove powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Daalcheeni*/cinnamon powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Javitri*/mace powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Kebab cheeni* powder**

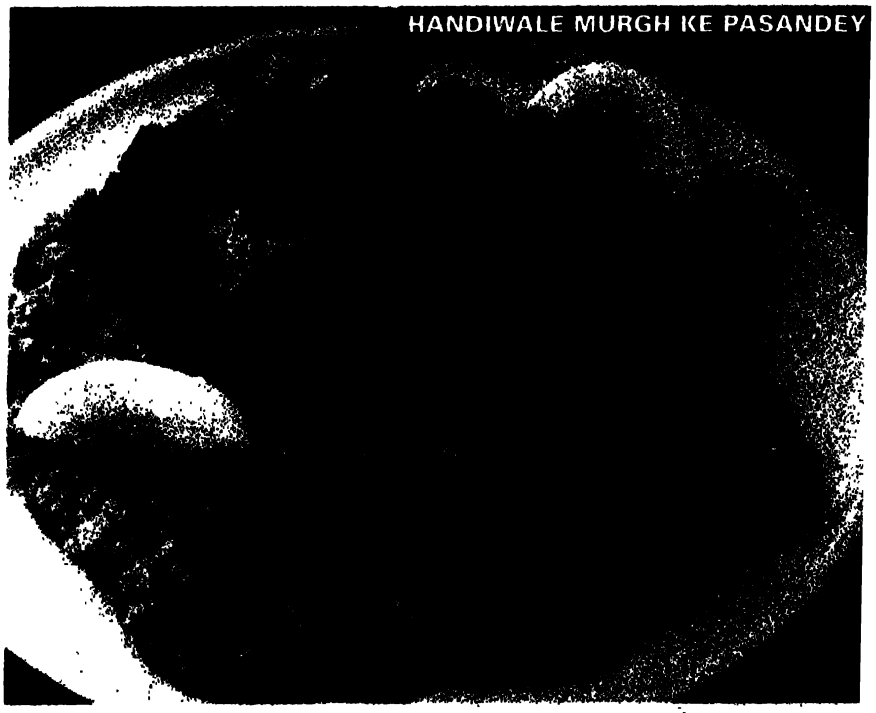
The Mince

- 400g/14oz ***Kheema*/chicken mince**
- 75ml/6tbs ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- 4 flakes **Garlic (chop)**
- 100g/3oz **Onions (chop)**
- 10g/1 piece **Ginger (chop)**
- 4 **Green chillies (seed and chop)**
- 9g/1tbs ***Dhania*/coriander powder**
- 4.5g/1½ **Red chilli powder**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Haldi*/turmeric powder**
- 4 **Tomatoes (large;chop)**
- **Salt**
- 1.5g/1/2tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Lavang*/clove powder**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Daalcheeni*/cinnamon powder**
- 15ml/1tbs **Lemon juice**
- 2 **Hard boiled eggs (quarter)**
- 3.25g/1tbs ***Taaza dhania*/coriander (chop)**

SERVES: 4
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
PREPARATION TIME: 1:30 HOURS

PREPARATION

- The Chicken: Carefully prise open



HANDIWALE MURGH KE PASANDEY

the meat along the bone, pull the meat carefully to the opposite end, making sure that the bone does not get detached. Then flatten with a bat/steak hammer to make lollipop-shaped escalopes.

● The Marination: Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl, evenly rub the lollipops with the marinade and reserve for one hour.

COOKING

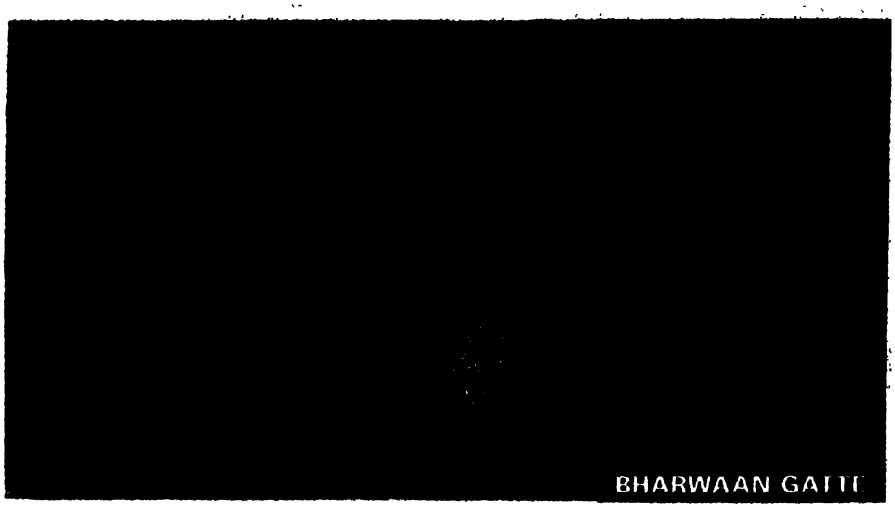
● Melt enough ghee to cover a *lagan*/flat pan, place the marinated chicken escalopes, in the middle and shallow fry over very low heat, turning carefully once, until crisp and evenly golden (approx 10-12 minutes). Remove to absorbent paper to drain excess fat. Reserve the *ghee*.

Melt 75g/6tbs of the reserved *ghee* (add more if there is not enough left over) in a *handi*/pan, add garlic, sauté over medium heat with a spatula until light golden, add onions and sauté till the onions are translucent and glossy. Add ginger and green chillies and stir for a few seconds. Then add coriander, red chillies and turmeric powders (dissolved in 45ml/3tbs of water), *bhunno*/stir-fry until the moisture evaporates, add tomatoes and *bhunno*/stir-fry until they become soft and release their juices. Now add the mince and salt, *bhunno*/stir-fry for 1½-2 minutes, add chicken escalopes, stir carefully, add cardamom, clove and cinnamon powders, stir carefully, cover and cook on *dum* for 2 minutes. Remove and keep the *handi*/pan covered for a few minutes. Uncover, add lemon juice, turn carefully with a spatula to incorporate and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

● Remove to a flat dish and garnish with eggs and coriander.

Bharwaan Gatte



INGREDIENTS

The *Gatte*

- 265g/2½cups ***Besan*/gramflour**
- **5g/1tsp Baking soda**
- **Salt**
- **100g/3oz *Paneer* (grate & mash with the base of the palm)**
- **60g/2oz *Khoya* (grate & mash with the base fo the palm)**
- **15g/1½" piece Ginger (finely chop)**
- **3.25g/1tbs *Taaza dhania*/coriander (finely chop)**
- **25g/2tbs *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**

The Filling

- **100g/3oz Potatoes (tiny dices)**
- **75g/2½oz Carrots (tiny dices)**
- **60g/2oz Beetroot (tiny dices)**
- **60g/2oz *Paneer* (grate)**
- **60g/2oz Cheddar/processed cheese (grate)**
- **25g/2tbs *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **2.5g/1tsp *Shahi zeera*/black cumin**
- **A generous pinch of thyme (dried)**
- **2 Green chillies (seed & finely chop)**
- **24 Roasted pistachios**
- ***Desi ghee*/clarified butter to deep fry**

The Gravy

- **100g/1/2 cup *Desi ghee*/clarified butter**
- **5 *Lavang*/cloves**
- **2 sticks *Daalcheeni*/cinnamon (1")**
- **2g/1tsp *Zeera*/cumin seeds**
- **1g/1/4 tsp *Methidaana*/fenugreek seeds**
- **A generous pinch of *heeng*/asafoetida**
- **480g/2cups Yoghurt**
- **15g/5tsp *Dhania*/coriander powder**
- **6g/2tsp Red chilli powder**
- **3g/1tsp *Haldi*/turmeric powder**
- **Salt**
- **1.5g/1/2tsp *Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- **0.75g/1/4tsp *Lavang*/clove powder**
- **0.375g/1/8tsp *Daalcheeni*/cinnamon powder**
- **0.375g/1/8tsp *Javitri*/mace powder**
- **A generous pinch of *kasoori methi*/fenugreek leaf powder**
- **3.25g/1tbs *Taaza dhania*/coriander**

SERVES: 4

PREPARATION TIME: 1:15 HOURS

COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The *Gatte*: Sift *besan*, baking soda and salt into a *paraat*, add the remaining ingredients and 180ml/3/4 cups of water, knead to make a hard but pliable dough and divide into 24 equal portions.

● The Filling: Melt *ghee* in a *kadhai*/wok, add black cumin, stir once over medium heat, add vegetables and *bhunno*/stir-fry until cooked but not soft. Remove, cool, add the remaining, mix well and divide into 24 equal portions.

● The Stuffing: Flatten the gramflour balls, place a portion of the filling in the middle, make balls again and then make croquette-shaped *gatta*. Heat ghee in a *kadhai*/wok, add croquettes and deep fry over medium heat until light golden. Remove to absorbent paper to drain excess fat.

● The Gravy: Put yoghurt in a bowl, add coriander powder, red chillies and salt, whisk to mix well.

COOKING

● Heat *ghee* in a *handi*/pan, add cloves, cinnamon, cumin and fenugreek seeds, stir over medium heat until the seeds begin to pop, add as asafoetida, and stir until it puffs up. Remove *handi*/pan from heat, stir in yoghurt mixture, *bhunno*/stir-fry until the fat leaves the sides, add water (approx 720ml/3 cups) and salt, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat, add *gatta*, cover and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the gravy is of thin sauce consistency. Sprinkle green cardamom, clove, cinnamon and mace powders, stir, sprinkle *kasoori methi*, stir, remove and adjust the seasoning.

TO SERVE

Remove to a bowl, garnish with coriander and serve with *chapatti* or *phulka*. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I have thick hair but it is rough and dry. I have changed my shampoo a couple of times but to no avail. What shampoo or conditioner should I use?
PRIYA C., CALCUTTA

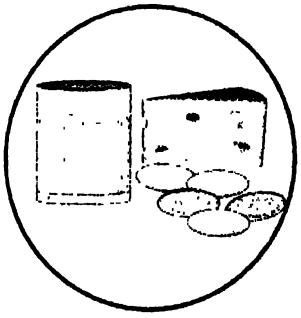
If you think that only shampoo and conditioner are going to make your hair silky soft, you are highly mistaken. You need to nourish your hair with oil and make it smooth and manageable. Massage a mixture of coconut, almond and castor oil into the scalp. Steam the hair for about five minutes. Make a hair pack with the following ingredients and apply to the hair and scalp— *amla* powder, *shikakai* powder, two eggs, half a cup of curd, 1 tsp honey and 2 tsp powdered fenugreek. Mix all the ingredients to form a thick paste and leave on for about half an hour. Shampoo preferably with a mild herbal shampoo at home. Please do not keep changing your shampoos and stick to one that suits your hair.

I am a 19-year-old boy. I have a bad stomach. I used to eat a lot of junk food and take aerated drinks like cola but I have recently given up all this. Is there anything else or any particular diet that I can follow?
RAJESH YADAV, BIHAR

Do you mean to say that besides junk food there is no other diet? If you are a regular reader of my column, you should be knowing that I stress on eating fresh fruits and vegetables a lot. For this, you can also create your own salads and soups. A well balanced diet where there is an adequate amount of dairy products like butter, milk, yoghurt, *paneer*, cheese etc is essential. Green vegetables like spinach, cabbage and turnips are essential. Include plenty of pulses, wheat and other grains in your diet which are not only nourishing but energy giving. Reduce oily foods and go in more for steamed, grilled, or baked foods.There are many different recipes that you could try out at home which are both simple and easy to make.

RECIPE FOR A BALANCED DIET

Avoid junk food and eat lots of fresh fruits, vegetables and soups. Also, have an adequate amount of dairy products like milk and cheese



I am a 17-year-old girl and have a lot of spots and patches on my arms making it impossible for me to wear sleeveless outfits. I have used potato juice and lime peel but to no avail. Please advise.
ANITA, HOWRAH

You have not mentioned what these marks and spots are. But the use of only potato or lemon juice will not help. Make an exfoliating scrub with the following ingredients: almond powder, rice powder, milk, lemon juice and *chokker*. Mix all the ingredients, apply on the skin for about 10 minutes, then start to gently scrub in rotating movements and wash off with milk and then water. Also use coconut oil mixed with lemon juice to massage this area. This treatment must be done every day for about a month for results. After sometime, you will have smooth, flawless arms and will be able to wear sleeveless tops, too. So start right away.

I am 18 years old and have excess hair on my hands and legs, and now my arms too. Please suggest a way to get rid of them.
D.K., CALCUTTA

The only way to get rid of them is to have the hair waxed which is both safe and effective. At this age, the use of *uptaan* will not work unless done religiously, twice a day and over a period of several months.

I am a 35-year-old woman and I am allergic to make-up. Can I use anything natural which will

For thickening the eyelashes, take one drop of pure castor oil and massage it onto the eyelashes. Leave on for about an hour and wipe off with a moist cotton wool pad



make me look fairer?
KOMAL RAI, CALCUTTA

You have asked me two different questions, an allergy to make-up and something to make you look fairer As far as make-up is concerned, you can use a translucent powder to give it a smooth look to avoid the use of foundation To make you look fairer, I would suggest a pack of the following ingredients fuller's earth, lemon juice, sandalwood powder, grated potato and milk Mix together and apply on the face and neck and leave on till dry Wash face with cold water This pack must be done at least three times a week for results

I am a 25-year-old man. What are natural moisturisers? Are they effective all through the season? Can they be combined with each other?
ROHIT DUTTA, BARASAT

Yes, there are a number of natural moisturisers and they can be used in combination and throughout the season Although some natural moisturisers are heavier than others and should be used according to the type of moisturising your skin requires Honey, fresh cream, all oils like almonds, sesame, coconut, rose etc, milk, butter are natural moisturisers They can be used safely and directly on the skin The results, if done regularly, are stunning which goes to explain that our ancestors had great skins as they used only natural products and made a regular routine of skin and hair care Most natural beauty and skin care aids were made at home from simple but natural ingredients

I have a lot of blackheads and whiteheads. I am 25 years old and what do I do to remove them?
INDIRA GUPTA, CALCUTTA

One must understand as to why whiteheads and blackheads occur Basically, it is because of oil accumulation on the skin and improper cleaning The best way to clean this area would be to use a scrub made of orange and lemon peel powder and mix it with fullers earth and rose water If the blackheads are very deeply embedded into the skin, I would suggest that you get them cleaned out two to three times by a professional salon Rub ice on the skin afterwards so that the pores get closed

I am a 24-year-old man who followed turban therapy for two weeks and my hair stopped falling. But after I discontinued it, I am facing hair loss again. Should I continue with turban therapy?
DEEPAK AGGARWAL, CALCUTTA

I presume that you brush your teeth daily If you don't, I would think that not only will there be deterioration but also the teeth will turn yellow Just like dental care, your skin and hair both require regular care routine Turban therapy will benefit you if done after the application of *bhringraj* oil ■



DESIGN Corner

AESTHETIC AND FUNCTIONAL
Today's kitchen would flaunt an all-wood look in cherry, pine, oak and maple and also be equipped with sophisticated accessories



COOK IN

Amidst luxury, as the designer kitchen makes its entry into Indian homes. **Samita Bhatia** reports

It's been accepted as the heart of a household, a gourmet workshop and that part of the house which must be well planned ensuring safety, comfort and efficiency. So it's not surprising that kitchens have finally come out of the closet and into the gallery.

Today's kitchens are mostly made of water resistant veneer and shutters in plastic, laminates or stained glass. Invariably they flaunt an all-wood finish in cherry, pine, maple or oak and are mostly equipped with a wide range of sophisticated accessories.

Now kitchens can take their pick from hundreds of convenient storage options, detergent baskets, cutlery trays and chopping boards. They can be fitted with dead corner shelves, curved door cabinets, rotating shelves and drawers and dividers that maximise interior space. The choicest racks are available for wines, spices and teas as well.

In the last four years kitchens have witnessed a sea change. To begin with they've gone designer. However, you no longer have to travel overseas to give your kitchen an international feel. There are innumerable companies in India that give you advice and assistance.

You could avail of designer or modular brands but at a price that's probably double (or much more) of what you can pay when the kitchen cabinets are built on-site.

Priti and Sandeep Sabharwal of Overseas Connexion stumbled upon some kitchen furniture when on a visit to Italy. They hit upon an idea and established Overseas Connexion and Kitchen Art. Says Priti, "Indian kitchens are built purely along functional lines and are typically drab." Italian designs, they realised, would revolutionise Indian kitchens.

Designer kitchens were initially launched for a segment that could afford them. The market, however, didn't expand as the middle class was deterred by the prevailing steep prices. But brands like Kitchen Art have striven to make kitchens more affordable.

"With Kitchen Art we intend to meet the different demands of our customers while catering to each price segment," says Sandeep Sabharwal. Their range is available starting at Rs 60,000 to scale Rs 3 lakh and sometimes even Rs 20 lakh. However, Sabharwal adds, "The modular structure of the range offered by them gives the client flexibility of adding accessories over a period of time."

Since they launched three years ago, the company has already installed as many as 400 kitchens in the country. Their list of clients includes the Canadian High Commission, Apollo Tyres and a clutch of glamorous personalities like Shah Rukh Khan, Namrata Shirodkar, Rakesh Roshan and Anil Kumble.

Most modular kitchens come with international tie-ups and are designed in India according to the specifications and requirements of individual clients using specialised software. The designs are then sent to the parent company overseas where the kitchens are manufactured, shipped back and installed at the site.

The measurements are precise to the last millimetre. This as opposed to the inches that we are more accustomed to when the neighbourhood carpenter takes on the job.

But there's no mistaking the prices which can range from Rs 1.5 lakh at the basic to scale Rs 10 lakh and even Rs 12 lakh to 15 lakh for a state-of-the-art Laurentide Kitchen. But prices notwithstanding Laurentide sells at least five kitchens a month. Once the order has been placed with Laurentide you can expect your kitchen to be fitted three months later. "It's the transportation of the ready-to-fit cabinets from Canada, customs clearance and in-land delivery from Mumbai that's time-consuming," explains Gogi Sodhi of Laurentide.

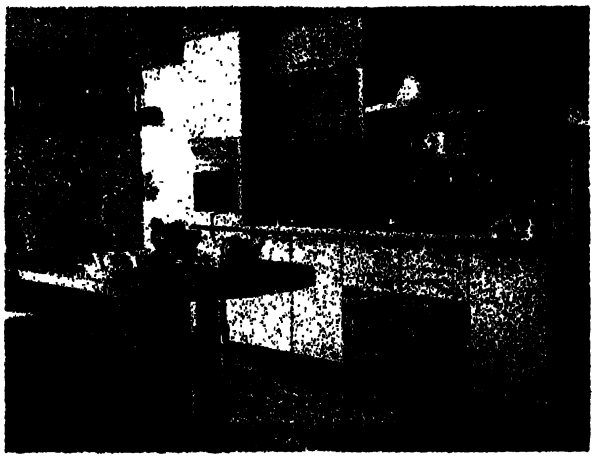
Closer home, indigenous kitchens with floor-to-ceiling design concepts come from Vacline Modular Kitchens. They offer a range of the latest, modern finishes, traditional handcrafted wooden panels in kitchen cabinetry which are user-friendly, rugged and practical. And affordable too or so the company claims — with prices that begin at Rs 35,000.

For the culinary connoisseur, problem-free working kitchens also come from Kitchen Grace. Priced between Rs 60,000 and Rs 5 lakh the kitchens can be custom built within a few days according to the requirements of the customer. Kitchen Grace brings those hard-to-reach corners within easy reach with Lazy Susan, a revolving counter.

Another company doing the rounds of kitchens across the country is Lispo that promises a kitchen that's modelled on European designs at "half the price". While the units are manufactured in India by a group of NRIs, the parent company abroad is providing regular assistance for upgrading the fittings.



Besides guarantees, modular kitchens come with an in-built promise of being hassle-free. Many are entirely wood-free which makes them water and termite resistant. Made with aluminum frame structures and paired with laminated panels these kitchens are easy to fabricate, assemble and dismantle.



But the latest addition is computerised kitchen planning and constructing the kitchen in accordance with Vaastu Shastra. At Master Line you have the option to plan your kitchen with complete flexibility to choose between colours and styles, racks and drawers.

Designers suggest that the floor covering be water resistant and anti-skid. And your choice abounds with floor tiles and stone finishes. Says Sodhi, "The height and position of the kitchen equipment and storage units are critical. The best height for a workshop must be 32 inches from the floor with black granite, the best option for the work top as it does not stain or scratch. The new high gloss reflection fluorescent tubes are the answer for overall luminosity."

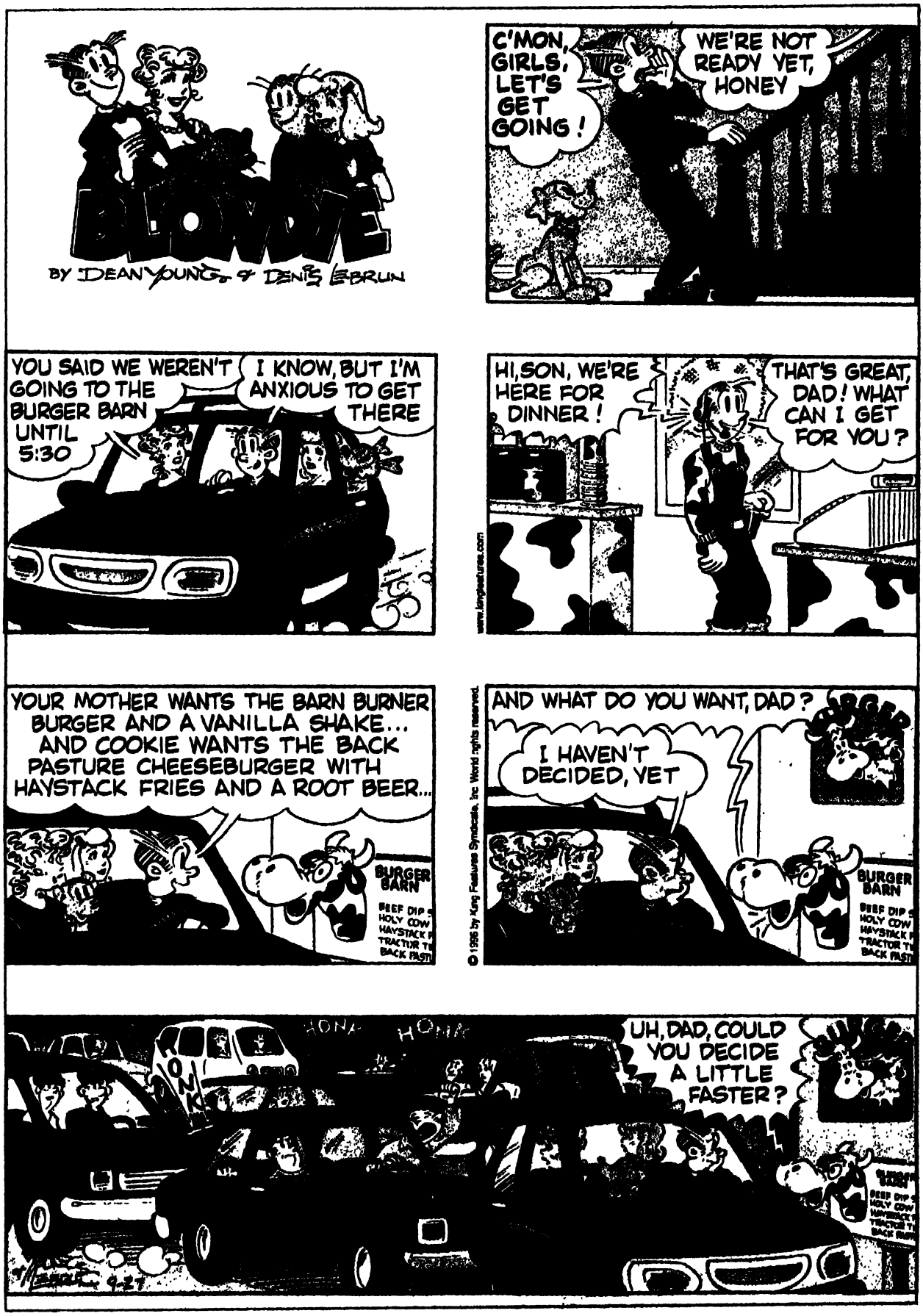
Designers have also found that the modern look is in, while the demand for beading and moulding is on the wane. And as Priti says, "It's an age of utility rather than looks, maximisation of space and *vaastu*."

With domestic help gradually disappearing, the chef of the house is obviously not willing to be surrounded by drudgery. So, the most complicated room in the house is metamorphosing into the best-kept.■

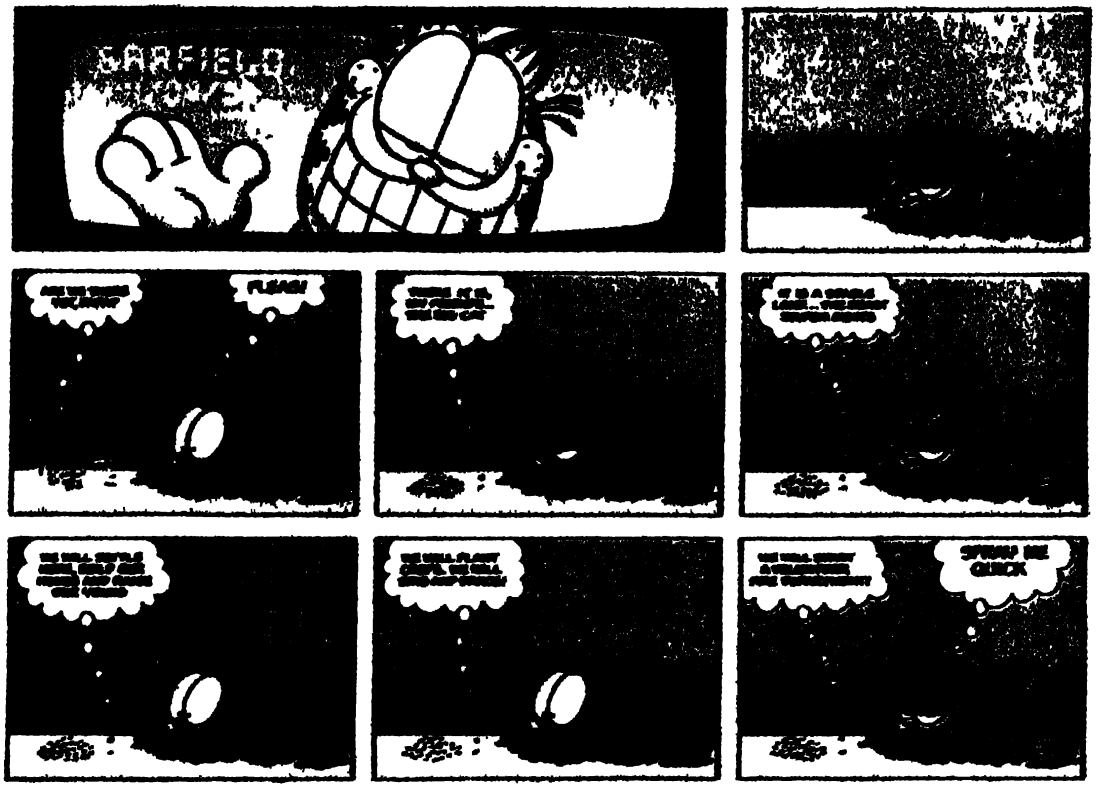
KITCHEN BASICS

The height and position of the kitchen equipment and storage units are vital. The best height for a kitchen workshop must be 32 inches from the floor

BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ❶ MONDAY ❷ TUESDAY ❸ WEDNESDAY ❹ THURSDAY ❺ FRIDAY ❻ SATURDAY ❼ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press two weeks in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	0845	1 3 5 7	IC 742	1500	1 3 5 7
IC 743	1240	daily	IC-744	1110	daily
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1430	2 4 6	CD-268	1950	2 4 6
CD 269	1620	1 3 5	CD-270	2125	1 3 5
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 2 4 5	IC 722	1620	1 2 4 5
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
SW-511	1405	daily	SW-512	2140	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 986	1015	2 4 6	IC 985	0825	2 4 6
IC 777	1400	1 5	IC 778	1300	1 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 986	1015	2 4 6	IC-985	0825	2 4 6
IC 765	1630	daily	IC-766	2135	daily
CD 267	1430	2 4 6	CD-268	1950	2 4 6
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	SW-901	0810	daily
SW-902	0845	daily	AI-682	0825	1
IC 402	1730	daily	* IC 855	1055	2, 6
* IC 856	1900	2 6	IC 401	0855	daily
SW 912	2010	daily	SW-911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2025	daily
CD 412	1715	2 4 6 7	CD-411	2120	1 3 5 7
IC-890	1200	4 7	IC 889	1545	4 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3 5 7	IC 702	1450	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 715	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3 5
CD 247	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	2 4 6
SW-611	1000	1 2 4 7	IC 730	1310	daily
IC 890	1200	4 7	SW-612	1250	1 2 4 6 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC-889	1545	4, 7
IMPHAL					
SW-511	1405	daily	IC 770	1300	2 4
IC 777	1400	1 5	IC-778	1300	1 5
IC 769	1400	2 4	SW-512	2140	daily
CD 572	1020	2 4 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6
JORHAT					
CD 255	0550	1 3 5	CD-256	1020	1 3 5
IC 889	1200	4 7	IC-890	1545	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
CD-269	1620	1 3 5	CD-270	2125	1 3 5
KOLKATA					
SW-621	1000	3 5	SW-622	1315	3 5
CD-257	1100	1 4	CD-257	1455	1 4
[illegible]					
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1 3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
SW-202	0825	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	SW-201	0820	daily
CD-269	1620	1 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1 3, 5
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
SW 212	2000	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 273	1950	daily	SW-211	1915	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
MUMBAI					
IC 769	1400	2 4	IC 770	1100	2 4
[illegible]					
IC 725	1000	2 6	IC-725	1355	2 6
CD-412	1715	2 4 6 7	CD-411	2120	1 3, 5, 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD-265	0530	2 4, 6	CD-266	1035	2, 4, 6
CD-265	0530	7	CD-266	1105	7
SILIGURI					
CD-267	1430	2 4 6	CD-268	1950	2 4 6
[illegible]					
IC 725	1000	2 6	IC-725	1355	2, 6
[illegible]					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1 3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6

FLIGHTS

[illegible]					
RJ-105	1455	4	RJ-104	0845	4
[illegible]					
IQ-476	0915	7	IQ-475	0230	7
[illegible]					
RB-105	1025	2, 6	RB-106	0945	2, 3, 7
RB-105	1010	4			
IC-730	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1205	1, 3, 6
IC-865	1155	2, 6	IC-732	1010	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-865	1010	2, 6
AI-305	1020	5	AI-805	1005	3
[illegible]					
IC-889	1200	2, 5	IC-887	1210	2, 5

* IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to International terminal

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
[illegible]		1	[illegible]		1
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IC-723	1450	1, 5, 6, 7	IC-724	1650	1, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1450	3	IC-724	1650	3
[illegible]	1915	2	[illegible]	1515	2
[illegible]	2105	daily	[illegible]	2025	daily
[illegible]					
SI-537	2030	2, 6	SI-538	0730	3, 7
[illegible]					
IC-747	0955	1, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1315	1, 3, 5, 6
IC-747	0955	2	IC 748	1325	2
IA-214	1525	2, 6	IA-213	1425	2, 6
[illegible]					
BA-142	2020	2	BA-143	1350	2
BA-142	2020	6	BA-143	1500	6
[illegible]					
SI-538	1100	4	SI-537	0830	4
SI-538	2230	7	SI-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
[illegible]	[illegible]	2, 4, 7	[illegible]	[illegible]	2, 6
			[illegible]	[illegible]	4
[illegible]					
[illegible]	[illegible]	4, 7	[illegible]	[illegible]	3, 6
SQ-415	2345	2, 5	SQ-416	2235	2, 5
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1600	3, 7
[illegible]					
AI-305	1950	5	AI-306	1905	3
[illegible]					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1600	3, 7

AI Air-India • **BA** British Airways • **BG** Biman Bangladesh Airlines • **BI** Royal Brunei Airlines • **CD** Alliance Air • **IC** Indian Airlines • **KB** Druk-Air • **KL** Royal Dutch Airlines • **RA** Royal Nepal Airlines • **RJ** Royal Jordanian Airlines • **SQ** Singapore Airlines • **SU** Aeroflot • **TG** Thai Airways International • **9W** Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Arrival	
	Howrah		
[illegible]	Delhi-Kalka Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Amritsar Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Purva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. Wed., Thurs. & Sun		
	Arr Tues., Wed & Sat.		
[illegible]	Purva (New Delhi) Express via Patna	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep Mon, Tues., Fri & Sat.		
	Arr Mon., Thurs Fri. & Sun		
[illegible]	Rajdhani Express via Gaya	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep: Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat.		
	Arr: Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri & Sun.		
[illegible]	Rajdhani Express via Patna	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. Wed. & Sun. Arr Tues. & Sat.		
[illegible]	Jodhpur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Shaktipunj (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Hirakud (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri-Weekly	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep: Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues. Wed. & Sat		
[illegible]	Amarnath Jantaghat Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. Tues. Wed & Sat Arr Tues Fri. & Sat		
[illegible]	Gorakhpur Express Dep: & Arr. Thursday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep & Arr Sun, Mon., Wed. & Fri		
[illegible]	Doon Express via Grand Chord	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Uttaranchal Express via Main Line	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Delhi Janata Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Amritsar Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Kishanganga Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Malda (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Kurseong (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Black Diamond Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Coalfield Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Asansol Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Dhanbad Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Jamalpur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Sealdah-Ajmer Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Sealdah Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Chandni (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep Mon., Tue & Thurs., Arr Mon Thurs & Fri		
[illegible]	Bihar (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun, Wed. & Sat		
[illegible]	Shaktipunj (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Ajmer Canal) Express Dep Fri., Arr Tues.	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Sealdah		
[illegible]	Tarak-Tirwa Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Sealdah Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Ltd Mail Express via Main Line	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Kanchanjunga Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Sonar Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Bihar Sangi Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. Mon. & Fri., Arr: Wed & Sun		
[illegible]	Kolkata Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Jammu Mail Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Jaipur Express via SRC Loop	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Rajdhani (Howrah) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Puri (Shatabdi) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. & Arr Tues., Thurs. & Sat.		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure		Arrival	
	Howrah		
[illegible]	Madras Mail	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Bombay) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Puneeta) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. & Arr Except Saturday		
[illegible]	Ahmedabad Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Express via Nagpur	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Falaknuma (Secunderabad) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Yesvantpur Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Bangalore) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah-Chennai Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Madras Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Puri Express via Cuttack	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Visakhapatnam) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	East Coast (Kalinga) Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Purushottam Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep Except Saturday		
	Arr Except Sunday		
[illegible]	Howrah Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah (Puri) Bi-Weekly Express	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Dep. & Arr Tuesday & Sunday		
[illegible]	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Howrah Express Tuesday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah - Howrah Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr Friday & Monday	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Howrah Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	Bangalore City Howrah Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	[illegible]	[illegible]

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Information Voice Response System (8 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 8 am to 2 pm on Sunday). For reservation status, dial 139 (computerised); Dial [illegible] (manual enquiry)

THE Best



SET FOR SUCCESS

If you're buying a new TV, make sure you check it for special features, says Geeta Sharma

HAPPY VIEWING
With over 20 brands of television sets, both national and international brands, flooding the markets, India is pegged to become one of the top five markets for electronic consumer goods in the world

No household is complete without it, and no dinner tastes quite the same unless it is consumed in front of it. Like the newspaper without which mornings are never the same, television is a habit that makes the evenings worthwhile. In most households, it is kept on even when the family is conversing. There's simply no denying that most of us are becoming couch potatoes, slowly but inexorably.

Little wonder then that the Indian markets are simply flush with over 20 brands of television sets, both national and international. Besides Onida, Videocon, Akai, Sharp, Grundig, Panasonic, LG, Philips, Samsung, Sony, Thomson, Salora, which are all-India brands, there are also regional brands like Bestavision, T-Series, Beltek, Jolly, Texla and Oscar.

But that's not surprising, given the fact that India is pegged to become one of the top five markets for electronic consumer goods in the world, next only to the US, Japan, China and Germany. According to K.S. Raman, President of CETMA (Consumer Electronics and TV Manufacturers Association), India has already reached a sales figure of nine million television sets and Rs 1,600 crore of audio business in the last financial year. It has now set a target of 20 million sets and Rs 2,300 crore audio equipment at the end of the next five years.

"Our industry, after six years of liberalisation, delicensing of most of the equipment, entry

RAMESH SHARMA

Film maker and television anchor

Our family has had this TV set at home for years. It's a Sony and it has been almost maintenance free. It never needed repairs. Its picture and sound quality are wonderful



KIRAN BEDI

Police officer



I have never really had any preferences for a particular set. But yes, I have bought this Akai TV set in an exchange scheme, where you give your old set and get a new one at some extra cost. And I am quite happy with it

DALER MEHNDI

Pop star

My favourites among television sets are Videocon and Philips. I like these because both the sets have got good screens and the sound quality is also very nice. These sets have good controls which give a very clear picture



of major global players and reduction of excise and customs duties, has helped in the transition from the protective era and placed itself on the growth curve," says Raman.

The rush of various multinational television brands into the Indian market is one of the indicators of this growth.

National or international, each brand has been vying for consumer attention with the lure of special features that vary from the largest screen package, incredible stereo sound and brilliant picture quality.

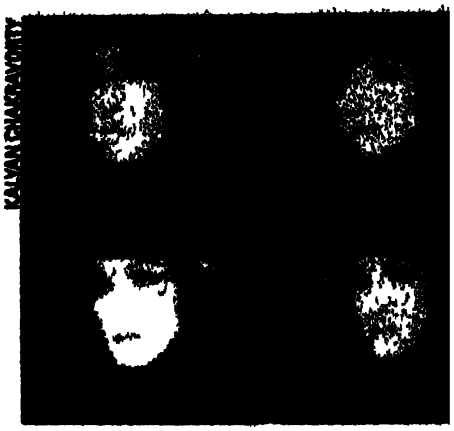
Philips Power Vision, for instance, has the power picture feature developed by the Philips research laboratory and results in better contrast, accurate colour reproduction and optimum sharpness. The chip gives the viewers a choice of four picture settings— soft, rich, natural and personal — and allows the viewer to select the ideal picture for each type of programme or room lighting conditions. It also has a Smart Surf that allows one to switch or surf through eight channels at the touch of a button.

Another multinational, LG, has introduced the 'Golden Eye' series. These sets have a light-sensitive natural algorithm 'EYE' and an advanced circuit both of which respond to any change in room lighting, and automatically adjust colour, sharpness, brightness, contrast and tint.



Samsung, on the other hand, lays claim to what it calls the Vision Plus technology that shows the viewer an extra inch of picture. For instance, assume you're watching an exciting football match and a goal is scored. But, if the goal is scored from the extreme corner of the screen , you can't see the player who has shot it. But the extra inch of picture that Samsung provides helps one see the player and his shot clearly. Samsung television sets are also supposed to have 'bio-screens' that emit infra-red rays which, when absorbed by organisms, they transform into active energy, and so are considered beneficial to human beings.

The Onida Unique Collection claims to owe many of their special features to digital technology. Among these is the 'frontier-technology based' frequency synthesised turner which stays locked into the transmitted frequency so that there is no picture drifting, no-channel interferenc.



KAVAICHAGRAVORTY

In India, the development of the TV industry has been focussed on the model of the West where the accent has been on technology and price wars are a common feature. According to Deepak Jhaveri, director, Crown Television Limited, in the Indian context the technology paradigm is not really the primary factor in the mass market development.

He says, consumers in India are basically price-conscious, price swings both upward and downward. This has made companies more sensitive to price as well. The 21-inch sets come in prices ranging from Rs 10,000 to 25,000.

And that explains the various incentive schemes that most television brands are offering to lure the consumers. These vary from buying a set on easy installments, getting smaller gadgets free with a set, or simply being able to exchange an old set with a brand new one at some extra cost. The last, which is the most preferred and effective incentive, has been adopted among others by major brand names such as Philips, Videocon and Akai.

So, no matter how much we demean the little screen with labels such as 'idiot box', and those who watch it as 'couch potatoes,' this is one commodity that will continue to occupy a safe niche in every home. And with luck, its quality and features will only get better with time.■

WHAT PRICE?

Since consumers have became price-conscious, television companies are being forced to offer various incentive schemes in the form of special features, installments and exchange offers to lure them



MY PERSONAL *Style*

QUIET RETREAT

Warmth and comfort; that's what actress Nafisa Ali would like her home to exude

My home is my temple, it's my mosque, my church and my *gurdwara*. It's a place where I spend a lot of my time and where I am very much at peace with myself. It's a place where a large part of my past and present co-habit, where I have put together innumerable things that I have gathered over the years; things that hold memories of days gone by.

I have put together my home with a lot of care and personal attention to every aspect. I did learn the nuances of interior decoration, so maybe, that helped me somewhere down the line. I love doing things for the house including painting the walls myself and so people have often thought that I'm really crazy.

Over the years, my taste hasn't changed drastically. Which means that I haven't really changed too much of the furniture or the colours dominating the interiors. However, what I do quite frequently is to move the furniture around as I don't like to be stuck with a static look.

I simply love my plants and there are lots inside the house as well as in the garden. And each one is in a pot which makes it quite a treat for my four dogs who love to break the flower pots just as much as I love planting them.

I do like to collect paintings — but of a different kind. I have a painting of my grandmother that was painted in 1913. There's a painting of my husband playing polo and some more done by my father who is an artist.

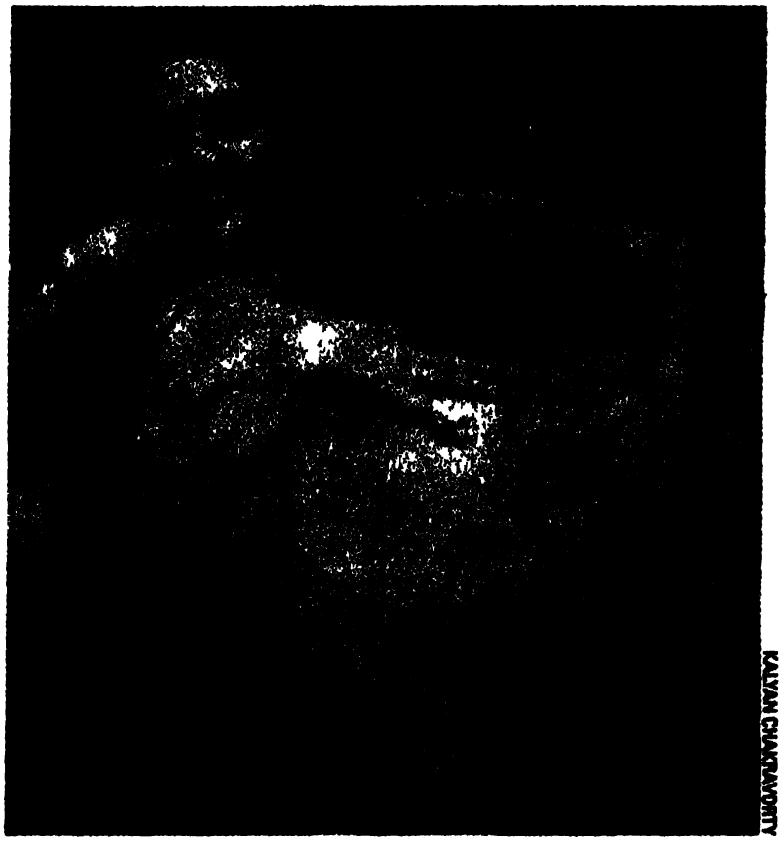
Most of the furniture at home hark back to the days when my husband was in the army and there was little money to spend on the house. That was the time when people bought pieces of furniture from the *kabariwala* for as little as Rs 50 for a chair. And every time I bought a piece from a *kabariwala*, my husband would be horrified at the "rubbish" I was collecting. But once I had scrubbed, polished and upholstered it, he would invariably change his mind. Today, he proudly points to each piece and loves to tell his friends about how he acquired it for so little a price.

I love the colours green, cream and beige. Also white, though given the three children and four dogs, it's a colour that I can't use. Everything in my house is breakable and I have only occasionally felt the need to protect the pieces.

What I'd never do to my home is to use the colour red or black as I have an aversion for these colours. And what I have never done is to call out — "don't come here, don't sit there".

Comfort and warmth is what my house is all about.

AS TOLD TO SAMIRA BHATIA



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

POTLUCK

I simply love my plant and there are lots inside the house as well as in the garden. And each one is in a p which makes it quite a treat for my four dogs who love to break the flower pots just as much as I love plantin them

You don't have to consult a horoscope to find the ideal match.



Senorita Rs. [illegible]

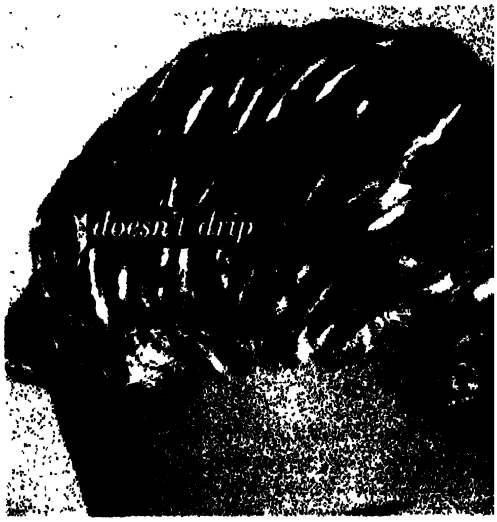
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WRITE IN



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FOOLS' PARADISE

The cover story on the Kashmir Valley ('How Green is the Valley?', October 25) was engrossing indeed. It's a pity that the once picturesque Valley is now in fetters which have only served to destroy its pristine beauty. Reeling under a siege, the city has more personnel in mufti than civilians, living as they are in constant fear. Paradise this may be, but now a fools' paradise.

GAUTAM PILLAI, DELHI

PARADISE LOST

My first impressions of the Valley were heavenly — a favourite shooting site for film makers of yore Kashmir with its quaint little wooden houses and *shikaras* in vibrant hues on the Dal lake bring back fond memories One only wished it was a safe haven for tourists in spite of the tourist department allaying our unwonted fears Here's hoping that a paradise that's been lost can be regained

Gaurav Belani, Calcutta

Srinagar may be limping back to normalcy but the question that's been raised as to whether it is safe for tourists seemed largely unanswered The question I guess is rhetorical

In spite of the tourist department's assurances on the contrary it can be quite an unnerving experience to be be woken up in the morning by the sound of Border Security Force men exercising next door

Shweta Menon, Agartala

GET FLOORED!

The write up on carpets in Design Corner was very informative(On the floor' October 25) What was especially useful was the tip on how to discern a genuine Persian silk carpet from a fake one Carpets are like family heirlooms cherished and passed on from generation to generation They are exquisite and are justifiably worth the price that comes with buying and possessing one Assuming that they can blend into any setting be it classic or modern they have an appeal that few could resist

Nethra Raman, Jamshedpur

FIRST PERSON

Could we have Beau Peep and Lockhorns back again please? Sunday mornings are not the same without them Also could you please publish a weekly *tete a tete* with a celebrity perhaps in the same vein as First Person?

Ria Ray,Patna

graphiti ★ 6 December 1998

6 SULTANS OF STYLE Rating India's top fashion designers

18 MORE DASH LESS CASH On the high street you don't have to spend a fortune **22** BEHIND THE SCENES An account of the madness that reigns backstage at a fashion show **30** THE RAG TAG BRIGADE Who's on the worst-dressed list

One morning on a winter's day...

Brrr... drag myself out of bed. A quick shower?
(It's soo...o cold. But can't think of giving it a miss.)
A must in the morning, like my Rexona Deodorant.



Rexona Deodorant. Even in winter.

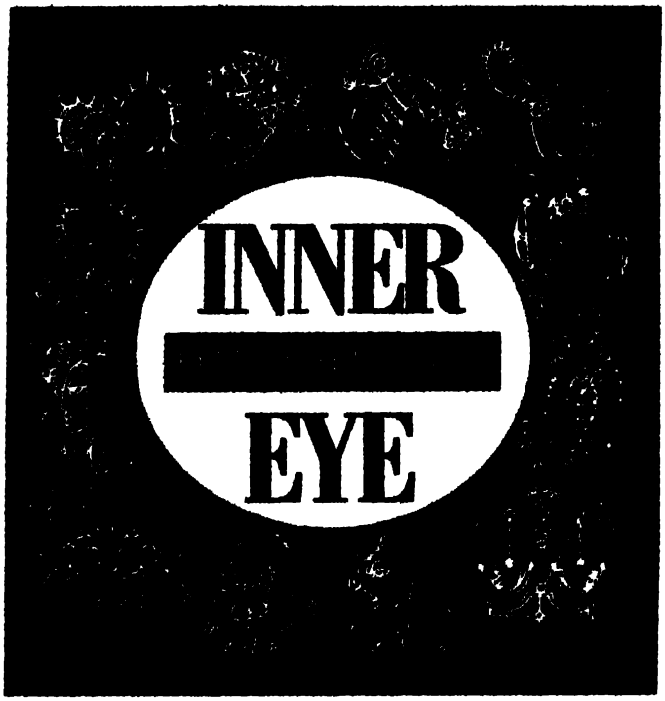
ARIES, (March 21-April 20) The full moon — you are now pursuing high objectives. Tact and diplomacy will stand you in good stead. Mars indicates a strong will to grow in your job with the possibility of a raise. Activities involving your superiors are important but so are parental ties and duties. An eventful week ahead. Eat well, drink well and live well.

TAURUS, (April 21-May 20) Slow down your pace a bit, take time to explore your motives. The main catalyst to do inner work will be the deeply felt need to relate better with others especially those you are close to and this need is best served by curbing your pride, your tongue and your ego. A tall order but it will serve to 'win friends and influence people' to see the real you!

GEMINI, (May 21-June 20) This is when you garner wisdom, consolidate your gains. Time to reap in the harvest of what you have sown. It is a particularly fine time to create, strengthen and nurture bonds of affection and caring. In many respects, you will be riding the crest of a wave and will have a place in the sun. Partnerships receive a boost. Love foretold.

CANCER, (June 21-July 20) Your popularity, professional and personal credit rating, are at an all time high but you may find yourself inviting trouble with the powers-that-be, shirking certain responsibilities that seem irksome, riding roughshod over people when conflicts arise. And arise they will — it's only diplomacy and accountability that will resolve them; this holds good for the personal/home front as well.

LEO, (July 21-August 21) The full moon focusses on the domestic and filial duties. Venus-Saturn form a favourable combination around the 9th, this will give additional surge of power and energy that will put in top gear your strong will to grow in your job. You will learn more about negotiation, management and other job-related skills. Health will cause concern.



VIRGO, (August 22-September 22) You realise that rather than outside forces, internal fears and inhibitions have slowed down your pace. Protect your health from stress and strain, build bridges with those around you and yet do not rely too heavily on on others. You may have to however, tackle some matters of the past in order to make progress. Collaborations and long distance ties are possible.

LIBRA, (September 23-October 22) Time to loosen up a bit. Socialising and even involvement in love and romance add zest to your life, but a part of you holds back. Despite conflicts and some confrontations, you pursue your goals and score. Issues of prestige and power will take top priority. Renovation/decoration/buying is a possibility. Luck is on your side, so enjoy.

SCORPIO, (October 23-November 22) You react to the moons placing in this sign by indulging in introspection, even meditation and serious contemplation of aims and objectives. A challenge involving work responsibility may trigger off this introspective self-assessment. You are interested in forming close ties but the pressures of work will exert a contrary pull. Ganesha advises you on having an open mind to help resolve doubts.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23-December 20) You react in an unwonted show of worry, tension and nervousness, a degree of restlessness, to life itself and what it holds for you. A paradoxical internalising draws you to quietude, solitude and also to hospices and welfare centres. Travel for this purpose is a strong possibility and will help ease your tensions. Financially and family-wise a good week.

CAPRICORN, (December 21-January 19) Learn to share your own advanced ideas in the realms of the occult, psychology, religion, philosophy and such sciences. Love will play a heart-warming part but be gentle with children, avoiding traumatic flare ups. Concentrate on a new, expanded vision of social objectives and sharing. Bonding on the personal level is foretold. Expenses will reach sky high.

AQUARIUS, (January 20-February 18) The full moon sees you resolving all doubts of the preceding weeks. Social and family activities and ties, renewing and strengthening old and new acquaintances, a sense of altruism and philanthropy, a desire to give are strongly felt. You are interested in mind-body relationships and healing and in helping those in distress.

PISCES, (February 19-March 20) You are friendly and sociable, and learn to avoid offending, or neglecting your near and dear ones and well-wishers. You may have a tendency to spend either too much on business or on social status. Overhauling career/finances will bear fruit. You might have to handle personal issues that surface with intuitive wisdom. Ganesha warns you not to lose your cool.

BIRTHDAYS

THE DAYS WHEN HIGH FASHION IN INDIA MEANT A HEAVILY-EMBROIDERED *SALWAR KAMEEZ* are long over. Over the last decade, the fashion scene in India has metamorphosed from a place dominated by Banarasi saris and ornate *lengha-cholis* to an arena where you are spoilt spoilt for choice.

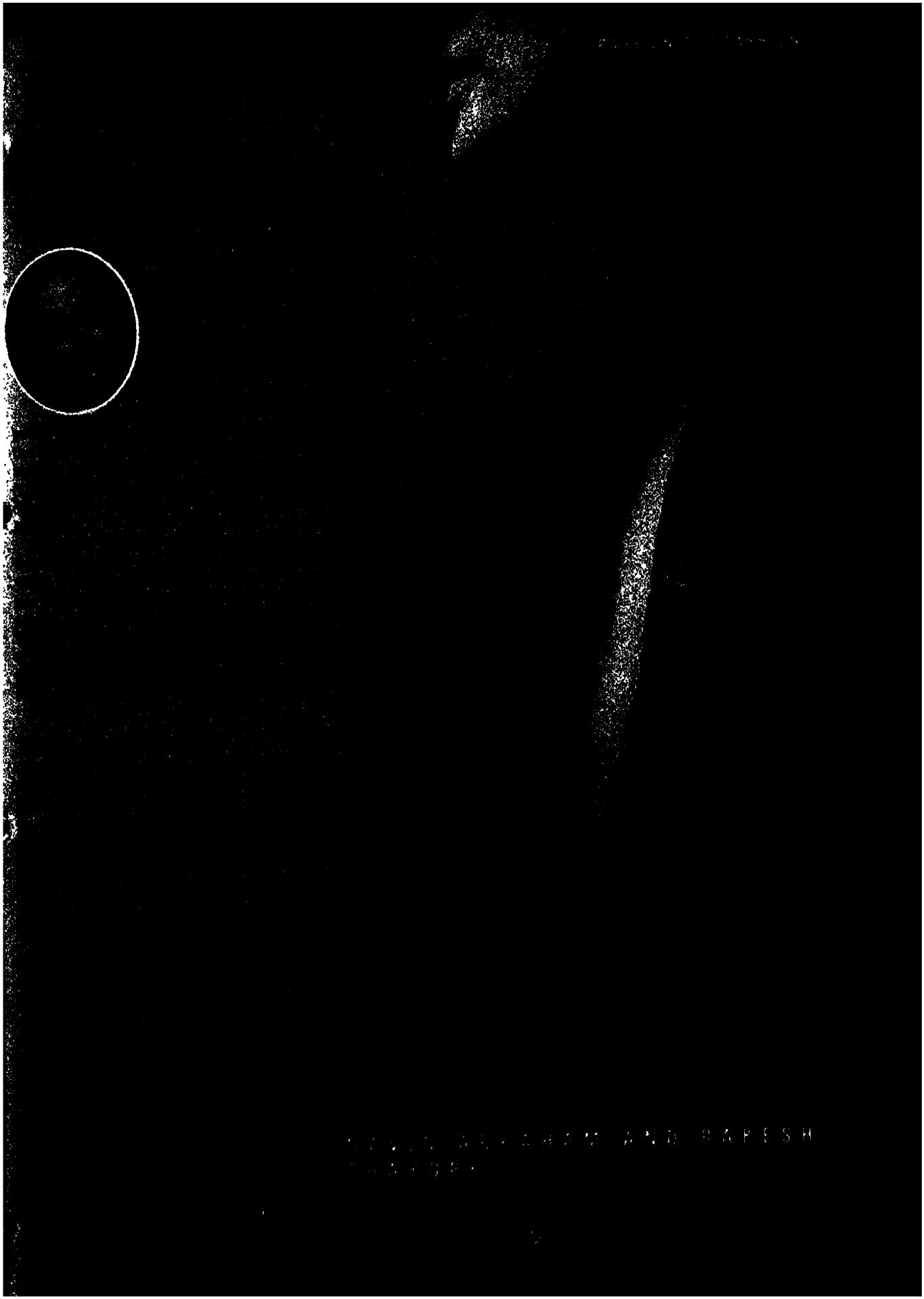
SULTANS OF Style

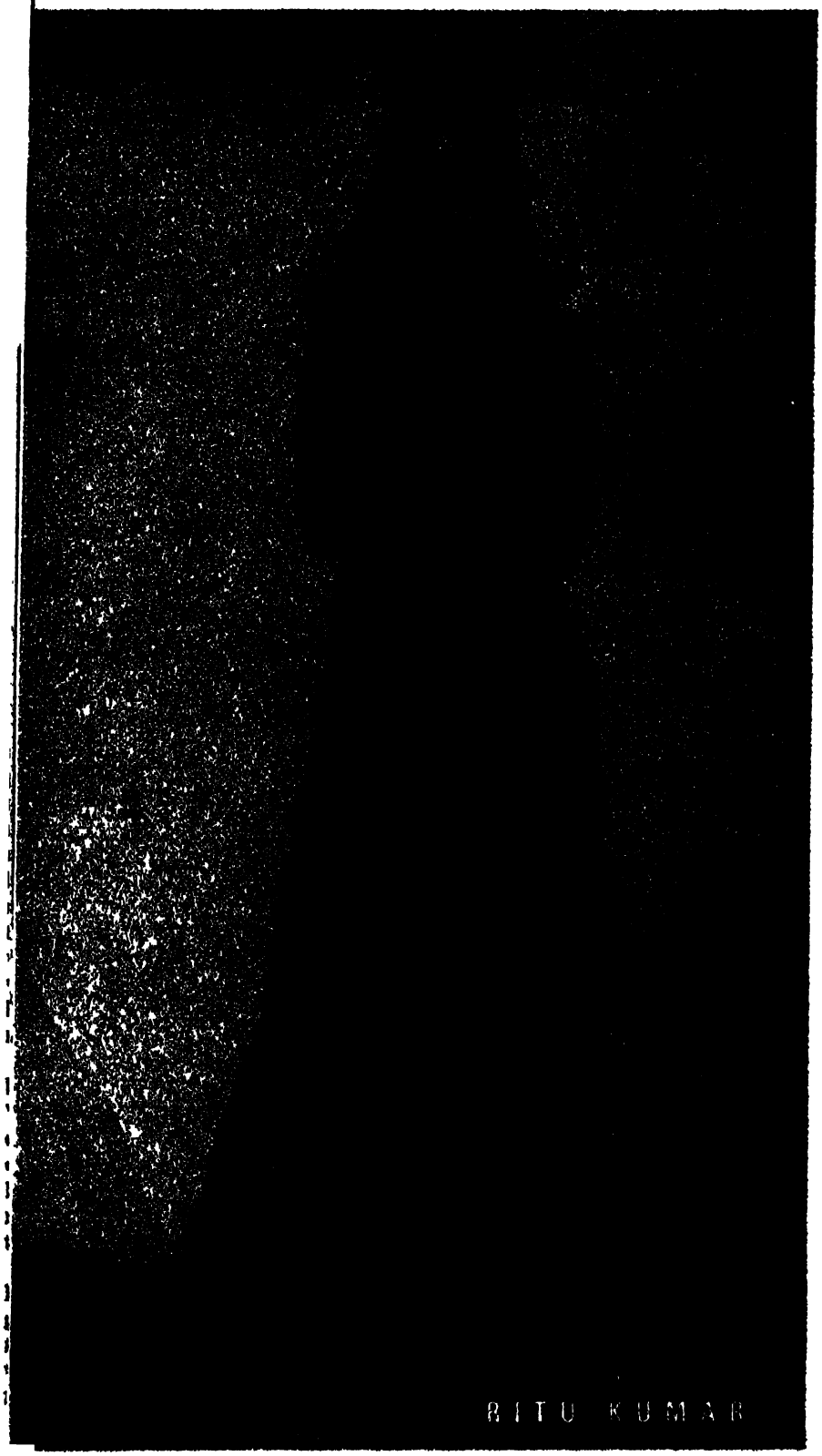
Sure, you still have the wedding-style ensembles pulling in the punters, but you will find a minimal Abraham and Thakore silk dress just a few racks away. If you want to move away from the classicism of Tarun Tahiliani and Shahab Durazi, then you only have to look through the merchandise of such new kids on the block as Manish Arora. And if you're looking for clothes you can wear to office or a business lunch, then you can't go wrong with Raghuvendra Rathore.

SEEMA GOSWAMI RATES INDIA'S FASHION DESIGNERS

The fashion business may not be booming in India right now — and how could it, in the middle of a recession? — but a creative explosion is taking place all the same. The days when you could dismiss Indian designers as *darzis* for rich ladies (though there are a few who still fit that description) are over. Today, you'd be better off describing them as the Sultans of Style, though each occupies a different place in the fashion hierarchy.







and *zardozi* saris, and yet he has to give expression to his sense of drama as well — and what better place to do that than a fashion show?

RITU KUMAR

While Rohit Khosla and Tarun Tahiliani were still running around in short-pants at Doon School, Ritu Kumar was a designer of repute. Inspired by the fast-dying-out block prints of Serampore, she began designing saris and *salwar kameezes* that retailed from her eponymously named store, Ritu's (or Ritu's Boutique, as it was called in its first incarnation), establishing the first name label in the country.

Two decades down the line, Kumar is still as successful as ever, designing her own collection as well as working in collaboration with her husband's export house, even as she makes clothes for sundry Miss India's who represent the country at international pageants. Her *forte* is traditional Indian clothes, that draw heavily on the textile and embroidery heritage of this country, and remain classics of their kind. But she also makes fusion clothing, that is clothes with an Indian look but with Western cuts, which appeal to a younger clientele.

She now has stores in every major Indian city, and an outlet in London which has been patronised by such style icons as Princess Diana and Jemima Khan, and seems set to go from strength to strength.

ABU JANI & SANDEEP KHOSLA

Over the last three years they have run a real risk of seeming like last year's thing. Perhaps they peaked too early.

When Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla first began selling under the Jashaan label, they were hailed as the new creative geniuses on the block. Drawing on the richness of Indian fabric and the strength of Indian embroidery, they created clothes that wouldn't have looked

out of place in a museum, but were accessible enough for women to party in. They played around with the drape of the sari, their *kalidar* kurta became a fashion staple, and their film star clientele ensured them plenty of publicity.

But several years down the line, they still clothe the same women, who keep getting older at the same pace as the clothes get more expensive. Perhaps this downturn in creativity has come about because the duo have diversified too soon and too fast. These days, they dabble in furnishings, furniture and interior design, instead of concentrating exclusively on the clothes — and that has taken its toll.

In fact, these days you begin to wonder whether the creativity had shifted from the designs to Sandeep Khosla's rhetoric. Certainly, they are the only Indian designers to sound even better than they look.

SHAHAB DURAZI

The Armani parallels are now beginning to look as tattered as a 1980s Rei Kawakubo outfit. Certainly, anybody who has heard Simi Garewal say for the millionth time, "Oh, Shahab is so much better than Armani", must fight the urge to reach for the sick bag.

Having said that, there is much to commend in Durazi's clothes. He was the first Indian designer to learn how to cut Western clothes and in his chosen field he still reigns supreme. His jackets are perfectly cut, his evening dresses are marvels of construction, and his trouser-suits are immensely flattering. His colour palette rarely extends beyond the pastel, and the designs are classic rather than innovative.

The advantage is that you can wear Shahab Durazi through the years without looking in the least dated. But that's only if you fit into the clothes. Durazi is notorious for making clothes in only three sizes — six, eight and ten — refusing to accommodate fuller figures. The good news is that he may soon begin making clothes in bigger sizes (going all the way up to 14) after being cajoled into it by the stores.



But to come back to the Armani parallels, the trouble with them is that while Armani likes to re-invent the jacket, Durazi prefers to just tailor it. See him as a Saville Row tailor, an old-style couturier, a young Hardy Amies even, and he makes sense. Look for flair, for innovation and go home disappointed.

DAVID ABRAHAM & RAKESH THAKORE

If Indian fashion had developed the way it should have — from the richness of our fabric heritage and the brilliance of Indian artistry — then this is the route it would have taken. Sadly, our fashion scene grew out of wedding tailors, rich ladies, and in a scene that is still dominated by designers who are content to re-embroider a *salwar kameez*. In this scenario, Abraham and Thakore remain an anomaly.

The two designers who make up the label, David Abraham and Rakesh Thakore, complement one another perfectly. While Thakore (who trained in textile design at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad) gets the fabric for the collections woven specially, Abraham (who has designed for such labels as Christian Dior and sold under his own name at Bergdorf Goodman) uses his knowledge of the international market to make clothes that would sell as easily in Milan as they would in Mumbai.



That said, Abraham and Thakore sell only a fraction of their output in India (at such stores as Ensemble and Ogaan). Their real volumes come from their furnishing sales abroad, where they retail at such tony stores as The Conran Shop in London, and their high

fashion collections that are sold at — and routed through — Browns on South Molton Street, the Mecca of fashion in London.

THE FASHION ARISTOCRACY

In search of the crown



SUNEET VARMA

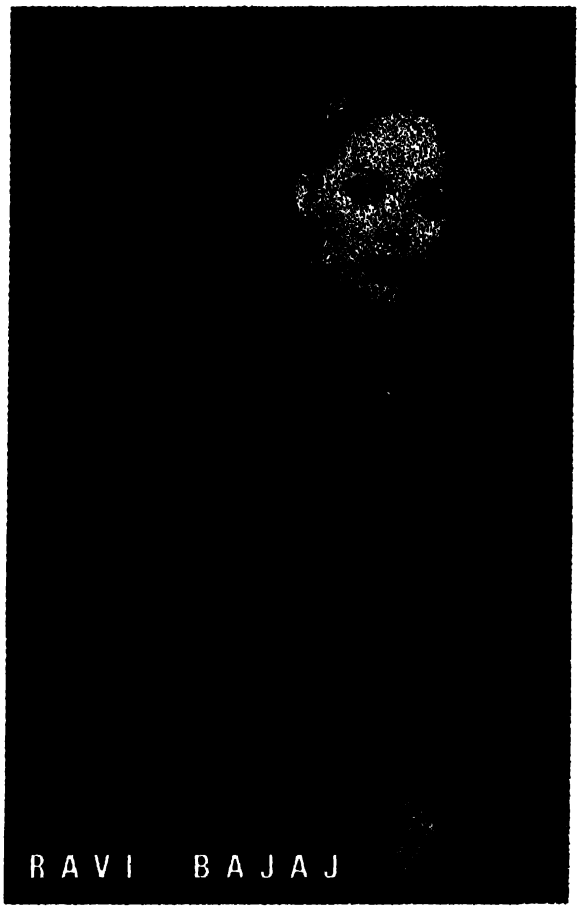
● He's well-known for searching far and wide for inspiration for his collections. And what's more he finds it: whether it is in an antique bit of fabric in a Paris flea market; a statue at the Metropolitan Museum; the wild Pucci prints of the 60s; or even in the motifs of Cartier jewellery. This year, it was the Art Deco period that inspired Suneet to make elegant, flowing clothes embellished with geometric patterns in silver and diamante, which were Western in inspiration, but Indian in spirit.

Varma arrived on the Indian fashion scene in the early Nineties, close on the heels of Rohit Bal and Tarun Tahiliani, and has since gone from strength to strength. He has a loyal clientele of women who like looking understated and yet different from the rest of the pack. And he has gained enormously from having a show on Star Plus, called *Style Gurus*, which gave him more visibility than most designers get in a lifetime.

ASHISH SONI

● He was probably the youngest ever designer — at 21— to launch his own label in India. And to him also goes the credit for having the first solo show in India (1993). Since then,





RAVI BAJAJ

Soni who began by specialising in menswear has diversified into women's clothes, thus capturing an even larger chunk of the market.

His clothes are wearable, easy on the eye, and have a luxurious feel to them. But for those who can't afford to drop Rs 10,000 on an outfit, he has a bridge line, Ikos by Ashish Soni, which combines a design element with reasonable prices.

GITANJALI KASHYAP

● Her strength has always been her ability to experiment with the structure of clothes, rather than just restrict herself to tinkering with the embellishment. And that's what makes Kashyap's clothes more interesting than the average designer garment. Her version of the Dries Van Noten trouser-cum-skirt, for instance, made a striking impression on the ramp even if it didn't find too many takers off it.

Not that Kashyap minds. Her real volumes (and income) come from the export market, while her high fashion collections keep her name alive in the Indian market. As a combination, that's near unbeatable.

RAVI BAJAJ

● These days Bajaj appears to be terribly disillusioned with the state of Indian fashion, and his place in it. He's always muttering darkly about where the fashion scene is headed and giving snide interviews about the personal hygiene of the girls who model his clothes ('they need to use deodorant' was one memorable quote). All of which makes one wonder how long he will last in the business — and more importantly, whether he wants to.

Meanwhile, he makes practical shirts, well-cut jackets and suits for men, while his women's line is chic without being madly creative.

FADING GENTRY

Better luck next time

J.J. VALAYA

He's always relied heavily on the embroidery traditions of India (*zardozi* being a particular favourite) and prided himself on making outfits that could be passed on from generation to generation.

But all that Valaya's latest collection generated was disappointment at a



major talent who appeared to have lost his way. Instead of the bright, vibrant colours, traditional designs and exquisite craftsmanship that marked his designs what we saw were character-less clothes that looked mediocre at best and ghastly at worst.

The only silver lining was Valaya's bridal collection, which had all the staples that have made his reputation.

RINA DHAKA

It's not easy being a bright young thing (BYT) when several hundred BYTs are born every year. And, as Rina Dhaka is discovering, it doesn't take much to go from being a whiz-kid to a was-kid.

Dhaka, who burst on to the Indian fashion in the early 1990s as the putative Donna Karan of India, making young, trendy clothes with zest and verve, is now beginning to look a little faded. The shock! horror! impact of those itsy-bitsy outfits is beginning to wear off, and in its place is a certain ennui with the essential sameness of these designs.

In Rina's defence, it has to be said that it is not easy juggling the demands of two young children and a career in fashion. No doubt, as her schedule eases up, she will again deliver on the early promise.

THE BRIDAL BRIGADE

The more the marriages

PALLAVI JAIKISHAN

If you live in Mumbai, have loads of money, and are about to get married, you can't do better than [illegible] yourself in Pallavi Jaikishan's [illegible]. She'll make you the most trousseau, in chiffon, in pinks [illegible]ch (which are most flattering [illegible]ung bride), with classic [illegible] designs which *your* daughter can wear on her wedding day, without looking at all dated.

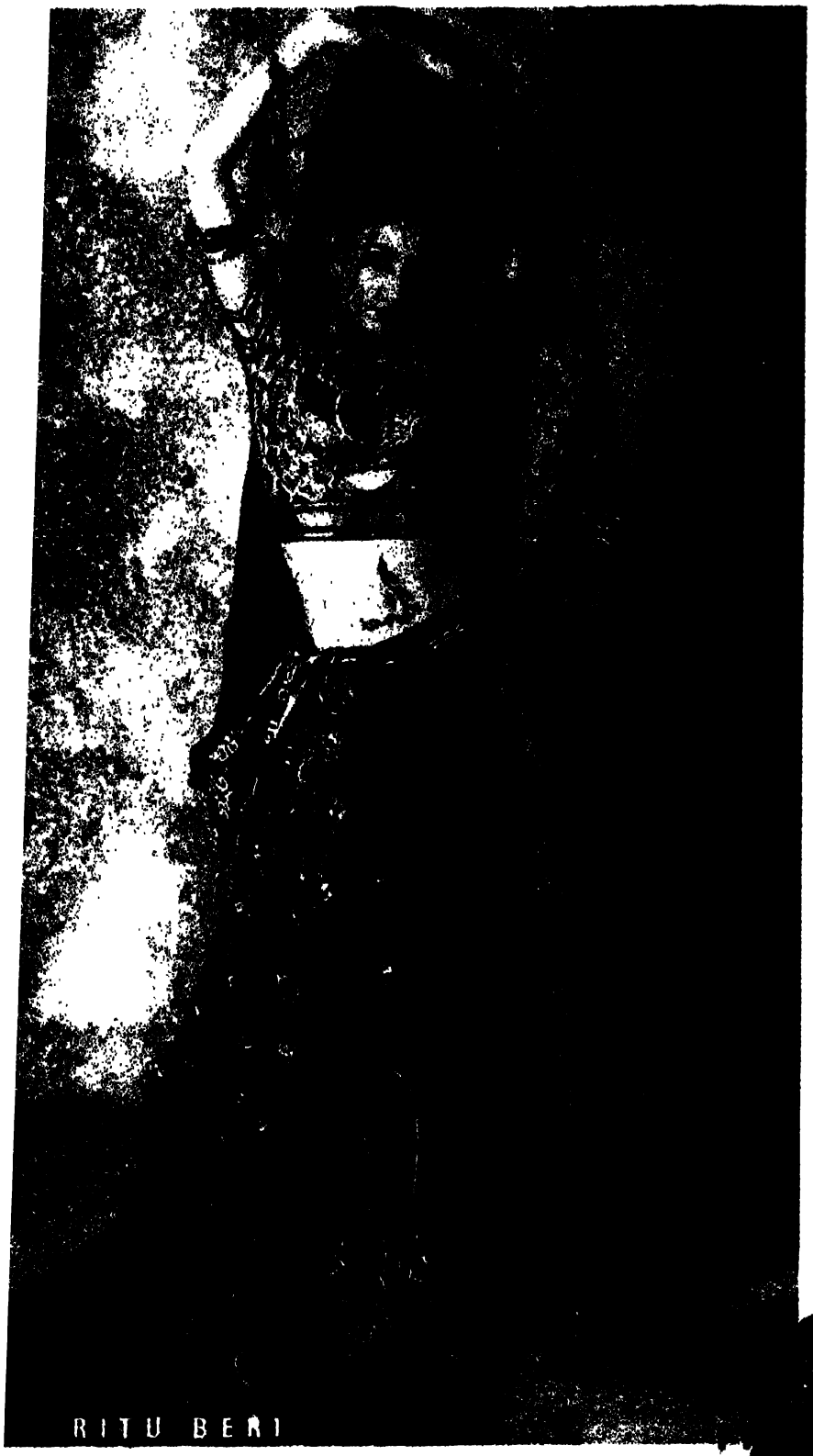
Her annual festive collection has Mumbai's socialite brigade out in full strength, buying up *lenghas* as if they were going out of fashion (or not, as the case may be).



RITU BERI

She has a pret line of casualwear, which sells a short distance away from her bridal boutique, Lavanya. But it is the latter that accounts for most of Beri's business. In fact, such is her expertise as far as the marriage market goes, that one of her bridal *lenghas* was the prize offered during a contest run by *Bride and Home* magazine.

Beri's wedding outfits are characterised by bright colours, high contrast and ornate embroidery which makes a woman feel like a queen on her wedding day — and that's the idea anyway, isn't it?



THE YOUNG TURKS

Their time is now

MANISH ARORA

He has no hang-ups about describing himself as a Ladies' Tailor (Specialist in Punjabi suits). In fact, that was the message emblazoned on one of the models during his first solo show at The Park, Delhi, last month.

That makes a nice change from all those other fashion designers who have little compunction (or embarrassment) in describing themselves as Yves St Laurent incarnate. But Manish Arora is refreshing in more ways than one — as are his clothes. There's none of the overdone embroidery that characterises most other designer garments. Instead, Arora makes young, trendy clothes with a slightly bizarre edge. His fabrics come from abroad as well as from the Jama Masjid area of New Delhi, and it is a tribute to the young designer that both sell just as well.

Having understudied Rohit Bal for two years after passing out of the NIFT, Arora also makes safe, commercial clothes (*salwar kameezes* with gold *khadi* work, for instance) to bring in the numbers. But his heart lies in the kind of dress that features on our cover.

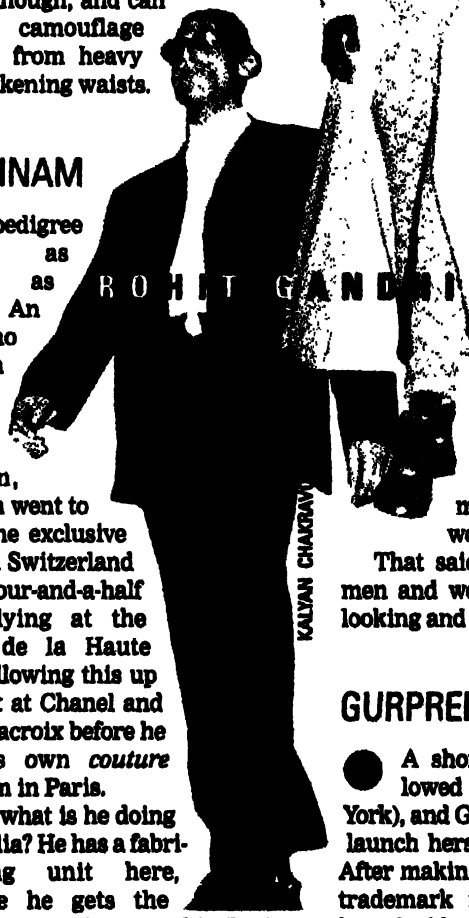
RAGHUVENDRA RATHORE

His training with Donna Karan and Oscar de la Renta has paid off in terms of cut and styling. His Western clothes are beautifully cut and perfectly finished, and his understanding of fabric is next



to none. The only problem is that Rathore restricts himself to a medium size, which most Indian women find impossible to squeeze into. Once Raghuvendra understands that women are built differently from little boys, he will have the kind of success he deserves.

His Indian clothes are a little more forgiving, though, and can perfectly camouflage everything from heavy hips to thickening waists.



ALI BEHNAM

His pedigree is as impressive as his clothes. An Iranian who has lived in Paris ever since the Revolution, Ali Behnam went to school at the exclusive Le Rosey in Switzerland and spent four-and-a-half years studying at the Syndicale de la Haute Couture, following this up with a stint at Chanel and Christian Lacroix before he opened his own *couture* showroom in Paris.

So, what is he doing in India? He has a fabricating unit here, where he gets the embroidery done for his Paris *couture* collection, and on prodding from Kavita Bhartia, he agreed to do a small line of Western clothes for her store in Delhi's Santushti complex. These comprise precisely tailored jackets, flattering trousers and tops, and elegant separates that can form a good basis for a working woman's wardrobe.

But Behnam himself is far from satisfied with this line, even though it flies off the shelves in Ogaan. He would much rather design a *couture* line for India — and no doubt, he'll do just that in a year or so.

ROHIT GANDHI

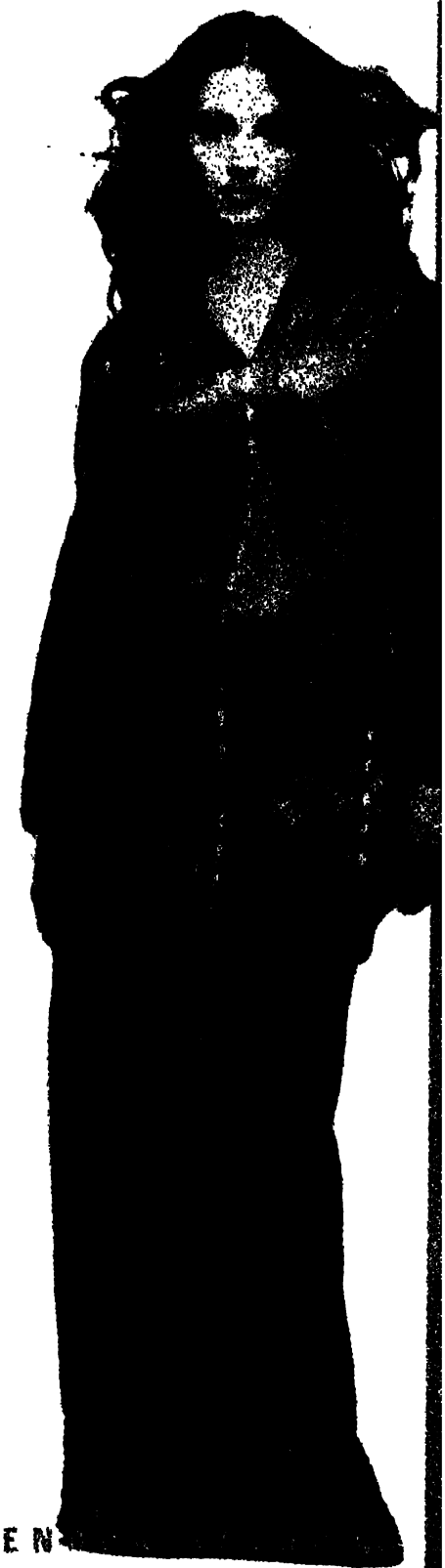
He is, without a doubt, India's best shirtmaker. It helps, of course, that his family fabricates merchandise for Emporio Armani, and Gandhi has access to the best fabric, the best machines, and the best workmen.

That said, his clothes — for both men and women — are young, good-looking and on the cutting edge.

GURPREET BAJAJ

A short stint at NIFT was followed by a year at the FIT (New York), and Gurpreet Bajaj was ready to launch herself in the Indian market. After making outfits under the Matrix trademark for several years, Bajaj launched her own label, Gurpreet, this October. Her strength is her Westernwear, made with fabric — wool jersey and wool crepe, for instance — accessed from New York, and perfectly constructed. Her Indian collection is not quite as creative, but safe enough to do well commercially.

What is most refreshing about Bajaj, however, is her laid-back attitude, which makes a wonderful change from the hype that surrounds others of her ilk. ■



EYE ON *Style*

IT'S make-over TIME

The look on the ramp varies with every show and each designer. **Samita Bhatia** gets an eyeful



PUNIT ISSAR

Your eyes can make a statement, as can your hair. And if you have any doubts on that score, all you have to do is attend a fashion show.

That will also give you a broad idea of what the hot colours for the season are. It will teach you to keep the lips pale when the eyes are heavily made-up and to keep the eyes free of liners when the lips are darkly coloured. On a night about town you won't feel out of place with a touch of glitter. But if the look on the ramp is anything to go by, just get rid of that red highlight you've recently given on your tresses. A single-colour tone is in, highlights are, sadly for some, out.

In the fashion arena where cosmetic finery is an integral part of selling clothes, a clique of hair and make-up stylists is calling the shots. Demanding anywhere between Rs 1,000-1,800 for fixing each model's hair and face before a show, the artists have their hands full

FACE TO FACE

The look of the season changes according to the clothes and fancies of the designer and the stylist. Be it a heavily embroidered eveningwear of Suneet Varma (left) or the stylised elegance of (right) Tarun Tahiliani

while the fashion season swings.

Running against time and dealing with backstage mayhem is all in a day's work for this brigade, and, of course, adhering to the common brief — keep the look different from what the other designers have ordered.

"Not quite difficult to manage," mulls stylist Ambika Pillai in hindsight, "not if you mentally vibe with the designer and know his or her pulse." So Pillai is never at a disadvantage even if she is simultaneously handling the shows of practically all the designers. She is sure that Rina Dhaka will prefer to keep the models' hair loose just as she knows for a fact that Tarun Tahiliani wouldn't "ever dream of doing so."



ATUL CHOWDHARY

Pillai, who dominated the grooming sessions backstage this season, says, "It was wild, wacky, cool and sensuous. There was an overdose of glitter, shimmer and gloss, shiny faces were in, so too dark eyes and bright lips while the hair was ornate. Moving away from the basic browns, the colours blue, green, pink and maroon were big this season."

Adds Aparna Bahl, the choreographer who doubled up as make-up stylist for J. J Valaya's show, "The look on the ramp must reflect the mood of the show and the mood of the designer when he was designing the collection."

Stylists must get cracking weeks before the show given that they must spruce up 25 to 30 girls in less than five hours. Despite the pre-prep, sometimes they find themselves battling against the clock. Thus, to make their lives easier, they create the hairpieces for the models much in advance. Then begin the experimentations with the look, dry runs under bright lights and a full dress rehearsal.

Deepa Verma, the youngest stylist on the circuit, says, "On the day of the show artists have no more than 20 minutes to work on a model's face and hair. Which leaves no room for experimentation."

Money TALKS

Five-star hotels are only too willing to host star-studded shows for the fashion designers

When Rohit Bal launched his Fall-Winter collection in Mumbai this year, also on display was Omega's jewellery collection. This was because of Omega's decision to associate itself with achievers, and as Ravi Thakran, regional general manager, South Asia, Swatch group says, "Rohit is India's numero uno designer."

Earlier, on the outskirts of Delhi, J.J. Valaya unveiled his trousseau line at Classic Golf Resorts before a 700-strong crowd. Says Pradeep Jain, managing director, Landbase, "Valaya's trousseau collection pertains to a lifestyle which is also the lifestyle of the members of the resort."

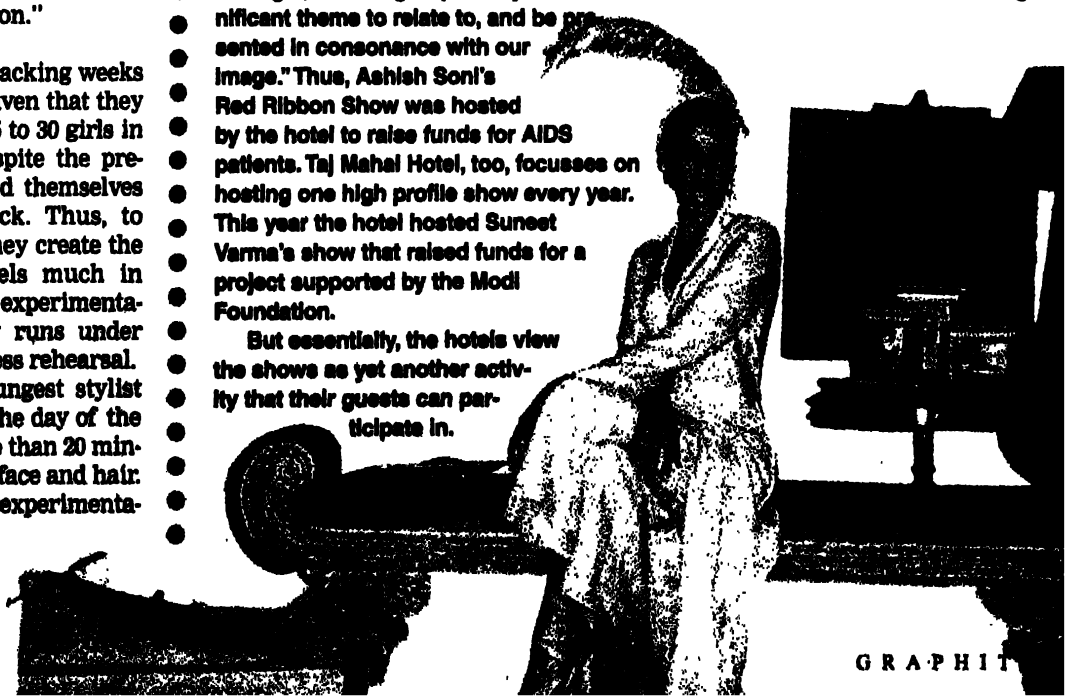
So how much did Jain and Omega blow up as Valaya's and Bal's respective sponsors? Shrugs Thakran, "There are no defined budgets for the sponsorship of such events. We try and achieve what we set out to do — whatever the cost."

Obviously, a fashion show is a marketing exercise that comes with a basketful of benefits for the sponsoring corporate houses and hotels. These companies position themselves as those selling contemporary products.

Others like The Park hotel too have a "policy to promote contemporary art and culture in all its manifestations — music, art, fashion or theatre," says PR manager, Bhavna Sood. When The Park sponsors a show it offers the designer a venue along with the complete arrangements for the evening besides designing and printing the invitation cards.So the invitees are wooed with delectable cocktails that the designer and the hotel's executive chef have devised to go with the overall theme of the show. At the Park, for example, Manish Arora's Fall-Winter collection was aimed at a trendy, very young gathering. Hence, the cocktails threw in a selection of wines and beer. Monapali's collection, on the other hand, was aimed at an older audience. Hence, it was decided to serve an elaborate high tea before the show and the celebratory wine afterwards.

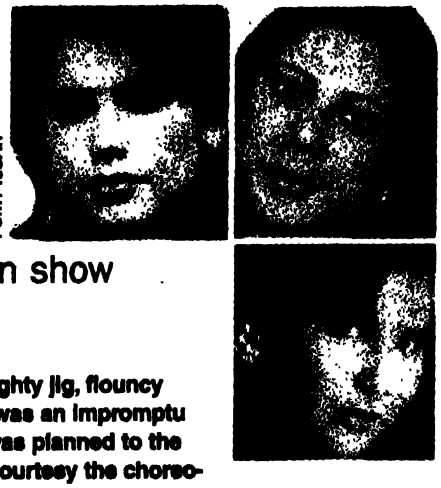
The hotels are careful about the shows that they host. Says Pratima Vasan, PR manager, Welcomgroup Maurya Sheraton, "The shows must be novel, have a significant theme to relate to, and be presented in consonance with our image." Thus, Ashish Soni's Red Ribbon Show was hosted by the hotel to raise funds for AIDS patients. Taj Mahal Hotel, too, focusses on hosting one high profile show every year. This year the hotel hosted Suneet Varma's show that raised funds for a project supported by the Modi Foundation.

But essentially, the hotels view the shows as yet another activity that their guests can participate in.



GRAPHIT

Curtain CALL



POMY ISSAR

Choreographing a fashion show is no cakewalk

Don't ever believe that the naughty jig, flouncy pirouette or coquettish pout was an impromptu addition to the sequence. It was planned to the last flutter of the eyelash — courtesy the choreographer's cue sheets."In the choreographer's lot falls not just the catwalk but the onus of ensuring that the hinges on the ramp click smoothly into place, the music closes just as the last garment of the sequence exits and that the dresses fit the models perfectly," says Aparna Bahl.

A fashion show is a synthesis of both stage production and model co-ordination, confirms Harmeet Bajaj. What one sees on the ramp is the result of months of work, which started when the dresses were but a gleam in the designer's eye. Says choreographer Rashmi Virmani who runs Ramp, "The synergy or lack of it between the choreographer and designer can actually make or break a show."

Having seen the garments from the time they were first sketched by the designer gives the choreographer a fair idea as to which model will best carry them off. So begins the task of booking the models as early as four months in advance.

Bajaj's ideas too start evolving right from the time the designers get their fabrics. Once they brief her on the silhouettes, she gets to work on the backdrops and the music which require much research. Says Bajaj, "On the last three days before the show the permutations and combinations of how each garment has to be shown are worked out."

Adds Bajaj, "For a show to be perfect, the designer's philosophy and the mode of presentation — which includes the music, choreography and set design — must be in sync."

And it isn't until the last outfit has walked the ramp that the choreographer can sit back and bask in the reflected glory of the applause.

The high tension nature of the job nearly convinced Verma never to do another show after the first. However, she did return backstage and more recently she dressed models for Aahish Soni and Monapali.

Most designers know exactly what they want to achieve through hairstyles and make-up. Verma's brief from the designers was to keep it simple. Since the Monapali collection featured simple outfits, Deepa kept the make-up light.

The dark — almost Egyptian — 'eye mask' she gave the models for Ashish Soni's show created quite a stir. "The eyes, we decided, had to make a statement," she explains. So the mouth was kept pale and the hair was braided simply, though accessorised heavily with feathers.

There are others like Manish Arora and Rohit Bal who allow stylists a free rein to tap their creativity. Pillai's brief from Bal was crisp: "think larger than life", while Arora wanted her to "think demented."

So Pillai gave Bal's models a hairdo that was three times larger than their heads. Fortunately, Bal's clothes were all about deep necklines and needed to be stepped into!

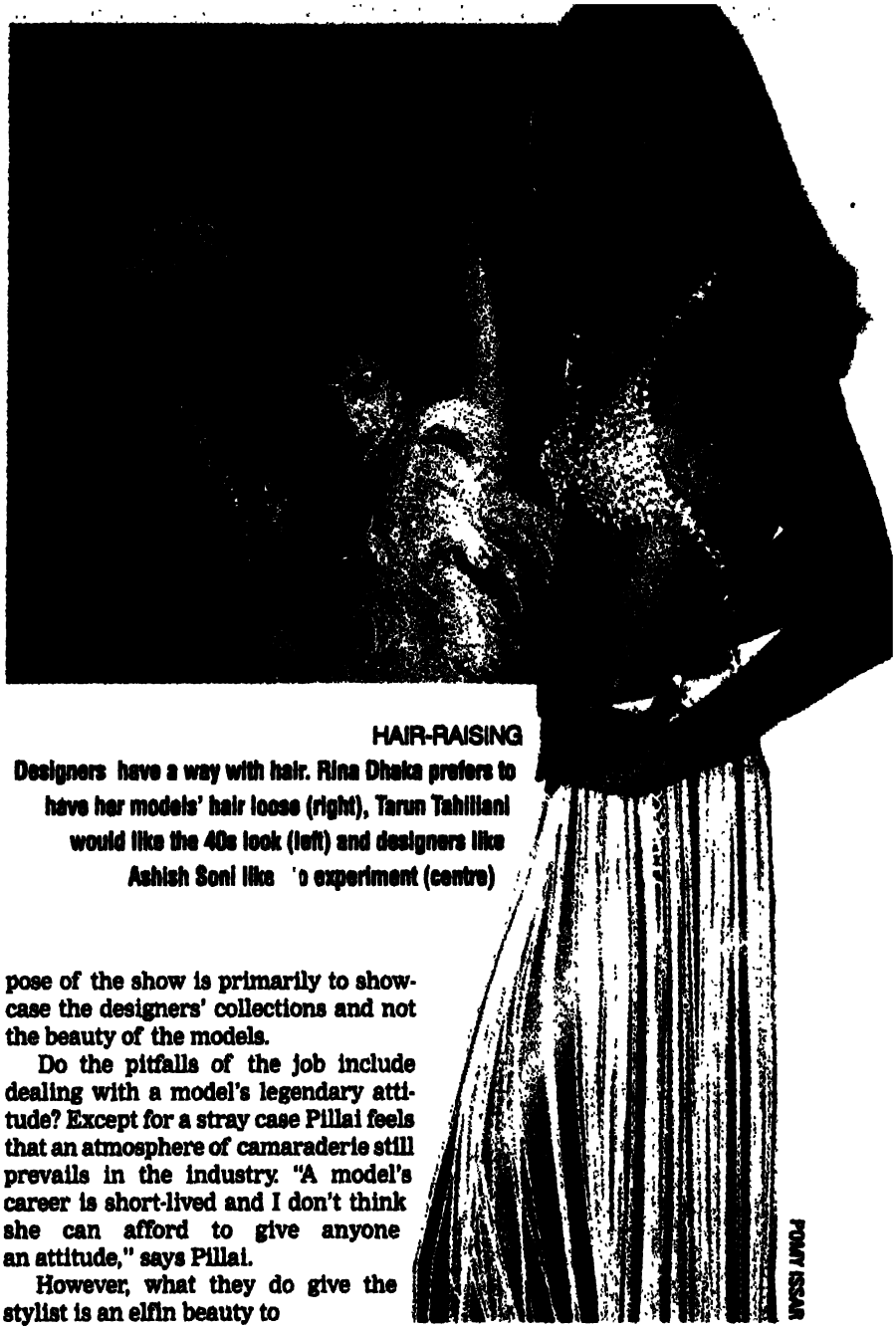
For Arora's show Pillai actually let her imagination run wild: "I put everything that I could lay my hands on into the hairdos — palm leaves, butterflies, clothes clips, bangles...anything," confesses Pillai.

Tarun Tahiliani was

WALKING BEAUTIES Stylists and choreographers like Aparna Bahl (top left) Harmeet Bajaj (right) and Rashmi Virmani (bottom) ensure the show is a perfect harmony of stage production and model coordination like the Leena and Ashima Singh's show here



POMY ISSAR



POMY ISSAR

HAIR-RAISING

Designers have a way with hair. Rina Dhaka prefers to have her models' hair loose (right), Tarun Tahiliani would like the 40s look (left) and designers like Ashish Soni like 'o experiment (centre)

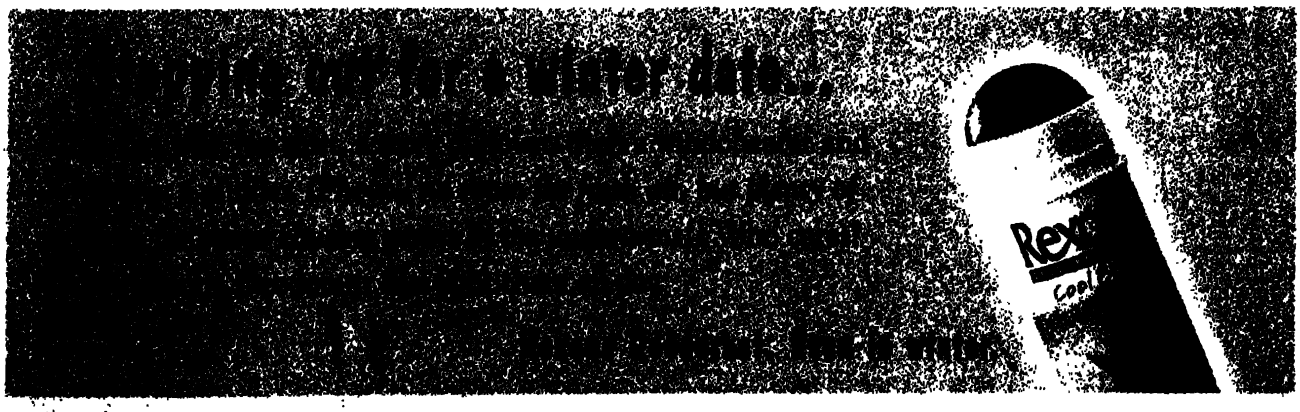
clear in that he wanted a look that ruled from the 20s to the 40s. Thus, the models flaunted a sculpted look — hair gelled down and finger waved, which also helped support the elaborate headgear. The eyes were heavily made up with silver and black liner, pale but "terribly moist" lips and very strong cheekbones. Pillai's forte is obviously a dramatic look. So Suneet Varma mannequins were given the high *joodas* of the 40s on which were planted some "fabulous headgear."

But how does one ensure that the chosen look sits well on each model? Pillai feels that "Models are on the ramp because they can carry off most looks."

It is of little consequence if the look doesn't suit the model. Moreover, an identical look is mandatory as the purpose of the show is primarily to showcase the designers' collections and not the beauty of the models.

Do the pitfalls of the job include dealing with a model's legendary attitude? Except for a stray case Pillai feels that an atmosphere of camaraderie still prevails in the industry. "A model's career is short-lived and I don't think she can afford to give anyone an attitude," says Pillai.

However, what they do give the stylist is an elfin beauty to



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press two weeks in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ AGARTALA					
IC-741	0845	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-742	1500	1, 3 5, 7
IC-743	1240	daily	IC-744	1110	daily
■ AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1430	2 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
■ BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 2, 4, 5	IC-722	1620	1, 2, 4 5
■ BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
9W-511	1405	daily	9W-512	2140	daily
■ BHUBANESWAR					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC 778	1300	1, 5
■ CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-966	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-965	0925	2, 4, 6
IC-765	1630	daily	IC 766	2135	daily
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
■ DELHI					
IC-263	0700	daily	9W-901	0810	daily
9W-902	0845	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily	* IC-855	1055	2, 6
* IC 856	1900	2, 6	IC-401	0855	daily
9W-912	2010	daily	9W-911	1920	daily
			IC-264	2025	daily
CD-412	1715	2, 4 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3 5, 7
IC 890	1200	4 7	IC-889	1545	4 7
■ DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1 3 5, 7	IC 702	1450	1, 3, 5, 7
■ DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD 257	1455	1, 4
■ GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1640	2, 4, 6
9W-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 7	IC-230	1310	daily
IC-890	1200	4 7	9W-612	1250	1 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-889	1545	4, 7
■ HYDERABAD					
9W-511	1405	daily	IC-770	1300	2, 4
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC-778	1300	1 5
IC-769	1400	2, 4	9W-512	2140	daily
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6
■ IMPHAL					
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
IC 890	1200	4, 7	IC-889	1545	4, 7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ JAIPUR					
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
■ JORHAT					
9W-621	1000	3, 5	9W-622	1315	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
■ LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	2 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W-202	0625	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0630	daily	9W-201	0920	daily
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
9W-212	2000	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC 273	1950	daily	9W-211	1915	daily
AI 6/9	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
■ NAGPUR					
IC-769	1400	2, 4	IC-770	1300	2, 4
■ PATNA					
IC-725	1000	2 6	IC-725	1355	2, 6
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
■ PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2 4, 6	CD-286	1005	2, 4, 6
CD-285	0630	7	CD-286	1105	7
■ PUNE					
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
■ RANCHI					
IC-725	1000	2, 6	IC-725	1355	2, 6
■ SILCHAR					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0820	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1020	1, 3, 5
■ TEZPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
■ VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6

FLIGHTS

■ AMMAN					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0645	4
■ AMSTERDAM					
KL-476	0415	7	KL-475	0230	7
■ BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2, 6	KB-106	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-105	1010	4			
IC-731	1005	4, 7	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-855	1155	2, 6	IC-732	1610	4, 7
TG-314	1350	1, 3, 6	IC-856	1810	2, 6
AI-306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
■ CHITTAGONG					
BG-698	1250	2, 5	BG-697	1210	2, 5

**** IC-855/856 Arr./Dep. from/to international terminal***

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
■ DHAKA					
BG 092	0915	1	BG 091	0815	1
BG 092	1150	3 4 5 6 7	BG-091	1110	3 4 5 6 7
IC 723	1620	1 5 6 7	IC 724	1850	1 5 6 7
IC 723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG 094	1645	2	BG 093	1545	2
BG 096	2105	daily	BG 095	2025	daily
■ DUBAI					
BI 107	2040	3 6	BI 108	0730	4 7
■ KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0945	1 3 5 6	IC 748	1315	1 3 5 6
IC 747	0955	2	IC 748	1325	2
RA 214	1525	2 6	RA 213	1425	2 6
■ LONDON					
BA 142	2100	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA 142	2100	6	BA 143	1550	6
■ MOSCOW					
SU 538	1100	4	SU 537	0930	4
SU 538	2230	7	SU 537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
■ PARO					
KB 106	1000	2 3 7	KB 105	0940	2 6
			KB 105	0925	4
■ SINGAPORE					
BI 108	0830	4 7	BI 107	1940	3 6
SQ 415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2215	2 5
IC 727	1505	2 6	IC 728	1000	3 7
■ TOKYO					
AI 306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
■ YANGON					
IC 727	1505	2 6	IC 728	1000	3 7

AI Air-India ● BA British Airways ● BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines ● BI Royal Brunei Airlines ● CD Alliance Air ● IC Indian Airlines ● KB Druk-Air ● KL Royal Dutch Airlines ● RA Royal Nepal Airlines ● RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines ● SQ Singapore Airlines ● SU Aeroflot ● TG Thai Airways International ● 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
2311	19-15	Delhi Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3009	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-00	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya Varanasi Dep Wed Thurs & Sun Arr Tues Wed & Sat	16-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon Tues Fri & Sat Arr Mon Thurs Fri & Sun	16-15	2304
2301	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon Tues Thurs Fri & Sat Arr Mon Wed Thurs Fri & Sun	10-45	2302
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun Arr Tues & Sat	12-40	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-45	2308
2019	8-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep Tues Fri & Sat Arr Tues Wed & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues Wed & Sat Arr Tues Fri & Sat	08-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun Mon Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3087	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	18-10	3088
3039	21-00	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	3040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	15-30	3050
3019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-55	3020
3051	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3052
5089	16-05	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	6-30	5090
3317	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-25	3318
3029	17-11	Coalfield Express	10-50	3030
3095	19-30	Asansol Express	9-45	3096
3231	21-05	Danapur Express	8-50	3232
3071	22-00	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	8-55	Ganadevta Express	21-45	3018
1189	15-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep Mon Tue & Thurs Arr Mon Thurs & Fri	7-55	1190
9669	15-15	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep Wed Sat & Sun Arr Sun Wed & Sat	7-55	9670
1447	14-00	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	4-00	1447
1191	15-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri Arr Tues	7-55	1192

Seealdah

Up	Time		Time	Dn
3045	15-00	Teesta-Torsa Express	8-55	3046
3047	15-00	Darjeeling Mail	8-55	3048
3053	15-00	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	8-55	3054
3055	15-00	Kanchanjunga Express	8-55	3056
3057	15-00	Gour Express	8-55	3058
3059	15-00	Uttar Banga Express	8-55	3060
3061	15-00	Dep Mon & Fri Arr Wed & Sun	8-55	3062
3063	15-00	Kather Express	8-55	3064
3065	15-00	Jammu-Tawi Express	8-55	3066
3067	15-00	Mughal Sarai Express via SBG Loop	8-55	3068
3069	15-00	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	8-55	3070
3071	15-00	Ganga Sagar (Darbhanga) Express	8-55	3072
3073	15-00	Dep & Arr Tues Thurs & Sat	8-55	3074

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure Up	Time	Howrah	Arrival Time	Dn
6003	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	6004
6062	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	8-20	6061
2860	12-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-20	2859
2021	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2022
8034	20-15	Ahmadabad Express	5-45	8033
8030	10-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	16-00	8029
2841	13-15	Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-30	2842
2703	7-05	Falaknama (Secunderabad) Express	19-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-20	8014
8011	8-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8005	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-05	8006
8015	21-25	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-20	8016
8007	21-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	6-20	8008
8409	16-25	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	9-09	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-18	2822
7045	9 35	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	16-15	7046
8017	16-40	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	11-35	8018
7479	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-00	7480
1030	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Tuesday & Sunday	5-15	1029
2421	17-00	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	16-35	2421
2422	11-05	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	10-45	2422
5628	03-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	03-30	5629
5627	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only	13-45	5627
5623	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	13-45	5623
5624	03-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	03-30	5624
6324	22-25	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	6323
5628	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	03-30	5626
5625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	5625

ENQUIRIES For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains 2203535-44 for all other information For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203496-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays) In addition dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running) 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations) Train service enquiry at Sealdah 3503535/37
Interactive Voice Response System (5 am to 9 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday 5 am to 5 pm on Sunday) For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised) Dial 2203496 (manual enquiry)



HIGH STREET mart

The Weekender's catch-line says it all: 'Wear your attitude'. That's what high street fashion is all about. Attitude. Loads and loads of it. Walk into any university campus and you can immediately see those who have it and those who don't. By the style of the hair, by the angle of the head, by the confidence of the walk, by the brands they wear.

High street fashion has always remained indifferent to the diktats of fashion pundits. It follows its own set of rules and makes up in sheer volume what it lacks in drama. Little wonder then, that brands like Benetton, ColorPlus, Levis, Weekender, Wearhouse, etc., have a faithful fan-following. This, despite the fact that as far as the basics are concerned, very little changes.

In fact, the standard design sells the most. New designs come and go but the classics remain. Says Ritika of ColorPlus, "Basically, ColorPlus is known for solid colours and that is what people demand over and over again."

A salesperson at Lacoste echoes the same opinion. "It is the traditional polo-shirt which has been selling over the years. Our clientele comprises old loyalists who keep coming back for the same thing."

And the same thing means an ssurance of quality and the confi- ence of never going out of style. This i the strength most brands cash on.

This has been the year of colours: bright, vivid, solid colours. Prints, ripes and checks were also in evi- ence but what took the market by orm were solid colours. And nowhere as that more evident than at olorPlus. Says Ritika, "This season eople have often picked up a lot of lentical stuff in different colours."

The designs are classic and formal, oth for men and women, even though ie label proclaims to be pre-washed asual wear. They have straight, busi- ess-like skirts for ladies, but this year ousers have been in demand. Even ough men went for variations of ues and greens, women were steady in eir demand for beige, olive and khaki.

"ColorPlus colours don't fade even ter innumerable washes," says Ritika. otton tends to expand when it comes contact with water and shrinks once 's dry. To avoid that, all ColorPlus buys e accompanied by a small booklet hich gives cleaning instructions. They so use polyester thread which does ot fade, unlike cotton thread.

ColorPlus shirts come between 730-1,900 for men and Rs 640-800 for omen. Trousers are priced at Rs 1,126- 540 for men and Rs 820-1,053 for omen. Cotton knit tops come any- here between Rs 500-700, while skirts e priced at Rs 820. They also have llovers, cardigans and ties, both plain d in geometrical patterns.

A slight variation of this can be seen Benetton outlets which are bubbling lth their united colours. The basics main steady, but the change of season es a lot of activity by way of new nges, new colours and new fabrics. ie colours this year are beige, dark own, royal and turquoise blue. The brics are corduroys and chennile art from the usual wool, flannel, chif- n, viscose and cotton.

There are chennile tops, bottoms d skirts priced at Rs 2,000 and above colours like maroon, royal blue and e occasional black. The chennile col- ction is part of the special 'Straight om Italy' section. Corduroys come in ps and bottoms both, but what has ally caught the fancy of people are rduroy overshirts to be worn loose



CLASSICS REMAIN

When it comes to high street fashion, certain labels providing basics like solid colours, stripes and checks, remain a favourite with many

over sweatshirts or T-shirts.

Other favourites this season are baseball jackets in blue, grey, dark grey and maroon. Priced at Rs 999, they have really taken off, says the salesperson at Benetton outlet

Benetton, it seems, has decided to celebrate the cold season with the fairer sex. There is a whole range of sweaters, cardigans and pullovers to choose from. There are body-fit sweaters in stripes with zippers in the 'Straight from Italy' section. Then there are mid-thigh-length cardigans with pockets in solid colours. Apart from these season specials, Benetton has a lot of its usual stuff like polo-neck sweaters, hooded jackets, flannel skirts, both long and short, and single-breasted jackets.

Another place where one finds a lot of usual stuff is Lacoste. At Lacoste, the seasons are incidental, because what matters to most regular customers is the crocodile symbol. So apart from polywool trousers (Rs 2,000) and pullovers for winter months they have their polo-shirts priced at Rs 1,100, trousers at Rs 1,500, T-shirts at Rs 750 onwards, and slacks for women for Rs 1,000. There are a range of uppers for ladies, priced between Rs 950-1,250, in a variety of styles including sleeveless. Almost synonymous with Lacoste (like the crocodile) are their solid colours. The only exceptions are boxer shorts where one finds exotic prints.

The man in-charge at Lacoste says that though the range is developed at their factory on the outskirts of Delhi, all the components — including pearl buttons and the famous crocodile monogram — are imported from France. This, according to him, is the reason why the Lacoste range in India is their cheapest worldwide.

Weekender, a wholly indigenous Bangalore-based company, targets its designs at people in the age group of 16 to 26. Weekender believes in sheer volume, though this does not mean that it compromises on either quality or design. According to Vanita Nayar, regional manager, Weekender, "We are known for providing quality stuff at affordable prices. Besides, our style changes every season."

This season's highlights are pullovers, particularly in dark green and dark blue, priced between Rs 895-995; and trousers in four different fittings: regular, tight, bootleg and formal, priced between Rs 545-595; and jackets, modestly priced between Rs 700-1,000.

Shirts for women come for Rs 395-495, and Rs 395-595 for men. Skirts cost only Rs 295, while tops, both woven and knit, are priced upwards of Rs 195. Over the years Weekender has been able to sustain a loyal clientele among school and college students.

If you are keen on moving with the international hip cats then Levis might just be the place for you. Their new Rs 995 range of nine fits in denim, gabadines, chinos and corduroys has something for everyone. Apart from that they have their regular 517-boot cut, 501-button-fly and 505-zip fly jeans priced between Rs 1,345-2,295.

The T-shirts are available for anything between Rs 495-595, the shirts, between Rs 845-1045. The seersucker check shirts come in three colours: aqua, lilac and lime for women at Rs 595 and navy, blue and bordeaux for men at Rs 545. Step in with a heavy wallet and step out in style.

In short, the high street has never been so full, the choice never so vast. All you need is the time to browse through the merchandise, and an attitude to carry it off. ■

BEHIND THE *Scenes*

It's show time folks!

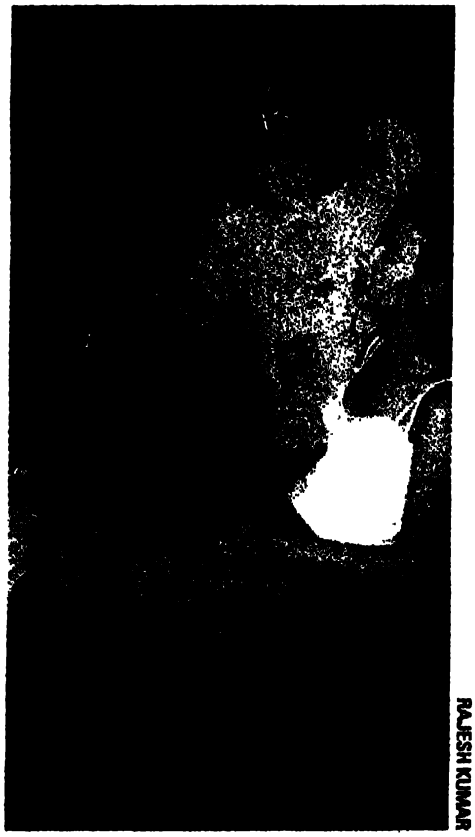
Ghazala Wahab witnesses the madness that reigns backstage at a show

Noyonika Chatterjee has a serious problem. The fashion show has begun. Noyonika is sliding into her second outfit of the evening when panic strikes. The drawstring of her salwar has disappeared inside the seam.

"Oh, s***!" she exclaims. "Oh my God!" shrieks her helper (the term used to describe the young design students hired to help models dress during the show). "Quick, quick, get a safety pin," urges Noyonika. Her helper materialises in a second with a safety pin but is far too nervous to do anything with it. Snatching it from her hand, Noyonika pins her salwar in place even as she strides briskly towards the ramp. Her *dupatta* trails carelessly behind her. She picks it up and drapes it around her shoulders as she steps on to the catwalk, her face betraying none of the nerves of a moment ago.

Backstage, the helper is still reeling from the shock. "What a narrow escape," she repeats for the nth time. It takes her a couple of minutes to get the next outfit organised. "I don't know how that happened," she explains to no one in particular.

But nobody has the time or the inclination to console her. The helpers are busy getting the next outfits ready, the co-ordinator of the show is standing close to the ramp with earphones and a mouthpiece, ready to whisper instructions, and designer Suneet Varma is busy clasping and unclasping his hands nervously. That is, when he is not trying to help a model drape her *dupatta* right or fixing her headgear.



RAJESH KUMAR

LONG WAIT

Long before the show begins, the models have to queue up for their turn to sit in front of the make-up artist and the hairstylist and step into their outfits. And then it's over to the ramp!

People who watch fashion shows have no idea of the chaos from which the cool and composed models emerge to sashay down the ramp. So, for the benefit of the uninitiated, here is a first-person account of the madness that reigns backstage at a fashion show.

But first, there's the helper, who's still to get over the anxiety caused by the drawstring episode. In sheer desperation, she turns to this reporter for comfort. "You know, I am getting very nervous, will you help me with the next outfit?"

Okay, but what kind of help does she require? "Oh, nothing much," she says chirpily, "just help me tie her shoes." Before any help can be offered, however, Noyonika is back from her saunter down the ramp, and the helper rushes to her aid. The shoe episode is forgotten.

All through the day everything has been moving smoothly creating a false sense of calm. Even as the day wore off and the time for the show neared, nobody showed any sign of nervousness.

The rehearsals that morning went off well, with choreographer Harmeet Bajaj putting the models through their paces. The only person who appeared nervous amidst all this activity was Suneet

Varma himself, but then that was understandable.

Post-rehearsal was a flurry of activity but mainly among the people involved in putting the show together. Simar Duggal's string blouse had to be refitted, some *dupattas* and *churidars* were yet to arrive from the factory, the outfits had to be ironed, the accessories were not ready and make-up artist Ambika Pillai wanted to leave early so the make-up had to be finished by six.

A serial list was drawn up for the make-up session and models figuring lower down the list were allowed to take a break for lunch and rest. They departed for the coffee shop even as Ambika started on the first model on her list. She was assisted by her sister, who applied the base make-up and a hair stylist.

An easy informality permeated the air as everyone chatted happily to one another, and it was hard to credit that there was such a thing as professional rivalry among the models. Simar Duggal decided to go home for a few hours. A few others like Noyonika Chatterjee and Helen Brodie retired to their respective rooms at the hotel. The rest either hung around or trooped off to the coffee shop for a quick bite. Throughout the afternoon only one person seemed to be hassled — the show coordinator. She was responsible for making sure that everything was in place. And the people at the receiving end of her ire were the poor helpers. Their job primarily is to get the outfits of the model ironed and kept ready sequence-wise. They are also supposed to make sure that the accessories match the particular outfit to avoid confusion.



RAJESH KUMAR



CHAOTIC CHIC

Missing accessories, outfits yet to come from the factory, drawstrings snapping at the last moment, saris refusing to drape or pleat and more such minor hitches are enough to reduce the designer and his team to a bundle of nerves



There may be no confusion, but there are a few anxious moments. Noyonika tries to drape the net-and-crepe-satin sari a couple of times before the show but the pleats just won't come right. Simar is having the same problem.

Finally, in sheer exasperation, Noyonika threatens to give up—and the pleats fall miraculously into place. With pleats firmly secured with safety pins, the saris are given for ironing.

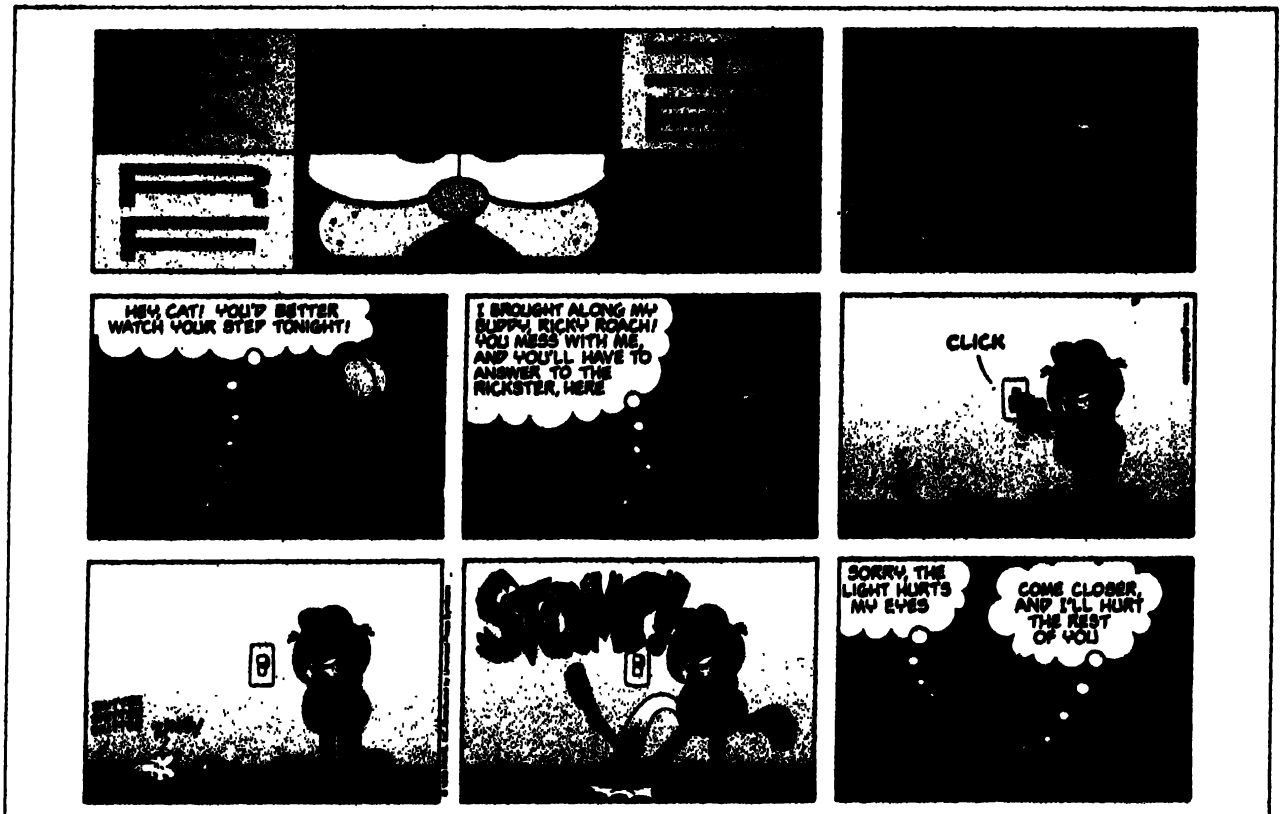
The tension which had started building up 6 pm onwards becomes more and more palpable. The show was supposed to start at 7.30 pm, but even by 8 pm things are not ready. All the men — with the exception of Suneet, of course — are ordered out of Diwan-e-Aam.

The models wish each other luck as glasses of wine are smuggled backstage. Suneet goes around telling everyone to be ready for the first sequence, stopping to check the accessories himself.

The show finally began close to 8.30 pm. The models glide in and out of the outfits. There is the occasional moment of panic, when a model's zipper gets stuck in her hair. But two helpers rush to her aid; and yet another crisis is averted.

Then, before you know it, the show is over. Everyone takes a few minutes to relax, there are the usual rounds of congratulations, and then it's time for dinner. The show is over — now it's time to wait and see how the clothes do. ■

GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



BEAUTY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am 19 years old and have a very tanned skin. The reason being, I am out in the sun very often. I have been bleaching my face of late but I get rashes due to that. Please advise.
RADHIKA KAPUR, CALCUTTA

The strong effects of chemical have been known to ruin the face. It is better that you protect your skin rom the strong ultra-violet rays by moving ut with sunglasses and an umbrella. Also se a sunscreen lotion. At home, use the ollowing pack daily for a week: sandalwood owder, juice of one lemon, fullers earth, hree ground cloves and some milk. Apply hs all over the face and neck and leave on o dry. Wash off with milk first and then ice-old water.

am 16 years old. I crave for ong, beautiful hair and believe me, I am willing to put in the ime and effort. Please tell me ow I should make my hair ong and lustrous.
ANDANA MOHAN, ORISSA

Long, beautiful and lustrous hair has been the envy of many and one has to follow a regular hair care programme. I would suggest that you oil your hair weekly. Also, apply henna on your hair as this is a natural conditioner. Add two eggs and one cup curd to henna. And if you want only conditioning, keep the henna on for an hour. But if you want colour, a minimum of two hours is necessary. Many women crave for long, beautiful hair but are not willing to put in the time or effort to create it. Proper diet and lots of water will go a long way in making hair manageable. Lay more emphasis on raw foods like spinach, cucumber, carrots, tomatoes, cauliflower and fruits. Eat lots of protein food like milk, eggs, meat, fruits, cheese and salads.

I am very conscious about my dry hands. Please recommend an instant hand nourisher that I can make at home.
ANAMIKA RAY, JAMSHEDPUR

I have seen women wearing the most expensive diamonds on their fingers and the most exquisite bracelets on their wrists but I fail to understand why women do not look after their hands. Use a good nourishing cream twice a day. Also, you can take two tbs of fresh cream mixed with two tsp sugar and a juice of half a lemon. Massage this paste all over the hands until the sugar granules have totally dissolved. Wash hands. Your hands will look and feel as smooth as silk.

I use baby cream daily to nourish and moisturise my six-month-old baby's soft skin. Yet her body appears very dry. Please suggest a remedy.
NEELIMA SEN, AGARTALA

Babies are born with soft skin. However, to maintain it, a regular oil massage before a bath is a must. I would suggest that everyday before bathing, massage your little one with olive oil, sandalwood oil and sesame seed oil, mixed and then, warmed. Nutrition is also important. Give her a few tsp of freshly squeezed orange juice. I would suggest that you apply baby cream after oiling and bathing the baby and avoid the use of soap. Instead use gramflour mixed with fresh cream and see how soft and cuddly your bundle of joy is.

For cracked heels, add sesame seed oil, lemon slices and glycerine to warm water and soak your feet in it. Apply almond oil after wiping dry



IN Vogue

India's top fashion designers draw up their best-dressed lists

And the winners are...

RITU BERI

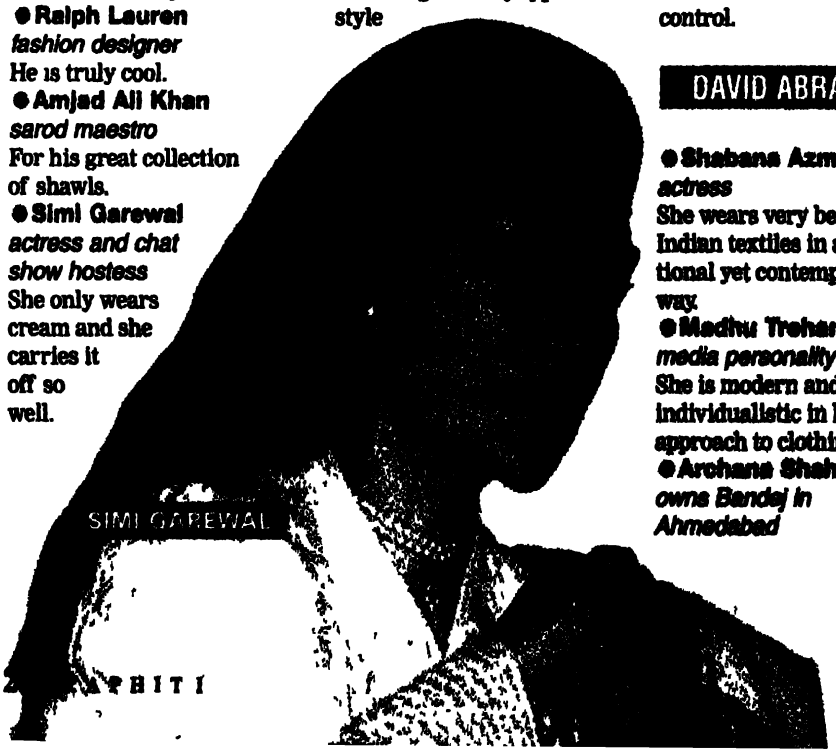
● **Uma Gajapati Raju**
television personality
She has a great sense of dressing. I quite admire her saris and jewellery.
● **Rekha**
actress
She has the ability to look very dramatic.
● **The late Princess Diana**
For being appropriately dressed for every occasion.
● **Ralph Lauren**
fashion designer
He is truly cool.
● **Amjad Ali Khan**
sarod maestro
For his great collection of shawls.
● **Simi Garewal**
actress and chat show hostess
She only wears cream and she carries it off so well.
● **Madhavrao Scindia**
politician
For being a well-dressed politician.
● **Indira Gandhi**
former Prime Minister
She had a great sense of colours and saris.
● **Shekhar Kapur**
director and actor
He is well-groomed and well put together.
● **Benazir Bhutto**
former Prime Minister of Pakistan
She has got a very typical style


REKHA

and she looks every bit in control.

DAVID ABRAHAM

● **Shabana Azmi**
actress
She wears very beautiful Indian textiles in a traditional yet contemporary way.
● **Madhu Trehan**
media personality
She is modern and very individualistic in her approach to clothing.
● **Archana Shah**
owns Bandej in Ahmedabad
She wears ethnic fabrics that are eclectic. The shades are very contemporary.
● **Martand Singh**
design guru
He wears the best white kurtas and Aligarhi pyjamas.
● **Deepti Naval**
actress
Her clothes are a good mix between traditional and contemporary shades. She looks like she can work in them.
● **Dave Chang**
graphic designer
I like him for his great contemporary style. He wears Sulka shirts with old khaki jeans. It is a nice mix between what is rarefied and ordinary.
● **Rakesh Thakore**
fashion designer
He is always faultlessly dressed.
● **Aruna Ghosh**
media personality
She wears only handloom saris which are just beautiful.
● **Mohan Neelkantham**
fashion editor


SIMI GAREWAL

He has a completely idiosyncratic and eccentric style but one that is stylish.

● **Sanjana Kapoor**
television anchor
I have seen her on television but never in person. I think she looks great in *The Amul India Show*

J. J. VALAYA

● **Simi Garewal**
actress and chat show hostess
She can carry on with one colour for years and yet look refreshingly different each time

● **Amita Gupta**
photographer
She is a simple dresser but I have often seen her combining elements of nature like flowers and fabrics with great elegance She also wears jewellery which has a lot of character and age

● **Romi Chopra**
ad man
He is very suave with a strong traditional style He is basically into neutrals with just the right amount of spice in his colours

● **Priyanka Gandhi**
putative politician
A safe dresser but very sophisticated She does not experiment too much with colours but carries off whatever she wears very well.

● **Haseena Jethmalani**
socialite
She is very petite, pretty, and her style is perennial.

● **Rohini Khosla**
representative, Christie's
Her's is an extremely high impact style of dressing with a lot of emphasis on jewellery, especially on the neck. She has a very good understanding of old jewellery

● **Shirin Paul**
chairperson, Apeejay-Surrendra Group
She is very elegant.

● **Feroze Gujral**
model
She has a very unconventional, beautiful face and carries off just about any style.

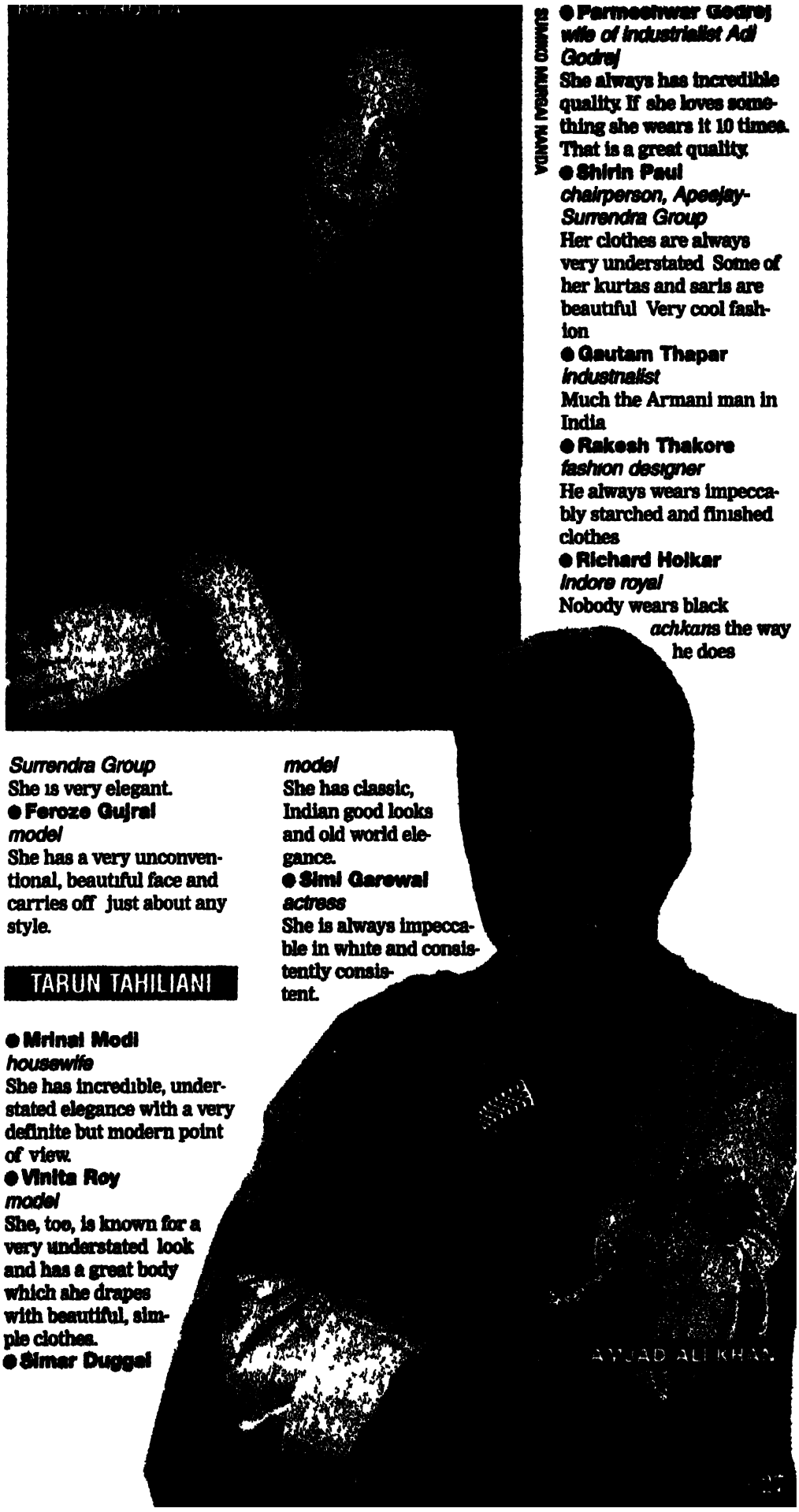
TARUN TAHILIANI

● **Mrinal Modi**
housewife
She has incredible, understated elegance with a very definite but modern point of view.

● **Vinita Roy**
model
She, too, is known for a very understated look and has a great body which she drapes with beautiful, simple clothes.

● **Simar Duggal**
model
She has classic, Indian good looks and old world elegance.

● **Simi Garewal**
actress
She is always impeccable in white and consistently consistent.



● **Parmeshwar Godrej**
wife of industrialist Adi Godrej
She always has incredible quality If she loves something she wears it 10 times. That is a great quality

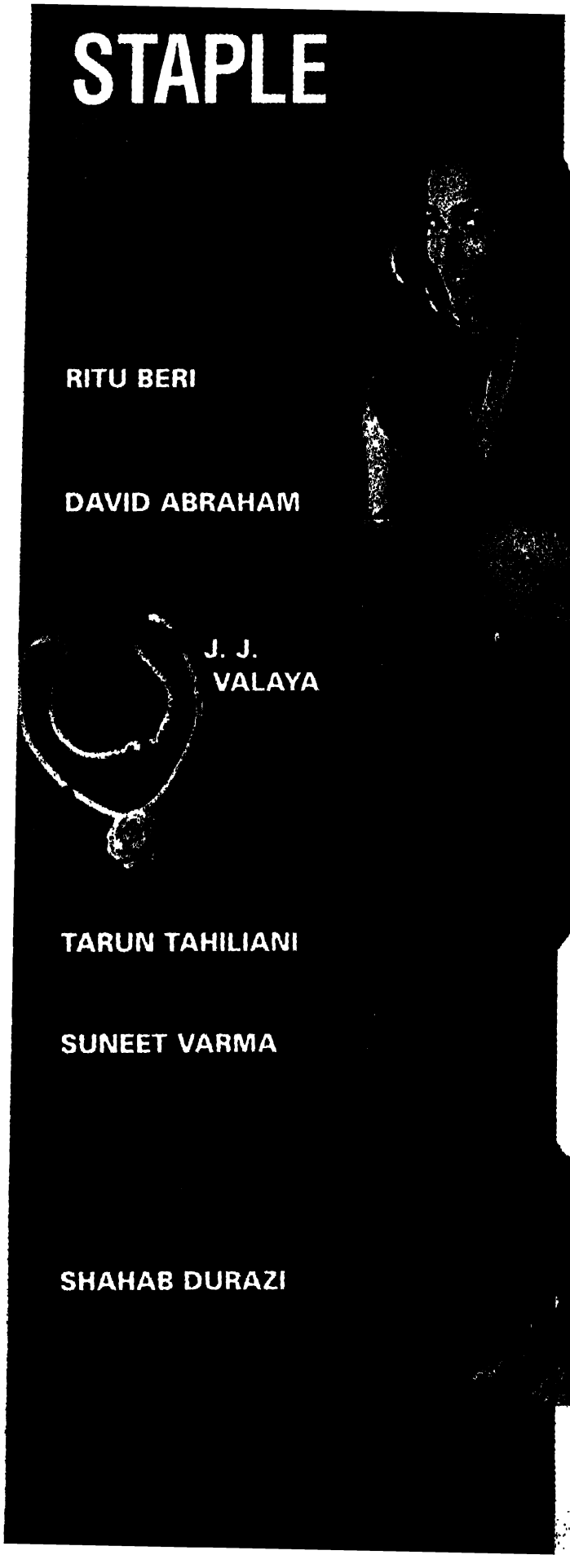
● **Shirin Paul**
chairperson, Apeejay-Surrendra Group
Her clothes are always very understated Some of her kurtas and saris are beautiful Very cool fashion

● **Gautam Thapar**
industrialist
Much the Armani man in India

● **Rakesh Thakore**
fashion designer
He always wears impeccably starched and finished clothes

● **Richard Holkar**
Indore royal
Nobody wears black *achkans* the way he does

STAPLE



● **Nasreen Qureishi**
designer
Her dress sense is very spontaneous.

SUNEET VARMA

● **Dimple Kapadia**
actress
She has the style and the looks. You can hardly take your eyes off her beautiful face but she always takes care to wear the right browns, beiges and peaches to match the honey-dew colour of her eyes and hair.

● **Madhu Sapre**
model
She has a God-gifted athletic body which has been trained to be a clothes hanger. She looks as beautiful in Indian clothes as she does in short skirts.

● **Prabha Chandran**
journalist
She is a petite woman who always wears beautifully-tailored jackets and trousers to give her a nice silhouette. She comes across as a very high-powered executive while retaining her feminity.

● **Neera Nath**
jewellery designer
She has a very boisterous, funny and enduring personality. And the clothes she wears have great panache and a great sense of humour—probably because she is a good designer herself.

● **Bim Bissell**
cultural entrepreneur
She has tremendous style which is unique to her, with some of the best saris from South India and Benaras.

● **Guneeta Sodhi**
interior decorator
She is the ultimate beautiful woman with perfect bone structure, body and hair. She is very understated and carries off the minimalist look—in a black off-shoulder dress with no jewellery—to perfection.

● **Ravi Bajaj**
fashion designer
Loves clothes since childhood. Wearing beautiful clothes comes quite naturally to him. He goes to great lengths to make beautiful clothes for himself.



● **Rasool Gujral**
interior designer
Her philosophy is opulence and she does it beautifully. Because if you are excessive and not careful, it does not work. But in her case, she is always opulently dressed and looks like a

winner

● **Naveen Ansal**
architect
The first time I saw Naveen he reminded me of a galloping horse I think most people would like to see him out of his clothes than in them Whatever he wears looks fabulous

● **Sharon Stone**
She has the unusual combination of being super sexy and volatile in the world's most subtle designer, Giorgio Armani's clothing Lethal combination

ATUL CHOWDHURY



RICHARD HOLKAR

SHAHAB DURAZI

Simi Garewal
actress
Always elegant and cool in her trade mark white

● **Ayesha Shroff**
former actress and wife of Jackie Shroff
She has her own brand of sophistication

● **Gayatri Devi**
rajmata of Jaipur
She radiates elegance and grace on all occasions

● **Jaya Bachchan**
actress
Simplicity becomes her best

● **Shabana Azmi**
actress
Her saris are always a stand out

● **Rhea Pillai**
model
With her figure she can carry off any outfit to perfection

● **Simone Tata**
businesswoman
Understated elegance characterises her style

● **Shweta Bachchan**
socialite
She looks good in both Indian and Western clothes

● **Sabira Merchant**
media personality
Her sharply tailored look gives her an air of consequence

● **Krishna Mehta**
fashion designer
She has an innate sense of style that permeates her wardrobe ■



SHIRIN PAUL



IF YOU FEEL LIKE A KING,
SHOULDN'T YOU LOOK LIKE ONE?

KING'S CHOICE
EXCLUSIVE SUIT LENGTHS FROM DIGJAM

King's Choice. A collection of fine suitings in pure Merino wool and blends.
Brought to you by the makers of DORMEUIL-DIGJAM Suitings.

In strategic alliance with DORMEUIL - The world's best cloths.®

THE RAGTAG Brigade

Graphiti draws up its worst-dressed list

And the losers are...


JAYALALITHA

● **Sushma Swaraj**
It is her clothes (tightly-wound sari, frilly blouses) that give her the look of a shrill housewife - all it needs is a rolling pin to complete the image. And that aggressive streak of *sindoor* and the larger-than-life *bindi* doesn't help matters either.

● **Jayalalitha**
Her saris aren't objectionable in themselves; it's the matching capes (which some say double as bullet-proof vests) that are the biggest offenders. And when the South has so much to offer in terms of textiles and fabrics, must she wear those flowery, synthetic-type saris?

● **Daler Mehndi**
Okay, so he has to wear those shimmering capes and those grotesque colours when he's performing on stage or on video. But what is his excuse for preening in a baby-pink suit and matching *pagdi* offstage?

● **Manisha Koirala**
Even if you excuse her over-the-top costumes on screen as the psychedelic imagination of her dress designer, Koirala doesn't inspire much confidence even when she's choosing her own clothes. It's either drab *salwar* suits with her hair pinned back severely, or trashy Western clothes that deejay boyfriend Husain probably finds sexy.

● **Govinda**
He may have put on 10 kilos since he first entered the movies, but in his own mind, Govinda is still a thin man. And what's more, he dresses accordingly: crotch-hugging jeans, chest-enhancing T-shirts, etc., which only accentuate that extra tyre around his waist. And given the dayglo colours he wears, you need sunglasses to look at him on a bright day.

● **Bappi Lahiri**
He's loud, he's crass, and seems to wear his entire worldly wealth on his person in the form of gold chains and diamond pendants. The look is best described as Italian gangster crossed with wealthy Punjabi bride.

● **Pritish Nandy**
He now seems to have given the Miami Vice school of dressing (round-neck T-shirt, casual jacket, chinos) a miss. His Japanese period (long, elaborate shirts) is also over. But Nandy's dress sense remains as suspect as ever (clingy shirt paired with skin-tight trousers that perch precariously above a prosperous paunch).

● **Bina Ramani**
Mutton dressed as lamb sums up her style of dressing. She may be on the wrong side of 50 but that doesn't stop her from wearing bare-dare outfits (backless *cholis* and the like), which show off her crepy skin to worst disadvantage. Surely, as a self-proclaimed fashion designer, she should know better.

● **Sophiya Haque**
We know that veejays are supposed to dress funky, but Haque carries this dictum to extremes. Some of her outfits — which take in tousled wigs, grunge-style clothing, innerwear worn as outerwear, and skimpy summer dresses that look as if they have been salvaged from a hippie commune — defy description.

● **Annu Kapoor**
His bad taste takes in both Indian and Western clothes. His kurtas are often far more elaborate than anything Pallavi Joshi would be caught dead in, and his ill-fitting suits give him the look of an East European hood. ■


SOPHIYA HAQUE

DALER MEHNDI

GOVINDA



"But how is Shapers different ?"
New Shapers, is a scientifically designed sanitary napkin which gives me complete comfort, freedom and total protection.

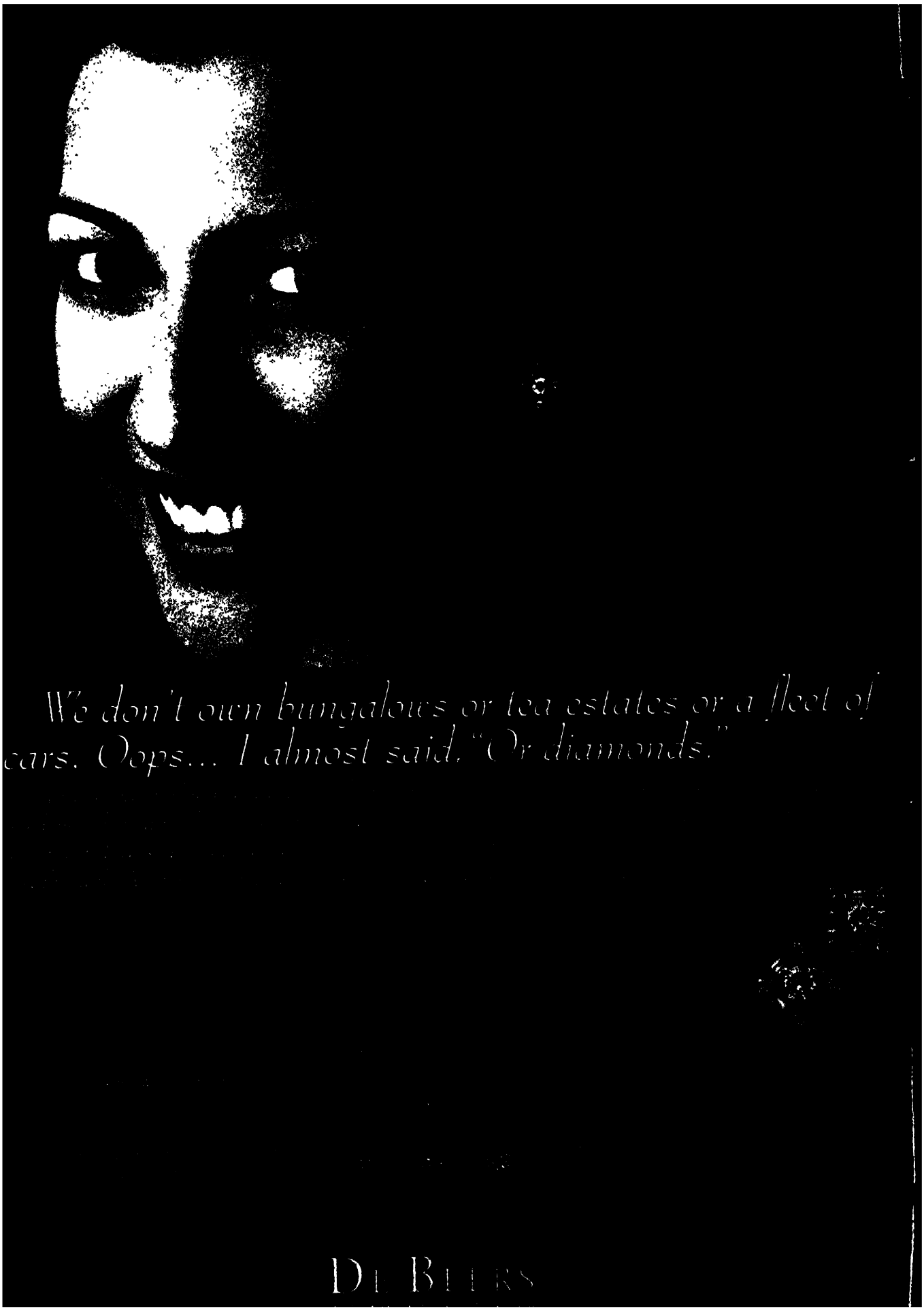
" But Shapers isn't rectangular ? "
Shapers is shaped for a perfect fit. Its side sealing plastic back cover ensures **no side staining. No bunching.**

" But doesn't a thicker & longer sanitary napkin absorb better ? "
No, not anymore. Shapers is a slim & compact sanitary napkin. Because its specially compressed absorbent material, **absorbs more.** Giving you the freedom which a thicker napkin will never allow.

" Don't all sanitary napkins get lumpy in the centre ? Never evenly absorb ? "
No, not with Shapers, its unique **Absorb Protection Technology** Channels pull the wetness down, spreading it evenly throughout the length of the pad leaving the surface comfortably **drier** and **longer lasting.**

Go ahead, get confidence when you need it most. Get Shapers.

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We don't own bungalows or tea estates or a fleet of cars. Oops... I almost said, "Or diamonds."
DE BEERS

WRITE IN



Address your letters to Write In, Graphiti, The Telegraph, 6 Prafulla Sarkar Street, Calcutta 1

YEHI HAI RIGHT CHOICE, BABY!

The cover story on Remo Fernandes ('Music Maniac', November 1) was as cool as the Goan himself. The electrifying performer that he is, he also has a conscience, the lyrics of his numbers having drawn inspiration from the volatile socio-political scenario around him: *Pack that smack*, *Politicians don't rock and roll* and *Bombay city* being a case in point.

ELA ROY, PATNA

ROCKING REMO

The *dekko* on singer Remo Fernandes proved to be a real *jalwa*. After over a decade in the English music industry and with a repertoire of Hindi film songs under his belt, Remo can afford to rest on his laurels. His ability to sing in Konkani, Spanish, Portuguese and French makes him a sure fire linguist. It's a pity though when he says that in spite of being geographically united, one still finds it difficult to relate to the average common man.

Wilfred Rodrigues, Delhi

Remo Fernandes might resist being slotted with the current crop of *bhangra* and techno artistes. But surely he must have had a reason to sing *filmi* numbers — the obvious reason being there are no takers for his brand of English music. It's an assault on our already frayed nerves to have to hear him belt out film songs in that anglicised accent. It's high time he stopped deluding himself into thinking he is a *firangi*.

Sulchhir Singh, Calcutta

HOME FABRICS

The write-up on furnishing fabrics was very informative('Dressing up the Home', November 1). Furnishing fabrics have certainly come of age. Gone are the days when home furnishings meant cottons and silks only. They now come in a varied range and a great variety of designs — floral motifs, geometric/abstract patterns and animal figures. With a combination of fabrics and weaves and great ingenuity, they are really adding a lot of colour to homes.

Sujata Chandra, Agartala

DOWN TO EARTH

I liked Nalini Singh's My Personal Style (November 1). She came across as a very simple person, not boasting about never-heard-before exotic dishes.

Arpana Chandok, Calcutta

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Kalyan Chakravorty

graphiti★ 13 December 1998

4 MIND OVER MATTER Sudhir Kakar examines the ascetic of desire

10 MASQUERADE Working in a five-star kitchen is a far from luxurious experience **13** SMALL TALK The more things change, the more they remain the same in the music business **23** IN RELATION The uneasy equation between Jayalalitha and the BJP

The idea behind exclusive bathrooms

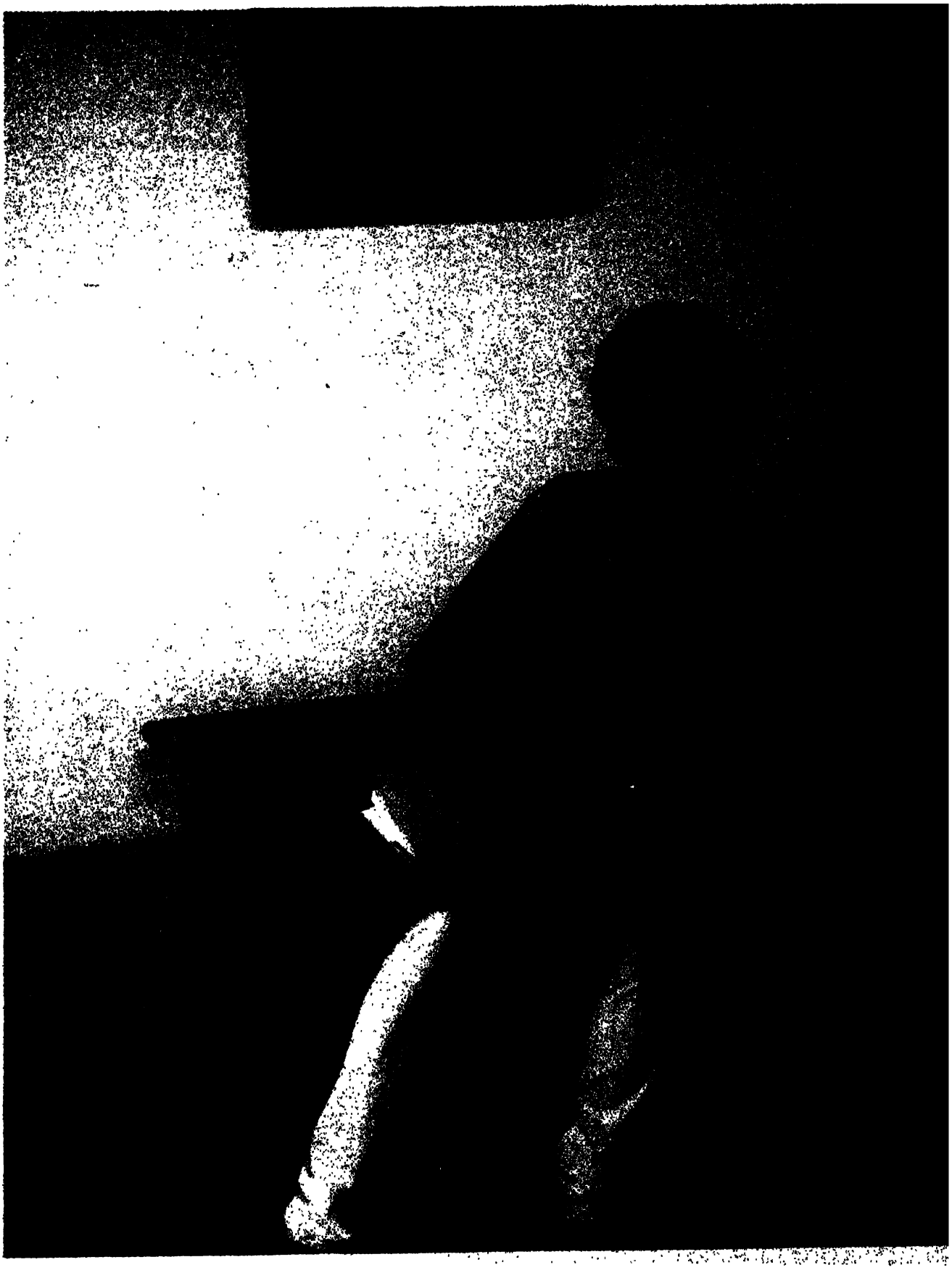


Fascinating Hindware

VITREOUS HINDWARE



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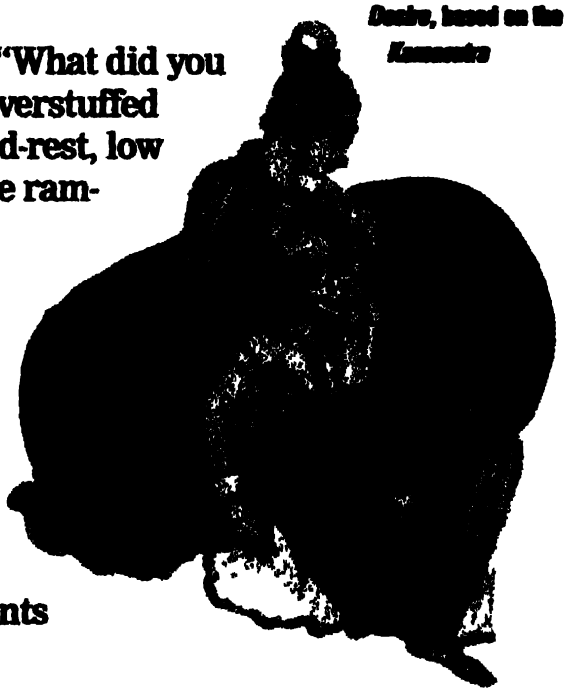
Mind over Matter

SAMITA BHATIA gets the benefit of Sudhir Kakar's psychoanalysis

Sudhir Kakar may be used to plumbing the dark depths of the human mind, but his office doesn't reflect that. Instead, it is bright, cheery and sunny. And India's leading psychoanalyst sits overlooking a sunlit terrace on which well-tended plants flourish.

But, asks Kakar, sounding genuinely curious, "What did you expect?" Well, to begin with, a bigger room, an overstuffed black leather couch, a reclining chair with a head-rest, low lighting and deafening silence broken only by the ramblings of a disturbed psyche. "The attempt was to break the stereotype," explains Kakar softly.

The couch is there, but it could — at a push — pass off as an elegant Colonial love seat. The upholstery, in pastel checks ("couldn't afford leather"), goes well with the *chattai* on the floor and windows. The doctor's chair and foot-rest are placed at a deliberate distance from the couch. Dressed in his trademark kurta-pyjama, Kakar says, "I don't like to breathe down my clients as they talk. I like to give them space."



HEALER AS WRITER: From sorting out people's problems to lecturing at universities, Sudhir Kakar also manages to find time to write books, like *The Ascetic of Desire*, based on the *Kamasutra*

Accustomed to listening rather than talking, Kakar is unwittingly monosyllabic when talking about himself. In his early 60s, he may have the guileless smile of the innocent, but he is intimately acquainted with the depravities of the human mind. But you can rest assured that

the most intimate confessions of your life will be safe with him.

For a man who insists that he doesn't possess "X ray vision" his eyes are probing. He seems to just. .well...know.

From sorting out people's dilemmas to lecturing at universities in India and abroad, Kakar also manages to find time to write books in-between. He mulls, "Writing falls quite naturally within the ambit of a psychoanalyst's profession."

Kakar's first novel, *The Ascetic of Desire*, a modern commentary on the *Kamasutra*, was pegged to be a major literary event of the year. Set in the fourth century AD in an *ashram* in the woods outside Varanasi, Kakar's protagonist sets out to write the biography of Vatsyayana, the author of *Kamasutra*.

So why did he chose the *Kamasutra* as his Muse? He explains, "I had the choice of two symbols of ancient Indian sexual heritage — the *Kamasutra* and Khajuraho. I opted for the *Kamasutra* as my knowledge of architecture is limited."

While Kakar's Vatsyayana recounts stories from his youth and childhood to his pupil, he emerges as an asexual being himself. In the course of the book Kakar transcends the 64-positions of love as described clinically in the *Kamasutra* and explores the role that eroticism and passion play in sexual pleasure.

Penning *The Ascetic of Desire* was a diversion that Kakar badly needed to clear the cobwebs left in the wake of his earlier work, *The Colours of Violence*. The book had left him emotionally drained as exploring social violence was a depressing experience. "I was glad to get back to writing about life — especially sex. Bringing the novel to life proved to be an uplifting, exhilarating and absorbing experience," he confesses.

> "I had the choice of two symbols of ancient Indian sexual heritage — the *Kamasutra* and Khajuraho. I opted for *Kamasutra* as my knowledge of architecture is limited"



BISWAJAYAN CHOWDHURY

The Ascetic also marks Kakar's deviation from non-fiction writing to fiction. He made his debut as a writer when he was in his mid-20s. Settled in Germany, his short stories found their way into the leading newspapers of that country. A novel followed, but was never published. He says thoughtfully, "Something within me was left unfinished and whatever success I'd had with my stories encouraged me to continue writing."

So at regular intervals his experiences come to the fore through his non-fiction works: *The Inner World, Shamans, Mystics and Doctors, Tales of Love, Sex and Danger, Intimate Relations* and *The Analyst and the Mystic*. And then he deviated from writing about sex to social violence in *The Colours of Violence*.

"Sexuality and aggression are the two primary human instincts and are, in fact, quite closely related. Essentially, I just shifted from one primary subject to another," explains Kakar.

While he enjoyed researching sexuality and sexually-related matters, he couldn't but be concerned about the violence that surrounds us. So he recorded and reconstructed psychological narratives of violence giving readers a chance to get as close as possible to the experience of it. "I wanted people to identify with the victim or the aggressor. An identification that could prove to be an important step in increasing our understanding of social violence," he says.

His latest dalliance has been with the form of the novel. "I wanted to get on with fiction writing for quite a long time as I began to feel that I had begun to repeat myself in my non-fictional works. Actually the shift from non-fiction to fiction began with some chapters in *The Colours of Violence* which were quite fictionalised."

Kakar revelled in the freedom the novel allowed him. If his non-fictional works demanded he document facts, the novel unchained his imagination. "At one level it was

frightening," he says.

Besides, there was the challenge to weave his tale around the *Kamasutra*, India's best known treatise on sexual love penned sometime during the third or fourth century AD. The process of fleshing out the essence of the Gupta period — its economic, social and cultural background — absorbed Kakar completely. "Contrary to its reputation for prurience, the *Kamasutra* is, in fact, a sober little work," comments Kakar.

And to understand the *Kamasutra*'s sometimes uneasy riding of the two horses of virtue and pleasure, Kakar says one must place the work in its socio-historical context. "The *Kamasutra* was addressed primarily to the wealthy man-about-town, written at a time of great material prosperity on account of India's flourishing trade with China and Rome." And that's the story that Kakar weaves.

Some critics have panned the book as dull, prosaic, pedantic and far from titillating. But Kakar is not worried. As he explains, "Titillate is a bad word, it comes with negative connotations. What I had set out to achieve was to delight the reader — not titillate but to stimulate."

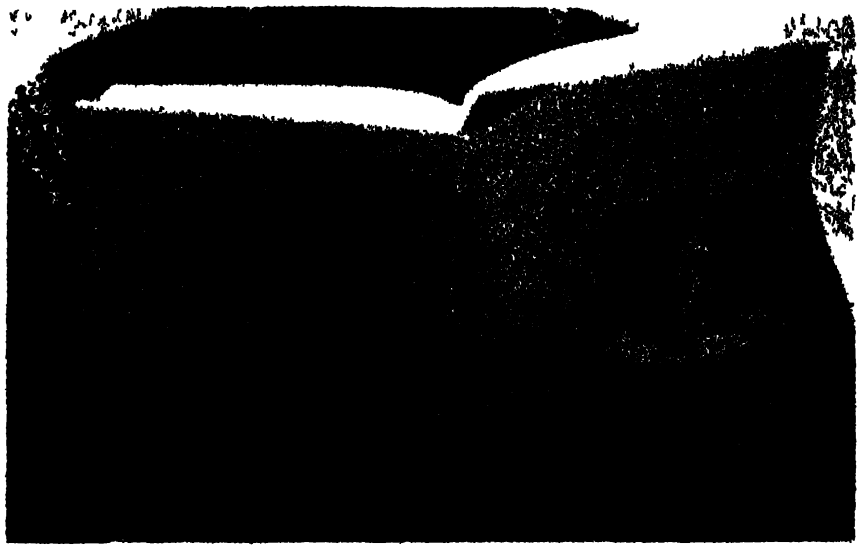
Would he describe himself as a successful author? "I would like to believe that I have always learnt something from the books that I have written." And no, he hasn't ever felt completely successful in achieving what he set out to do. "There's always the overriding feeling that I could have done better," he says softly.

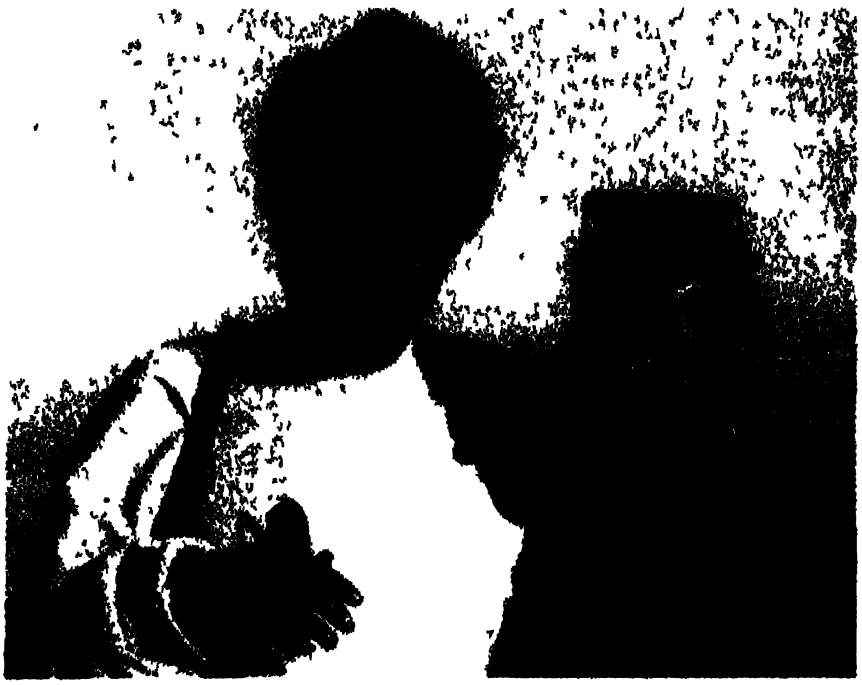
For a person who today plays author and healer with such panache, it's hard to believe that Kakar was caught in a maelstrom of confusion before he embarked on his career.

Kakar recalls his childhood memories in deadpan tones — obviously bored to repeat a tale oft-told. He goes back in time to the pre-Partition days of the early 40s and stops at a cluster of small district towns in west Punjab in an area that now lies in Pakistan.

Kakar recalls, "My father was a magistrate who was transferred to various towns for brief periods." The towns, indistinguishable from each other, left no indelible mark, except hazy memories of a childhood full of good cheer.

Then came Independence and the process of modernisation and industrial development. "When I was 17 it was decided for me that I would be an engineer," says Kakar. And since he didn't have any other personal preference, Kakar was packed off to study mechan-





SELF-ANALYSIS
Kakar would like to believe that he has learnt something from the books he has written and there is always this overriding feeling that he could have written better; (below) with his wife



ical engineering at a college in Ahmedabad. Here he stayed with an aunt who headed the Department of Psychology of a research institute established by the textile industry.

It was here that he discovered Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* and *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* — books that stimulated him more than academics. Recounts Kakar, "Studies were a chore and though I was unsure of what I was going to do with myself I was certain that I would never make a career in engineering."

Degree completed, Kakar the dreamer, left to work at a shipyard in West Germany. "The freedom of escaping from the oppression of a highly-structured Indian family was intoxicating. At 22 everything was not just possible but capable of magical transformation." That's when he decided to drop engineering and pursue philosophy instead.

As could be expected, his father rejected the idea of him studying philosophy with a "how do you hope to earn a living?" But a compromise was reached and economics was selected as the next best avenue. The next few years were spent studying economics in Meinz and Mannheim.

A romantic to the core, Kakar nurtured thoughts of writing a book some day. But he returned home and to a job at the Institute of Management, Ahmedabad instead. As he rode the horns of this dilemma, his woes came to an abrupt end. Help came through a chance encounter with American scholar Erik Ericson, a professor of Human Development at Harvard, who was in India to write a book on Gandhi.

Ericson dispelled him of his disquiet. "The more time I spent in his company the surer I became that I wanted to work with him as an apprentice and learn the craft of a psychoanalyst," recalls Kakar.

In the following years Kakar finished his doctoral studies in Vienna, worked as Ericson's assistant at Harvard, and completed psychoanalytic training at Frankfurt. The confusion was over and Kakar had arrived in the realm of psychiatry.

> "Believe me, a psychoanalyst can be as foolish and make just as many mistakes about people as anyone else. What you do end up doing is talking about motives of people much more"



So what does it take to be a psychoanalyst? It helps if you are an introvert and reflective. And Kakar adds, "You must be able to sit for long hours without moving, have a penchant for reverie and perhaps dollops of romanticism." A psychoanalyst doesn't sell sympathy but offers empathy and the understanding that his clients can't, perhaps, find elsewhere.

His interaction with his clients makes him believe that our society is caught in a web of sexual confusion. "We are at a crossroads," he says "and while the increasing influence of Western society make us, at one level, accept certain sexual mores, at another we reject them outright."

Does his profession impinge on his personal relationships as well? He waves away the thought with "you're a psychoanalyst only when you are psychoanalysing". Adds Kakar, "Believe me, a psychoanalyst can be as foolish and make just as many mistakes about people as anyone else. However, what you do end up doing is talking about motives of people much more."

Being a psychoanalyst leaves him open to being misunderstood and isolated. It's not unusual for people to avoid him in the belief that he possesses X-ray vision and actually knows what they are thinking. "Thus, encounters become non-encounters unless, of course, you meet up with another breed of people who fantasise about X-ray eyes," he says, with a smile that reaches those probing eyes.

Kakar ascribes the average Indian's hesitation of seeing a "shrink" to the fact that we still haven't got over the joint family syndrome. "Our actions and experiences continue to have a bearing on the rest of the family, bringing it shame or glory."

Kakar himself feels no shame in confessing that he enjoys writing books more than acting healer. In fact, he's already working on another one, which will be published by Penguin. More than that, Kakar will not reveal -- but then he's more used to listening than talking, remember? ■

Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya eats her heart out in a five-star kitchen

TOO MANY COOKS...

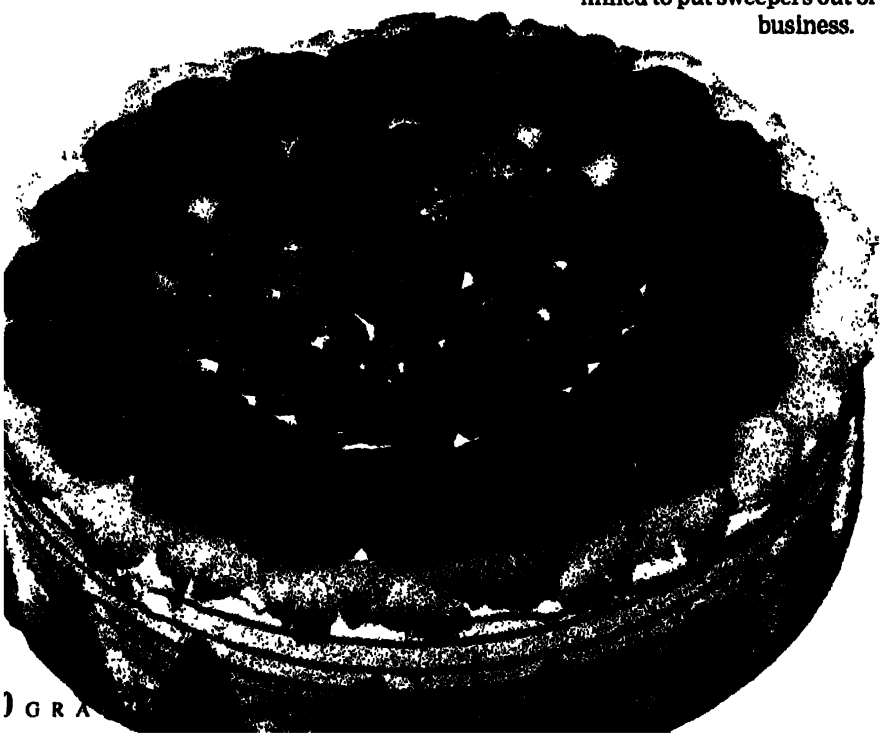


MASTER OF ALL TRADE

A chef has to be adept at training his staff, experimenting with new cuisines and designing the kitchen

An apprentice in a hotel kitchen? The idea of masquerading as one was appetising enough, given that I love fantasising about gourmet food. I knew that Arvind Saraswat, director of food production, the Taj Group, would not mind enlisting me for a day at the Taj Palace kitchen, and lost no time in calling him up. I was asked to report for work at 9:30 am.

Was I pleased? Not really. I'm not used to getting up early; and at 9.30 am you can swat flies in a newspaper office. Having spent a lazy weekend, I woke up at 7 am in a dour mood. There is something about Monday mornings which always make me blue. A shower and a hurried breakfast later, I struggled into a green kurta and black embroidered jacket and *salwar*. The long *chunni* hanging from one shoulder was, in retrospect, a mistake. Everywhere I went, it was determined to put sweepers out of business.



I was at the hotel reception at 9.30 am. I asked to speak to the director, who had gone to change into his chef's uniform. So, could I go down to the kitchen, please? I froze when I encountered the long-winding escalator which went down to the basement.

A severe attack of vertigo assailed me as I stood nervously at the head of the rapidly moving stairs. I jumped on to one of them, trying desperately to fight my phobia. For a moment I thought I was going to trip but I had regained my balance by the time I reached the bottom.

Walking unsteadily past a conference room in which sandwiches and rows of tea cups were laid out for the morning's session, I wondered about the kitchen's location. A member of the hotel staff accosted me a trifle suspiciously, but came to my rescue once I had explained my predicament. He deposited me finally at Saraswat's office.

Mornings are busy for the chief of food production. But he is never too busy to meet those who work under him. "So you think a chef has to be a good cook?" he asked, obviously amused at my half-baked notions. "A chef has to be equally adept at training his staff, experimenting with new cuisines and designing the kitchen. Cooking is craftsmanship which is a cog in the wheel," says Saraswat.

But how do they recruit all these chefs working hard in the kitchen. Saraswat explained, "You see, one batch of apprentices is recruited from a catering college and the other batch pours in from the employment exchange on the basis of a food trial."

Oh. Did that mean I would be asked to toss up some inedible rubbish to prove my worth(lessness) in the kitchen?

No, Saraswat knew better than that, contenting himself instead with briefing me on the hierarchy of chefs. I learnt they are demarcated in three ways: the black-and-white scarves are worn by the chef *de parti*, *sous* chef or executive chef; the red-and-white bow applies to those who help the head cook; and if you happen to wear a green-and-white scarf, then you are green, with a lot of learning to do.



RAJESH KUMAR

I was ushered into the uniform section where the lady-in-charge was openly dismissive.

"No, we don't have an extra coat," she said to my escort. Finally, a cylindrical paper cap was handed to me with a laconic "Do you think you could tie your hair?" I should have known that garnishing gourmet food with strands of hair wasn't going to do much for the hotel's reputation.

> "An hour later I was sweating like everybody else. Most chefs were young men in their twenties or thirties....Women were few, if non-existent, in most of the kitchens"

Then it was on to the kitchen, a multi-cuisine preparation area with a separate segment for the Indian, Chinese, continental, bakery, room service and allied areas. I was deployed in the main kitchen —from where all the banquet food goes—and asked to watch the proceedings.

In a huge tureen tomato soup boiled, being occasionally stirred with a ladle. "May I help with the cooking?" I asked the chef in charge, with some trepidation. "Maybe, you can, but it takes some time...," he said warily.

Never have I seen so many different soups churned under one roof: baby corn, chicken consomme and mulligatawny soup were frothing and bubbling over slow fires. Weren't they ever tempted to taste the many broths?

An hour later I was sweating like everybody else. Most of the chefs were young men in their twenties or thirties, chatting as they went about their chores. Women were few, if not non-existent, in most of the kitchens.

A clutch of apprentices kept looking up at a board. "Is that a grocery list?" I asked a chef in red-and-white scarf. "That's a function sheet," he replied. Then, realising that I hadn't a clue what that was, he explained it kept everyone informed when different events were scheduled. "We have to plan the preparations accordingly," he added.

"You mean to say the meals are cooked a day in advance?" I asked, unthinkingly. "No, it means planning the supplies. The actual cooking happens on the day of the banquet," he explained patiently. I knew I had committed a *faux pas*.

Towards the afternoon, I was let off for lunch. I sauntered into the hotel's 24-hour staff kitchen, where a buffet of *rajma*, *chawl*, *raita* and *aloo subzi* was laid out—not what you might call five-star food but nevertheless very tasty. There weren't too many people in the dining hall, but in hotels the unwritten rule is: you eat when you are hungry. The hotel's numerous shifts did not permit any fixed hours for lunch. Taking a tray I loaded it with some rice and *rajma*, and ate it quickly, not particularly enjoying the experience of eating alone.

In the post-lunch session, I was told to report to the Indian section and ran into a friendly character making the dough. A party was to be held that afternoon. Here was my chance of picking up a recipe while the kitchen staff was engaged in preparing the food.

"Do you use yeast for making *naans*?" I tried to strike up a conversation.

"It's best to use baking powder, egg, salt, *maida* and sugar which are mixed and beaten together," he explained.

A few feet away, a burly chef with a thick moustache was adding salt, chilli powder and *dhania* to a gravy for the *murgh tikka lababdar*. When a huge blotch of gravy singed my skin, I wondered whether cooking was really my vocation — even if it was only for a day. "Come back when the going is smooth," my new-found friend said to me, with an air of sympathy.

I was relieved to escape the spitting gravy but was told to join a couple of chefs at the chopping table to peel cucumbers, carrots and beans. The only cucumber I had managed to peel looked emaciated, its flesh hacked off to display several layers of seeds. It was now early evening, and I was being actively encouraged to leave the kitchen (no prizes for guessing why).

But there was still time for a tour of the cooling section. It is more like an oversized refrigerator stocked up with ice-cream, *kulfis*, and meats. Before taking a final bow I peeped through the glass doors of the bakery section to see a chef grating a chocolate bar over at least four dozen black forest cakes.

I drooled and resolved to come back some day, even though working behind the scenes hadn't exactly proved to be a piece of cake. ■

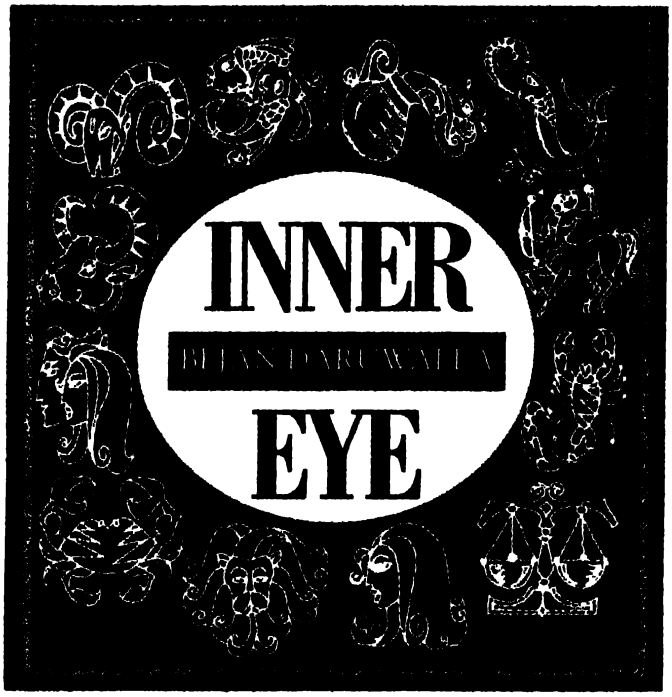
ARIES, (March 21- April 20)
You are in the mood for a complete overhaul, both mental and physical. You will try to resolve personal problems, emerge squeaking clean, with your person and image all spick and span, spruced and polished. You will also find the time to concentrate on improving your health with the right foods and exercise. You will persevere and succeed.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20)
The week focusses on house, home and property once again. Buying and selling are important, whether of assets, shares, or immovable property. Elders, parents and in-laws, will also be in the picture on all fronts. Being a good listener, discarding wrong opinions and dogmatic attitudes will take you far. Your focus will be on your career.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20)
Having resolved several issues that need attention and thought, you will be in the right frame of mind to gallivant, gad about, have a ball. And all this notwithstanding the continued pressures of work. There could be quite a few changes in the domestic scene; what exactly these are likely to be is difficult to say as this is a solarscopic chart.

CANCER, (June 21- July 20)
The new moon makes you realise the importance of leisure, of unwinding and, in fact, getting your second wind. It's time to relax, take a breather, entertain and be amused. The main trend will definitely be focus on group and shared activities, visits to amusement parks, clubs and even the disco and the races. You will keeping congenial and pleasant company.

LEO, (July 21- August 21)
It's not as if the holiday mood and feeling is over. Ganesha reassures you that it will prevail for some time. But finances, funding, capital-raising investments come to the forefront. So also do strong family ties, bonds of love and caring. You do not wish to, and, therefore avoid hurting or neglecting dear ones. But do be cautious in general.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) The new moon brings you chances and opportunities that come rarely to most people—the chance to be both successful and happy. It does not happen too often, so make the most of it. You have satisfaction in income from business, meeting old and new friends, and social and family activities that earn the cockles of your heart. Camaraderie, shared dreams, people give you a patient hearing.

LIBRA, (September 23- October 22) Joining organisations, increasing your social status, socialising and warmth in friendships come your way. You find that you fix new visions of the future firmly in your own mind, and have a chance to share them, too, with people who appreciate and understand you. It feels wonderful and you feel that it has changed your life.

SCORPIO, (October 23- November 22) There will be several expenses, but as the flow of funds has been satisfactory, they don't bother you as much as they could have done. There are happier relationships with relatives, family members and both parents and children. New projects and enterprises will materialise. So go head and plan in advance in order to be fully ready when good fortune strikes. And do make full use of your resources.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) Once again, an expansive time. Interviews, travel, delays and even cancellations can be troublesome and there will have to be compromises, negotiations and settlements to be made and carried through. Collaborations are also likely and these may also take the shape of marriage ties. Poor health may also bother you, so take rest.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) Delays and snags will bother you, as also postponements of important projects and travel arrangements. There may even be a thwarted journey. Health safeguards continue to be essential, especially as work pressures escalate, but you will seek light on the obstacles to progress and work actively to enlist support.

AQUARIUS, (January 20- February 18) You will examine your inner psyche, questioning yourself and striving to improve your mind. Education and research will draw you like a magnet, and you may find travel helpful to progress and happiness. Pleasant times can, however be shared with friends and love, and, will be a source of joy. You will strive to gain peace of mind, too, says Ganesha.

PISCES, (February 19- March 20) This week initiates much better times in all respects. It can be summed up in the three Hs' of hope, happiness and health, and what more can we mortals really ask for? You will be more sympathetic, warm and caring and indulge in self-analysis to understand your own limitations. Humanitarian efforts, social reform and spiritual growth will occupy you.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

The Mangeshkar monopoly is alive and well, says Seema Goswami

The talking point is:
The recent Channel V awards held in New Delhi, where the award for the best female vocalist went to -- no, not Kavita Krishnamurthy, Alka Yagnik or even Hema Sardesai -- but that venerable musical institution that goes by the name of Lata Mangeshkar.
Even more impressive was the fact that out of the four nominations in that category, three were for Lata herself, with Ila Arun bringing up the rear as some sort of joke candidate. It was, thus, a little hard to figure out which song Mangeshkar had been awarded for (was it *Dil To Pagal Hai* or *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* or... never mind!) but either way there was no denying that her songs were the pick of the lot.

DURGA PRASAD





NASREEN DAS

And Lata's not alone, either:
In fact, her younger sister, Asha Bhonsle, was the first to re-invent herself as a thoroughly modern warbler. Having made her mark in another age with cabaret numbers like *Piya tu ab to aaja*, Bhonsle wooed the younger generation by pairing up with such English pop music icons as Boy George, and more recently, Code Red.Bhonsle's master-stroke, however, was the decision to remix all those old R.D. Burman numbers which had been chartbusters in their time. After all, everyone else was doing it — making music and money on the basis of other people's talent. She, at least, was the late Burman's wife, and the rightful heir to his musical legacy.

What followed were:
A number of albums with updated versions of such all-time hits as *Chura liya hai tumne* and *Parde mein rehne do*, and before you knew it, Asha — with some help from Leslie Lewis, one half of the Colonial Cousins pair — had become the current craze of the teenybopper crowd.
And consummate performer that she is, Asha played to the galleries with aplomb. On being awarded the Viewers Choice award a couple of years ago, she confessed shyly that she wasn't sure she should have come to the awards ceremony, which was full of "*chhote chhote log*" and their "*chhote chhote kapde*". But having come, she was overwhelmed by the love, affection and appreciation showered on her. Needless to say, the crowd lapped it up — and asked for more.

This youthful ease:
Is not something that comes naturally to elder sister Lata, who is very much the venerable icon of Hindi film music and will not let anyone forget it (never mind the *faux* humility). Nevertheless, she is still the first choice of such brat pack directors as Sooraj Barjatiya and Aditya Chopra, who could all too easily have opted for someone much younger. And that's easy to understand when you hear Lata — or even Asha, for that matter -- sing. The passage of years seems to have had no effect on her vocal cords at all. She still sounds like a young teenager, and it doesn't strain credulity in the least to have her playback for Karisma Kapoor and Kajol.

The success of the sisters:
Is even more impressive when you consider that they resolutely refuse to sing any songs which have any vulgar or double-ended lyrics. But despite their pick-and-choose strategy, the Mangeshkar monopoly is doing very well, thank you — even if it is only restricted to the best kind of movie music. ■

Despite their pick-and-choose strategy, the sisters are doing very well, even if restricted only to the best in movie music●

SURVIVAL
Strategies



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

STRANGE LIAISON

Q: I am a 25-year-old woman engaged to be married. Ours has been an arranged alliance, and though I like my husband-to-be's views, funnily enough I don't feel attracted to him. Having witnessed so many failed marriages, my conscience does not permit me to go ahead with the marriage. In fact, I've always tried to avoid and escape situations leading to marriage and have distanced myself from men who have either come on too strong or have expressed their desire to marry me. I've become a paranoiac of sorts. Please advise.

ABC, CALCUTTA

I think you have, for one reason or another, developed a deep fear of intimate physical relationships. You say that you like your husband-to-be as an individual and a human being. This is an excellent basis for a happy marriage. You should do your best to adjust your mindset to go ahead with your marital plans.

Try to discover the root cause of your physical and sexual phobias. There may be some instance of childhood abuse, some memory you have blocked out. Try to come to terms with your extreme feelings, with whatever it is that prevents you from reaching out in physical terms. Remember, sexual intimacy is a primary condition for the creation and perpetuation of life, there is nothing dirty or bad in it. Learn to trust your own body, then learn to share that trust. All the best.

OH B(R)OTHER!

Q: I am a 20-year-old boy and have a sister four years older to me. I find myself drawn to her and fantasise about having sex with her. I know this is unnatural but then I am unable to rid my mind of these thoughts as I have fanciful visions of kissing, hugging and fondling her. Do you think I need psychiatric help? Please advise.

NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

No, I don't think you need psychiatric help, but do however need a degree of self-control and discipline. None of us can control the origination of a sexual fantasy, and incestuous feelings do arise among young people in close physical contact with each other. You have to remember that this is an unnatural desire, but blaming yourself and feeling guilty is not the answer. Instead, whenever you get obsessed by sexual thoughts regarding your sister, gently disengage and distract yourself. Busy yourself with

SISTER ACT

Q: I am a 28-year-old unmarried Muslim woman unemployed and unable to pursue higher studies due to financial difficulties. Since there isn't any hope of either securing a job or even getting a suitable suitor, I've decided to become a nun. Please advise me on ways to go about becoming a sister at Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity. I've got no one to turn to for help and need your help in this regard.

AYESHA, ADDRESS WITHHELD

Serving those less fortunate than yourself is the greatest privilege one can have towards a meaningful life, but I don't know if you really have a vocation for the religious life or whether you are only planning to do this as a desperate last resort. This is a point you have to ponder deeply, for you do not want frustrations and regrets creeping in later. Write to the Missionaries of Charity at Mother House, Missionaries Of Charity, 54A AJC Bose Road, Calcutta 700016. ✆ 297115 and seek their advice, or make a visit there in person. Once your inclination is leading you in such noble paths, grace and guidance will certainly follow.

books, with exercise, with films, with friends.

PEEPING TOM

Q: I am a 23-year-old bachelor and for the last eight-nine years, I've derived sheer pleasure out of watching women bathe or change without their knowledge. My obsession seems to have increased manifold. Is this lust? Am I a pervert, a voyeur, perhaps? Please advise.

SUSIL, PATNA

Lack of direct sexual opportunity can lead to the mind finding release in other ways, and voyeurism is one of the direct results of such a situation. What is wrong with voyeurism is that it is a one-sided sexual approach, it lacks the give and take of one-to-one sexual activity. Which is not to say that you are to be



Since there isn't any hope of either securing a job or even getting a suitable suitor, I decided to become a nun

blamed for your behaviour. It is simply that you could adjust yourself to less socially irresponsible methods of sexual release. Most bachelors have to resort to fantasising and masturbation until they get married, especially as promiscuous sexual behaviour is so potentially dangerous in terms of sexually transmitted diseases and the HIV virus.

HORNS OF DILEMMA

Q: I am 20 years old, a graduate and unemployed. I had been an athlete but had lost my leg in an accident. My fiancé refuses to see reason and insists that I marry her failing which she'd contemplate suicide. Please advise as I am on the horns of dilemma.

RINKU KUMAR SINGH, DHANBAD

Your fiancé obviously loves you very deeply and has trust and faith in you as a human being. You must realise that your accident and subsequent amputation must have been extremely traumatic for her as well.

She is displaying grit and courage in the face of adversity, and you must respect that. Do not mistake it for pity, as I think you are doing.

To be unemployed at 20 is no big deal, life is just beginning for you. This is the first big test life has given you, you must not fail it. Believe in yourself, believe in life, don't let it faze you.

I'll tell you a personal story — my grandfather, a respected politician, lost a leg at the age of 70, but carried a Jaipur leg until his death at 82. Not a word of complaint, not a second of self-pity. Go in for physical rehabilitation and begin life anew. If he could do it, you can too.

MISSING YOU

Q: I am a 21-year-old student. My fiancé and I have our graduation exams in December. Since our frequent rendezvous had taken its toll on our studies, we resolved to meet less frequently. But I find myself missing him constantly. We love each other tremendously and yet do not want our studies to get affected. Please help me concentrate my energies on studies so as to be able to do well in my exams.

C.P., IMPHAL

I think you are showing commendable restraint and discipline. Your love must be very real and strong for both of you to behave in such a mature manner.

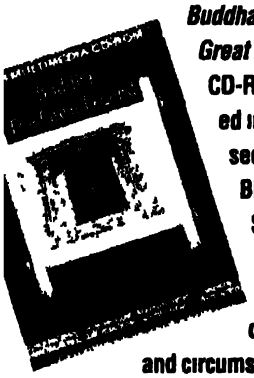
Missing your lover or boyfriend is one of the bitter-sweet delights of being in love, so you may as well enjoy it. Whenever you get distracted from your academic purposes, think of the life you will one day build together, for which you are doing all this. It will give you the strength to carry on. ■

MIXED Bag

NEW-AGE BUDDHA

When science can't answer all the questions, where do you turn? Why, to faith, of course. But this is the age of instant nirvana, and fulfilling that need is Cyber Multimedia.

A Delhi-based company, it launched a CD-ROM on Gautama Buddha, titled, ***Buddha — The Great Legend.*** **The CD-ROM is divided into several sections The Birth of Siddhartha deals with the social conditions and circumstances of Buddha's birth. Siddhartha, The Prince, talks of the luxurious life he led. Renunciation deals with experiences which led to his renouncing the world Enlightenment talks of his great struggle to know and understand the truth. Timeline chronicles the major events of Buddhism spanning over 2,500 years. There is a section which showcases Buddhist art and architecture including masterpieces like monastic paintings, Nalanda and Vikramshila universities and innumerable stupas, pillars, monasteries etc. The final chapter, Buddhism — The Great Faith gives an overview of the religion in the modern world. The CD-ROM includes comments by such scholars as Kapila Vatsyayan, Pandit Satkari Mukhopadhyay and Dev Bhikshu Satyapala, head of Buddhist Studies, University of Delhi. So everything you ever wanted to know about Buddhism is just a mouse-click away.**

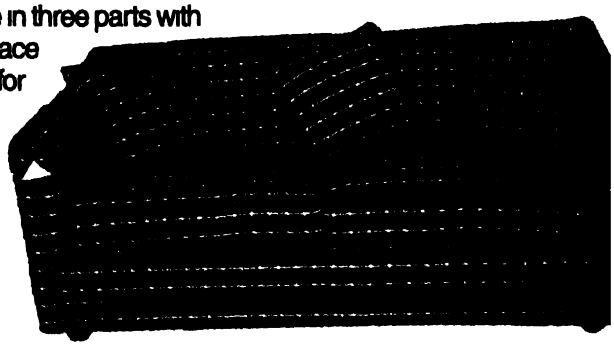


Bride and Home

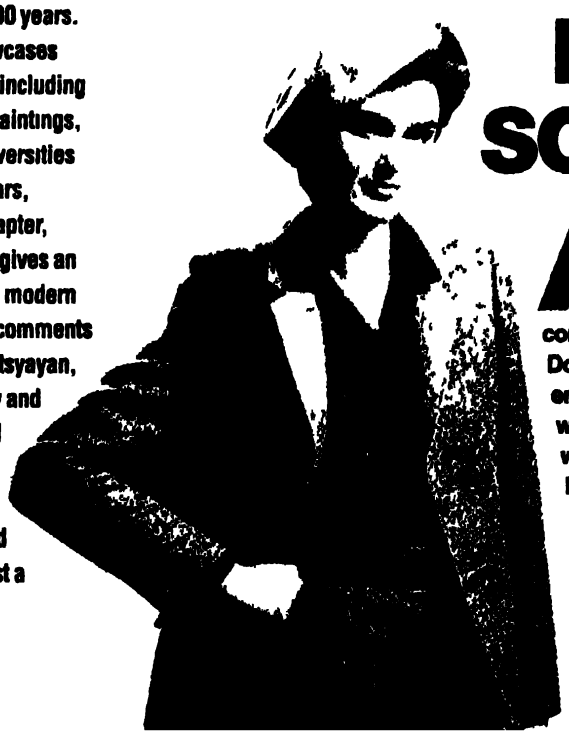


With the wedding season upon us, boutiques are gearing up to give brides some exquisite trousseaus. Brides can now take their pick from furniture that has been specially crafted for them. The Inside Story, a popular furniture label, recently introduced The Bride's Collection that offers to-be-brides furniture, interior accessories and fittings made with materials imported from Europe. Brides can choose from a special range that includes bedside tables, dressers, wardrobes, sofa-cum-beds, chest tables and cupboards

The collection includes Italian furniture crafted on sleek and modern lines in matt-finished wood. Wall units come in three parts with curved frosted glass with space for a television and drawers for cassettes and LDs. Another line of wall units come with shelves, a cupboard and even an aluminum ladder. A range of sofa-cum-beds uses an imported Spanish mechanism .



Fashion tip of the week: Wear a glittering bra unde



PRIDE OF SCOTLAND

Among the more desirable wool textiles of the world, Harris Tweed recently arrived in India courtesy Scottish Tweeds. Promoted by R.S. Sekhon, the company is the exclusive distributor in India of Donald Macleod, the only independent manufacturer of Harris Tweed in the world. Sekhon explains why he brought the tweed into the country, "We wanted to popularise the concept of tweeds in India specially among the younger generation. Harris Tweed makes a fashion statement and has been the dress code of the international corporate world for years."

So what makes the Harris Tweed so special?

Art fair



Controversy may have marked other national exhibitions organised under the aegis of the Lalit Kala Akademi. But the 41st National Exhibition of Art, 1998, was a clean and fair affair.

The jury for the exhibition, comprising Rekha Rodwittiya, S.G. Vasudev, Dhruv Mistry, Yusuf and Atul Dodiya, selected works of 179 artists from among 1689 entries, and selected another 10 for cash prizes of Rs 25,000 each. The exhibition covered paintings, sculptures, graphics, ceramics, traditional art and photographs.

The works demonstrated amply that the Indian art scene cannot be narrowed down to a few dominating styles and some famous artists. The exhibition gave a panoramic view of varied Indian art practices and included names such as Jyoti Bhatt, Rameshwar Broota, Daroz Pandurangiah, Samir Roy, Partho Guha and Bashwati Das.

sparent top for the sexy look of this season

Well, to begin with, it is produced only in the Outer Hebrides, Scotland. According to the Harris Tweed Act of Parliament, the fabric must be hand-woven by the islanders in their homes with a 100 per cent pure new wool. The tweed must be spun, dyed and thereafter finished only on the islands. Traditionally associated with sporting clothes, Harris Tweed has,



over the years, been cut to make suits, jackets, coats, dresses, blouses, hats, luggage, furnishings and even slippers.

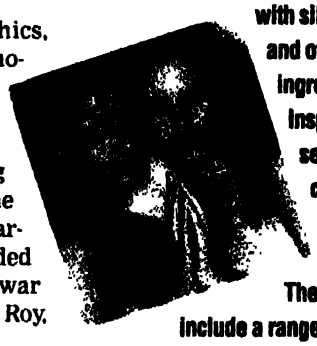
Harris Tweed is now available in all Indian metros at prices beginning at Rs 7,500 that scale Rs 9,000 per length. The tweed is available in three weights — standard, light and feather which gives it tremendous versatility.

SKIN DEEP



● So what's new about the recently unveiled Lakme Orchid's range? The cosmetics brand has done a makeover, combining 'the best of both worlds'. It has used the latest European technology to suit the Indian skin.

The range consists of two sensational lines: Elementals and Inspirations. The former includes compacts available in a variety of flesh tones not to mention a liquid make-up to give the whole face a flawless finish. The line comprises Luminous Matte Compact, Hydrolight Natural Make-up and Perfect Finish Wet and Dry—launched for the first time in India. The make-up has been enriched with silicon, vitamins and other skin care ingredients.



Inspirations is a selection of colour accents to suit every mood and occasion. The cosmetics include a range of matte and dewy shades and have been meticulously detailed down to the silky smooth application brushes. The lanolin of the moistwrap lip colour nourishes the lips and keeps them soft with vitamin E. The nail enamel offers shimmer frosts, silk and velvet matte finishes. Its superior, chip-resistant formulation gives longer lasting nail colour. And the sheer colour blusher contains mineral oils that work within the skin to give a vivid radiant glow.



The collection also offers eyeshadow and silky eye-liners containing water-resistant polymers and a powerlash mascara. All one has got to do is step into a Lakme Orchids Counter. Beauty advisors can be consulted to create the best effect with the make-up selected for one's skin tone.

RASOI

The food column



Festive Fare

Jiggs Kalra on some delectable confections

The great thing about *Mahaan* Bharat is the year-ending festivities -- from Ganesh Chaturthi to Durga Puja to Dussehra to Deepavali to Christmas -- are unending. We begin the Yuletide and New Year with delectable confections with Olaf 'Picasso' Niemeier, executive chef at The Oberoi, New Delhi.

Chocolate and Rasmalai Terrine

Served with Saffron and Nut Syrup

INGREDIENTS

The Chocolate Terrine

- 600g/1lb 5oz **Dark chocolate (break into small pieces)**
- 6 **Egg yolks**
- 8g/2tsp **Gelatine**
- 100g/1/2 cup **Butter (softened)**
- 110g/1/2 cup **Sugar**
- 600g/1lb 5oz **Whipped cream**

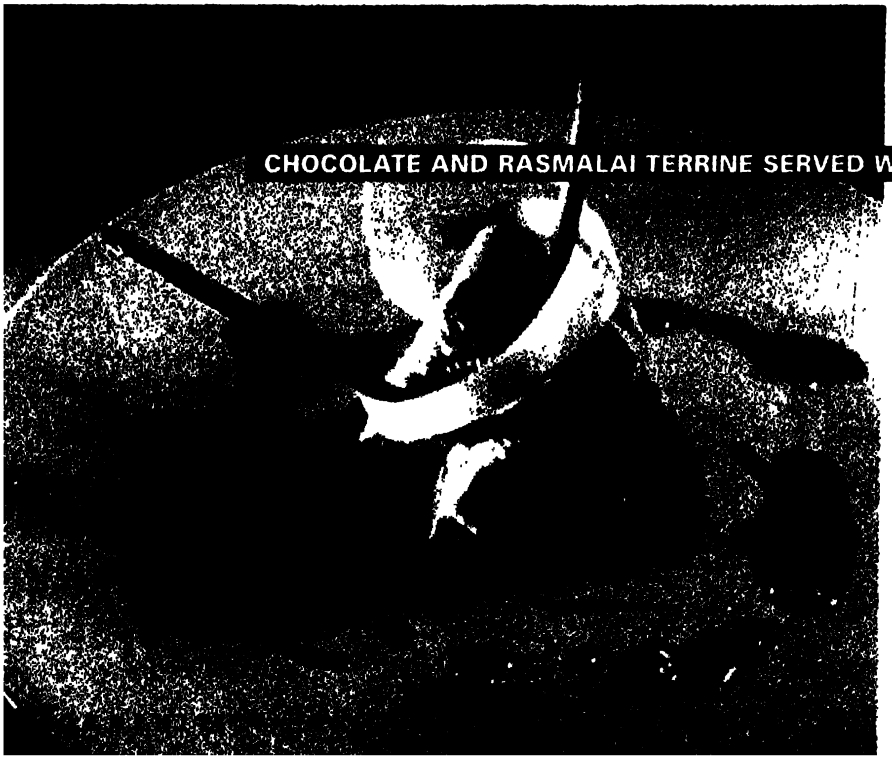
The *Rasmalai*

- 600g/1lb 5oz ***Chhenna***
- 15g/2tbs **White flour**
- 1g/1/4tsp **Baking powder**
- 750g/3$^{1/3}$ cup **Sugar**
- 500g/1lb 2oz ***Rabarhi***
- 8 **Pistachios**

The Saffron Nut Syrup

- 225g/1 cup **Sugar**
- 1g/2tsp **Saffron**
- 12 **Cashewnuts (roughly chop)**
- 12 **Almonds (roughly chop)**
- 12 **Pistachios (roughly chop)**

SERVES: 12
PREPARATION TIME: 1:15 MINUTES



CHOCOLATE AND RASMALAI TERRINE SERVED WITH SAFFRON AND NUT SYRUP

PREPARATION

- The Chocolate Terrine: Melt gelatine and stir-in softened butter. Separately melt chocolate in a double boiler, stirring constantly, add egg yolks and whisk until incorporated. Then fold-in the gelatine-butter mixture, cool to room temperature and, finally, fold-in the whipped cream.

- The *Chhenna*: Knead gently to mash any granules. Sift flour and baking powder together, mix with *chhenna* and knead to make dough. Divide into 12 equal portions, make balls and gently squeeze between the palms and flatten to make 'patties' (approx 2$^{1/2}$" diameter), ensuring that the surface is smooth.
- The Poaching: Boil 600g/2$^{3/4}$ cups of sugar with 300ml/1$^{1/4}$ cups of water to make thin syrup. Transfer half to a *kadhai*/wok (reserve the rest for preserving), bring to a boil, add the 'patties' and poach over high heat for 8-10

minutes. This is a tricky operation because under no circumstances should the syrup be allowed to settle down. To maintain the consistency, add a little more water as and when required. The *chhenna* is deemed cooked when the 'patties' rise to the surface. Remove to the reserved syrup and refrigerate.

● The Saffron Nut Syrup: Add 150g/3/4 cup of sugar while it is still warm and stir until dissolved. Cool and refrigerate.

ASSEMBLING

● Fill terrine mould(s) as follows: evenly spread a layer of chocolate mixture and cover it with a *rasmalai*. Then another layer of chocolate mixture, topped by a *rasmalai*. Repeat the process to the top of the terrine mould(s). Refrigerate the terrine.
To prepare the sauce, melt sugar in a saucepan over low heat, add saffron, nuts and 60ml/1/2 cup of water, and simmer for 5 minutes.

TO SERVE

● Demould the terrine, and serve 2 slices on 12 plates (12" diameter) with the nutty saffron syrup as shown in the picture.



Cardamom-flavoured Chocolate Curd Creme Brulee And Exotic Fruit Salad

INGREDIENTS

The *Creme Brulee*

- 750g/1lb 11oz ***Chakka dahi*/yoghurt cheese/hung yoghurt**
- 720ml/3 cups **Milk (fresh)**
- 15 **Eggs (whole)**
- 20 **Egg yolks**
- 250g/9oz **Chocolate (break into small pieces)**
- 0.75g/1/4tsp ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom powder**
- 225g/1 cup **Sugar**

The Fruit Salad

- 60g/2oz **Pineapple (dice)**
- 60g/2oz **Honeydew melon (dice)**
- 1 ***Seetaphal/shareefa*/custard apple (chop)**
- 2 ***Cheekoo*/mud apple (dice)**
- 2 ***Chotti elaichi*/green cardamom**
- 20g/1½tbs **Sugar**
- 2.5g/1tbs ***Taaza pudhina*/mint (chop)**

SERVES: 6
PREPARATION TIME: 1 HOUR

PREPARATION

● The Chocolate Mixture: Whisk yoghurt cheese, add eggs, egg yolks and sugar, and whisk until a smooth paste is obtained. Then add milk and cardamom and whisk until incorporated. Now melt chocolate in a double boiler, stirring constantly. When it has melted, fold into the yoghurt cheese mixture. Grease 6 pyrex (or any other) baking dishes (3" diameter) with butter and fill each with equal quantities of the chocolate mixture
Put the moulds into a water bath and bake in a pre-heated oven (120°C/250°F) for about 20-25 minutes. (To check, insert a cooking needle and, if it comes out clean, it means the *brulee* is cooked.

● The Fruits: Boil sugar and cardamom with 30ml/2tbs of water over low heat for 3 minutes, remove and cool. When cool, marinate fruits and mint in this syrup

TO SERVE

● Demould *brulee* and carefully place in the middle of individual plates. Arrange the fruit salad as shown in the picture. ■

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 21-year-old woman and my problem is that my soles are very hard and rough. They never crack in winters. Is it possible for me to have soft smooth soles? Please advise.
SWATI, GUWAHATI

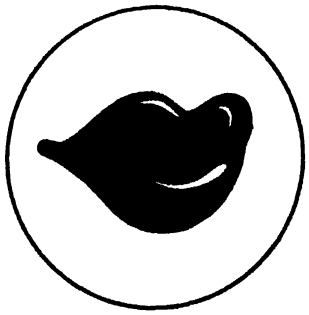
Most people who have cracked heels require to nourish and pamper their feet. Massage the soles with sesame seed oil and soak them in warm water in which you have added two tsp of glycerine. Use a pumice stone to scrub the soles. If done three times a week, it will soften the soles and you will have smooth looking feet. I would suggest that you apply the oil at night and leave on overnight for moisturising the feet. If you are afraid of staining the sheets, wear a pair of old socks over the oiled feet.

I am a 35-year-old woman and suffer a great deal from winter related problems. My lips crack to the point of becoming bloody and painful. What should I do to prevent this? Mere lip guards are not of much help.
NISHI NAHATA, ASANSOL

Internal well being is very important especially in winters. Many people I come across have an aversion to nourishing products like dry fruits, pure cow's ghee, *chawanprash*, dairy products etc. Besides this, you must understand that the lips do not have pores and therefore you must apply a balm or oil several times a day. Take vaseline and add two tbs of seasame seed oil, two tbs of almond oil and one tbs of sandalwood oil. Mix all the ingredients well and apply on the lips at least four to five times a day. Nourish within as well as externally to get to the root of the problem and you will not be having any painful, cracked lips but smoooth soft ones.

TO CURE DRY CRACKED LIPS

Apply vaseline to which you have added almond oil, sandalwood oil and sesame seed oil at least four to five times a day



I am a 27-year-old man and have a problem of dandruff in winter. I get the dry type of dandruff and no anti-dandruff shampoos can clear them. But they gradually disappear in summer.
ANIRUDDHA , CALCUTTA

Dandruff is a serious problem and the exact cause cannot be pinpointed. Stress, tension, lack of water, bad diet, sleeplessness, prolonged illness could just be some of the reasons cause dandruff. I would suggest that you start to cure yourself internally first. Have lots of fresh green vegetables and fresh juices. Drink at least 10 to 12 glasses of water a day and massage the scalp with a mixture of almond and coconut oil, and then apply the juice of half a lemon, massaging well into the scalp. Steam your hair for about 10 minutes and shampoo after a hour. This done even twice a week, will rid you of your dandruff within a month.

I am 50 years old and have the problem of hair loss for the last few months. My hair is very dull and lacks lustre. I use oil on the surface of my head daily. I have a lot of grey hair, I do not want to use anything that will colour my hair. I would only like to have a little more bounce and body.
SMITA, CALCUTTA

I would suggest that whatever oil you are using should be mixed with castor oil. Massage it into the scalp and leave on for about two hours and shampoo off. You do not have to do this daily, twice a week is more than sufficient. Also make a hair pack

Dabur Vatika

TIP OF THE WEEK

If you are seeing those fine lines around the eyes and do not have time for an elaborate treatment, massage the area with almond oil and apply the white of an egg. Leave on till dry and wash off. Your lines would have faded out!



at home with 100gms of *amla* powder, 100 gms of *reetha* powder,100 gms of *shikakai* powder, 100 gms of fenugreek powder. Mix all these ingredients with two eggs or half a cup of curd and apply finely on the scalp and strands of hair. Leave on for about half an hour and shampoo off normally. This is an extremely nourishing pack and will not colour your hair but condition it naturally as well as bring about both body and bounce. Apart from this, check to see that you are taking a high protein diet that is nutritious.

I am a 43-year-old woman. I used to have a normal skin but with age and the onset of winter, it feels extremely dry and stretched. It also aquires a scaly appearance in winter. How should a woman of my age take care of her skin?
BANDANA GHOSH, KHARAGPUR

Most women tend to start feeling their skins drying up with age and the onset of winter. This is due to the decrease of estrogen in the body. I would suggest that you start to take a cup of warm milk with two tsp of pure almond oil at night. I also recommend the use of pure *ghee* added to *daal* or just a tsp in your rice daily. Start to have a good quality *chawanprash* daily. Massage your face with pure almond oil and leave on for at least an hour or so. Most people keep the oil on for hours. This only attracts dust and grime, so avoid this. The most important part of looking after your skin at this age is to nourish and moisturise it.

I am a 33-year-old man and currently suffering from hair loss. Baldness runs in my family. So is there any way I can prevent it?
NIKHIL MOHAN, CALCUTTA

A regular massage of either *bhringraj* or *brahmi* oil will definitely help reduce the hair loss as both these herbs are very powerful and are known to have strengthening as well as hair growth promoting effects. You could also start to henna your hair as this will make them thicker and also form a natural coating on the hair shaft. If the hair loss is hereditary, then there is very little one can do to avoid it although with a regular hair care programme one can slow down the process.

I am a 24-year-old man and my skin is very dry. I apply moisturising lotions daily. But the dryness persists and my skin has become dark and flaky. Please suggest a herbal remedy.
DIPAK CHOPRA, CALCUTTA

Moisturisers are not adequate for excessively dry skin. Try to massage your face with warm coconut oil mixed with sesame seed oil, sandalwood oil and almond oil. This has to be done before your bath. Also, have a balanced diet with lean meat, eggs, green vegetables and fresh fruits.■



CYBER

STAR TREK

Samita Bhatia tracks celebrities on the Internet

Log onto cyberspace for everything-you-wanted-to-know-about that swoon-inducing Spanish actor, Antonio Banderas of *The Mask of Zorro* fame. Want Pamela Anderson Lee's fan mail address or want to know what Demi Moore's new passion is? From Amartya Sen to Kajol, the Web offers sites that have a huge offering of pictures, articles, biographies and interviews of your favourite celebrities.

http://www.nd.edu/~kmukhopa/cal300/calcutta/amartyasen
@ A background tells you that professor Amartya Sen, 1998 Nobel Laureate in Economics, was born in 1933 in Bengal and that he still retains his Indian citizenship. Besides accessing his address and telephone number you can browse through all the books penned by Sen. There's more — a Trinity College home page, an audio of Amartya Sen and a congratulation Guestbook for professor Sen for you to sign.

http://nobelprize.com/nobel/economics/1998a.html
@ Another site that you can log onto for more on Amartya Sen.

princeofwales.gov.uk
'The Prince of Wales' website provides a means to communicate directly, to a wide audience, get information about the Prince of Wales and his public activities. It will also enable those who visit the site to offer their views on some of the issues addressed," goes the site.
Learn all about the prince, go through a picture gallery, read his speeches, know about his trusts and charities and, of course, read a message from him. See the Prince's schedule of forthcoming engagements and get to know more about the British monarchy.

http://web2.airmail.net/bobb
@ The site gives you an A-Z directory of celebrity E-mail addresses. A sampling:
Baywatch cast
http://baywatch.compuserve.com/emailstuff/bayform.html
The Clinton Administration
75300.3115@compuserve.com
Macaulay Culkin
macaulay@cheerful.com & culkin@writeme.com
Madonna
madonna@wbr.com
Brad Pitt
CIAOBOX@MSN.com

www.http://celebsite.com
@ A feast for those dogging celebrity footsteps. Find out who Today's Star is, go to photo galleries, find out birthdays of your favourite celebrities and read their horoscopes. And, of course, browse through bios that give their real names, occupation, date of birth, place of birth, sun sign and education. The site gives you celebrities under various categories like actor, actress, athlete, comedian, musician, writer and so on.
Under your favourite male stars locate Pierce Brosnan, Jim Carrey, Charlie Chaplin, Richard Gere, Kate Winslet, Madonna, Mel Gibson, Anthony Hopkins, Michael Jackson... the list just goes on. Got a question about Woody Allen? Well, you'll find the answer here on The Woody Allen F.A.Q. (frequently asked questions). Tom Cruise's site, too, is great-looking, jammed with pictures, sound files and video clips.



http://web.syr.edu/~pimentel/
@ BJSweb or the Barbra Streisand Web page gives information on Barbra's next tour; it tells you whether she ever starred in a pornographic film or has had a nose job. There's more on Barbra's albums, films and awards.

http://members.aol.com/markjayeye/bjsfaq
@ Eighty-seven pages of the most frequently asked questions about Barbra Streisand.

http://dir.yahoo.com/regional/countries/India/government/politics/parties
@ Indian political heavyweights are at hand on this site. The official site of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) can be located here while other parties featured include the AIADMK, the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the Shiv Sena and the Victory of India Party. The last claims to establish a political party for India that will make it rich, powerful and free of hatred.

www.shammikapoor.com
@ The site affords an Indian Film Page, one on Indian Music, links to home pages of Indian actors and actresses. So there's Kajol's official home page, info on the Indian Film Festival, a call for entry to the 21st Annual American Indian Film Festival and synopses of Indian movies.
Click on filmflamglamsham for Indian films, glamour and entertainment magazines.

IN RELATION

JAYALALITHA VS THE BJP

Seema Goswami on the soap opera without end

They are logical allies. The BJP has no real base in Tamil Nadu, Jayalalitha has no base outside the state. The BJP believes in the Hindu way of life; Jayalalitha does *puja* for four hours a day. The BJP is controlled by shadowy Brahmins in Nagpur who like to stay out of the limelight; Jayalalitha is a devout Brahmin who plays this down for political reasons.

But almost from the moment the BJP government was sworn in at the Centre, Jayalalitha has declared war on it. The reasons are easy enough to find if you look hard enough. Jayalalitha had a one-point agenda. She wanted to return to power in Tamil Nadu. Her astrologers had told her that she had a good period in early 1998 and would win any election held during this period. Her demand to the BJP was simple: if I align with you and you do come to power, then you must sack the DMK government. A fresh election will be held, and I'll become chief minister.

The BJP, she says, enthusiastically agreed to this deal. And certainly, throughout the election campaign it appeared to honour the terms of the agreement. Rangarajan Kumaramangalam declared that the people of Tamil Nadu wanted the DMK government dismissed and after the Coimbatore bombs, L.K. Advani made fire and brimstone speeches about the breakdown in law and order. Jayalalitha led her alliance with the BJP and assorted regional parties to victory and all seemed to be right with the world.

Then, just as the government was being sworn in, the problems began. Subramanian Swamy declared that Jayalalitha wanted him to be finance minister. (The lady herself made no such demand but she didn't contradict Swamy either.) No way, said Vajpayee, I won't take office if this man is finance minister.

That skirmish died down, but Jayalalitha waited for the Centre to dismiss the DMK government. It refused to do so. "The Constitution won't allow it," said the BJP piously. "What nonsense!" screeched Jayalalitha. "You *promised* me "

"No, we didn't," they said. "Oh yes, you did. You've now got selective amnesia," she retorted. And so on.

As the battle raged, Jayalalitha did the obvious thing. She sent an emissary to Sonia Gandhi. Apparently, Subramanian Swamy slithered into 10 Janpath and made his pitch to Sonia. If the AIADMK withdrew support, then the BJP would lose its majority. If it shifted sides to the Congress, then a 'secular alliance' could form the government. So, how about it? Sonia looked interested. All you have to do, said Swamy, is make me finance minister. .

End of deal.

With the door of 10 Janpath slammed firmly in her face, Jayalalitha now finds that she has nowhere else to go. Hence, the process of making up again with the BJP. But, given her nature, she's not ready to eat humble pie. The only way to keep the BJP from taking her for granted, she believes, is to keep the pressure up.



With the door of 10 Janpath slammed in her face, Jayalalitha now finds that she has nowhere to go

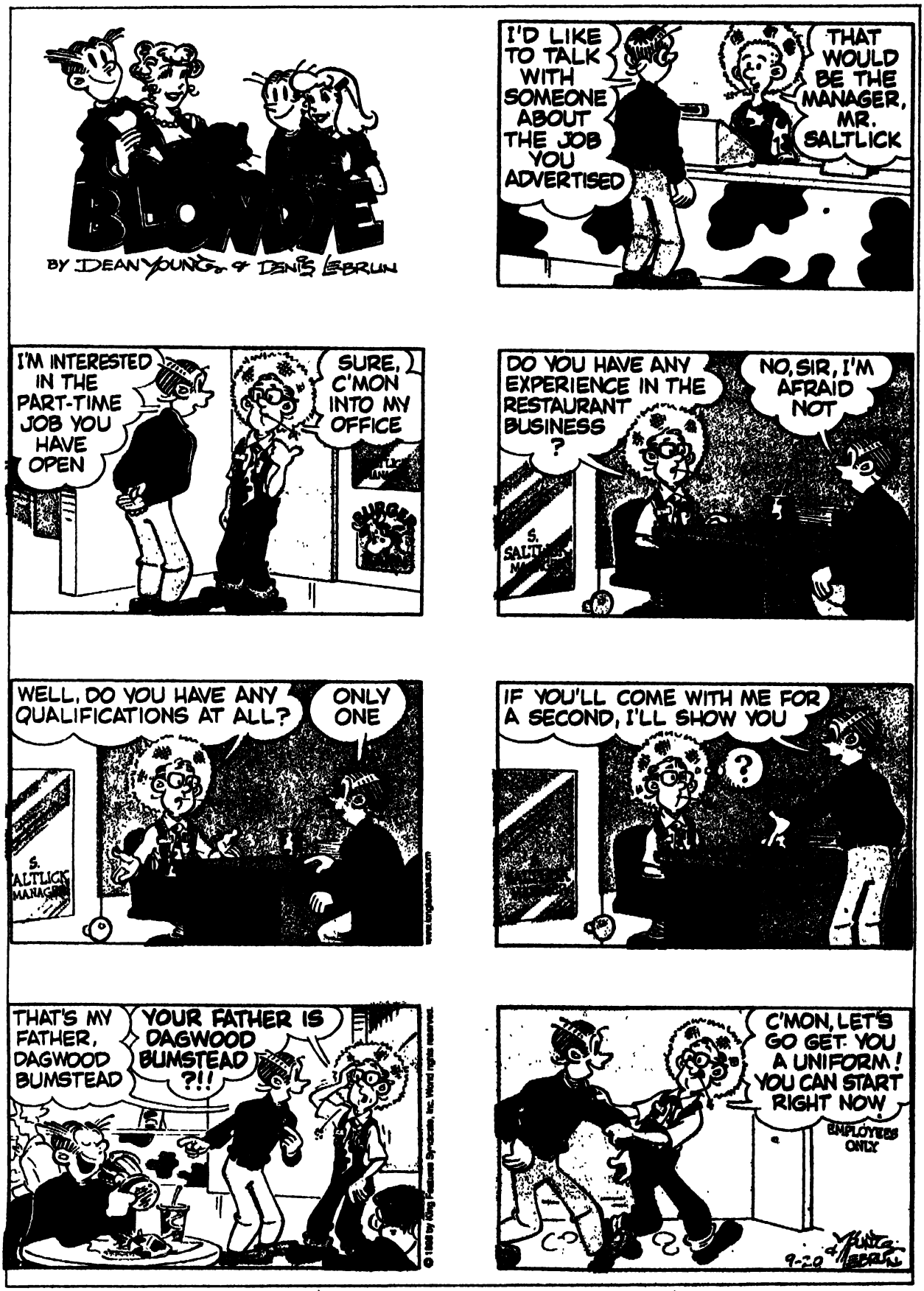
Thus, every alternate week, a new issue will be raised. Did they transfer the Enforcement Director? Okay, she's decided she wants him back. Are they offering her an additional portfolio in the Cabinet reshuffle? Well, that's not good enough. She wants two. And so on.

The consequence is that the alliance isn't broken – in fact, the lady recently issued a statement to proclaim that she still supported the BJP. But it isn't stable either. Nobody ever gets away without genuflecting to Jayalalitha.

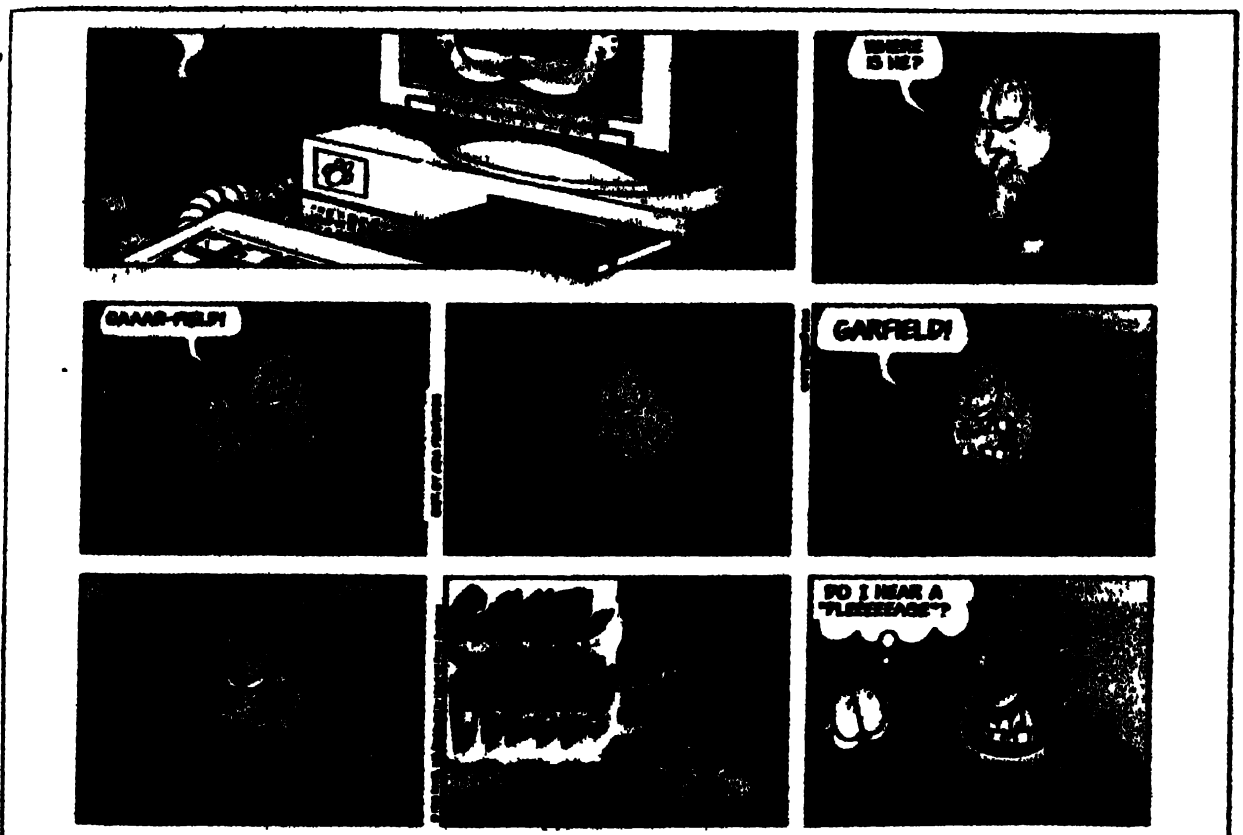
Of course, this can't go on. There will be a break at some stage. Jayalalitha's scenario is that the Congress – having won the Assembly elections by a convincing margin – will be ready to form a government at the Centre. But it won't have the numbers.

And when you don't have the numbers, who are you going to call? Why the BJP-buster herself: the one and only Jayalalitha. ■

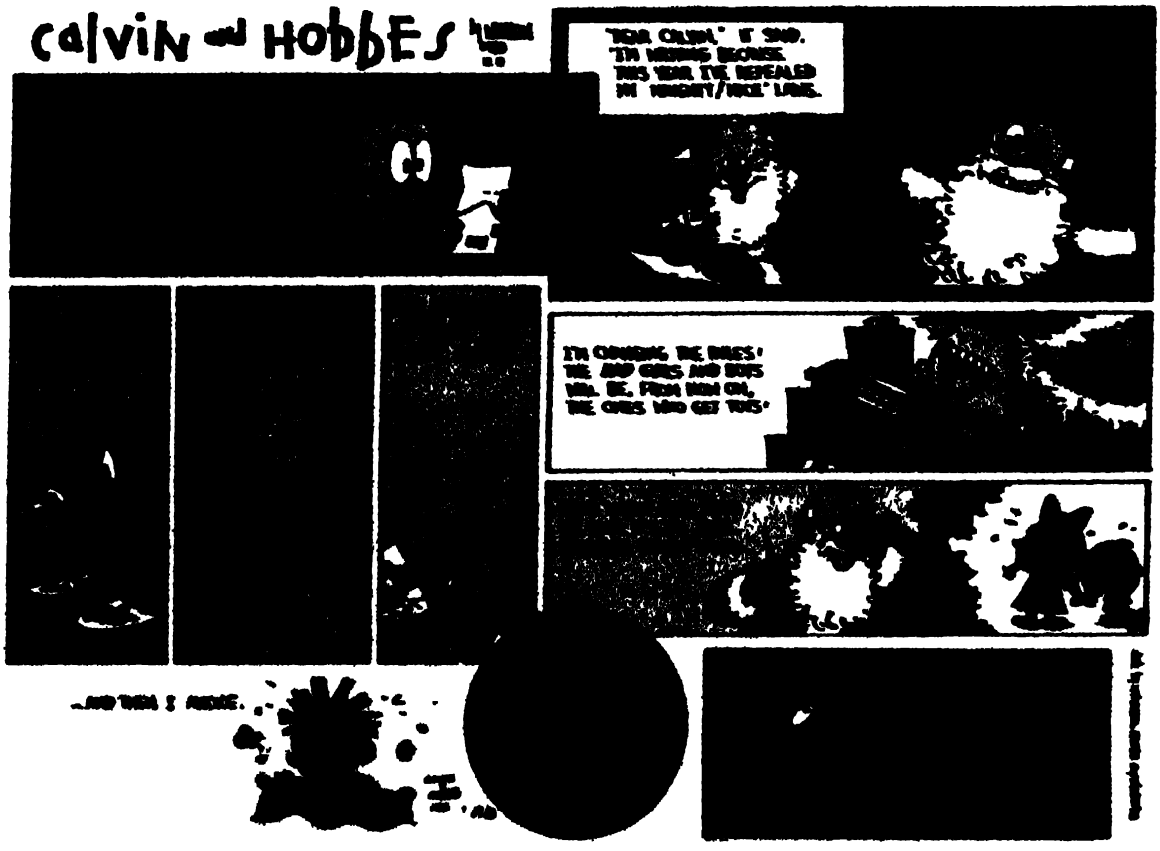
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ● MONDAY ● TUESDAY ● WEDNESDAY ● THURSDAY ● FRIDAY ● SATURDAY ● SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press two weeks in advance, readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC-741	0945	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-742	1500	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-743	1240	daily	IC-744	1110	daily
AHMEDABAD					
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
BAGDOGRA					
IC-721	1350	1, 5	IC-722	1620	1, 5
IC 721	1240	2, 6	IC-722	1510	2, 6
BANGALORE					
IC-771	0615	daily	IC-772	1150	daily
SW-511	1405	daily	SW-512	2140	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC-555	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-555	0825	2, 4, 6
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC-778	1300	1, 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC-555	1015	2, 4, 6	IC-555	0825	2, 4, 6
IC 765	1630	daily	IC-766	2135	daily
CD-267	1430	2, 4, 6	CD-268	1950	2, 4, 6
DELHI					
IC-253	0700	daily	SW-501	0810	daily
SW-502	0845	daily	AI-682	0925	1
IC-402	1730	daily			
			IC-401	0855	daily
SW-512	2010	daily	SW-511	1920	daily
			IC-254	2025	daily
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
IC-699	1200	4, 7	IC-699	1545	4, 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC-701	1100	1, 3, 5, 7	IC-702	1450	1, 3, 5, 7
DIMAPUR					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
GUWAHATI					
IC-703	0700	2, 4, 6	IC-704	1040	2, 4, 6
SW-611	1000	1, 2, 4, 7	IC-230	1310	daily
IC-698	1200	4, 7	SW-612	1250	1, 2, 4, 6, 7
IC-229	1000	daily	IC-699	1545	4, 7
HYDERABAD					
SW-511	1405	daily	IC-770	1300	3, 7
IC-777	1400	1, 5	IC-778	1300	1, 5
IC-769	1400	3, 7	SW-512	2140	daily
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No.	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1030	1, 3, 5
IC-699	1200	4, 7	IC-699	1545	4, 7
[illegible]					
CD-269	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
[illegible]					
SW-621	1000	3, 5	SW-622	1315	3, 5
CD-257	1100	1, 4	CD-257	1455	1, 4
LUCKNOW					
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
SW-202	0825	daily	IC-675	0835	daily
IC-676	0830	daily	SW-201	0930	daily
CD-268	1620	1, 3, 5	CD-270	2125	1, 3, 5
AI-305	2025	3	AI-306	1835	5
SW-212	2000	daily	IC-274	1855	daily
IC-273	1950	daily	SW-211	1915	daily
AI-679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
[illegible]					
IC-769	1400	3, 7	IC-770	1300	3, 7
PATNA					
CD-412	1715	2, 4, 6, 7	CD-411	2120	1, 3, 5, 7
[illegible]					
CD-265	0530	2, 4, 6	CD-266	1005	2, 4, 6
CD-265	0530	7	CD-266	1005	7
[illegible]					
CD-257	1400	2, 4, 6	CD-258	1900	2, 4, 6
[illegible]					
CD-253	0550	2, 4, 6	CD-254	0830	2, 4, 6
CD-255	0550	1, 3, 5	CD-256	1030	1, 3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-215	1100	3, 5	CD-215	1455	3, 5
[illegible]					
CD-572	1020	2, 4, 6	CD-571	1250	2, 4, 6

FLIGHTS

[illegible]					
RJ-185	1455	4	RJ-184	0845	4
[illegible]					
KL-476	0415	7	KL-475	0830	7
[illegible]					
KB-185	1025	2, 6	KB-186	0915	2, 3, 7
KB-185	1010	4			

IC-731	1055	4	TG-313	1235	1, 3, 6
IC-731	1000	7	IC-732	1000	7
IC-605	0600	2, 6	IC-732	1000	4
TG-314	1300	1, 3, 6	IC-699	1400	2, 6
AI-305	1450	5	AI-306	1835	5
[illegible]					
IC-699	1200	2, 5	IC-697	1230	2, 5

Departures			Arrivals		
Fl No.	Time	Days	Fl No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
[illegible]	1155	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	[illegible]	1110	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
IC-723	1630	1, 5, 6, 7	IC-724	1600	1, 5, 6, 7
IC-725	1430	3	IC-726	1400	3
[illegible]	1845	2	[illegible]	1545	2
[illegible]	2105	daily	[illegible]	2005	daily
[illegible]					
IB-197	2040	3, 6	IB-198	0720	4, 7
[illegible]					
IC-747	0815	1, 3, 5, 6	IC-748	1335	1, 3, 5, 6
IC-747	0815	2	IC-748	1335	2
IA-214	1535	2, 6	IA-213	1425	2, 6
[illegible]					
BA-142	2100	2	BA-143	1550	2
BA-142	2100	6	BA-143	1550	6
[illegible]					
SU-536	1100	4	SU-537	0650	4
SU-536	2230	7	SU-537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Fl No.	Time	Days	Fl No.	Time	Days
[illegible]					
[illegible]	[illegible]	2, 5, 7	[illegible]	[illegible]	2, 5
			IB-195	0805	4
[illegible]					
[illegible]	[illegible]	4, 7	IB-197	1040	2, 5
SG-415	2245	2, 5	SG-416	2255	2, 5
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC-728	1600	3, 7
[illegible]					
A-306	1650	5	A-305	1905	3
[illegible]					
IC-727	1505	2, 6	IC 728	1600	3, 7

AI Air-India • **BA** British Airways • **BG** Biman Bangladesh Airlines • **BI** Royal Brunei Airlines • **CD** Alliance Air • **IC** Indian Airlines • **KB** Druk-Air • **KL** Royal Dutch Airlines • **RA** Royal Nepal Airlines • **RJ** Royal Jordanian Airlines • **SQ** Singapore Airlines • **SU** Aeroflot • **TG** Thai Airways International • **UW** Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
		Howrah		
		Dehli-Kalka Mail		
		Amritsar Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Allahabad		
		Purena (New Delhi) Express via Gaya-Varanasi		
		Dep. Wed., Thurs. & Sun		
		Arr Tues., Wed. & Sat		
		Purena (New Delhi) Express via Patna		
		Dep. Mon., Tues. Fri. & Sat.		
		Arr Mon., Thurs., Fri & Sun		
		Rajdhani Express via Gaya		
		Dep. Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri & Sat.		
		Arr Mon., Wed. Thurs. Fri. & Sun		
		Rajdhani Express via Patna		
		Dep. Wed. & Sun. Arr Tues & Sat.		
		Jodhpur Express		
		Shaktidi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday		
		Hirakud (Jharsuguda) Express Tri-Weekly		
		Dep. Tues., Fri & Sat., Arr Tues Wed., & Sat		
		Gondwana Sankalpat Express		
		Dep. Tues, Wed. & Sat. Arr. Tues., Fri & Sat.		
		Gitanjaliyan Express Dep. & Arr Thursday		
		Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express		
		Dep. & Arr Sun, Mon., Wed. & Fri		
		Doon Express via Grand Chord		
		Lohar Akka Yesvantpur Express via Main Line		
		Dehli Janata Express		
		Amritsar Express		
		Kolkata Express		
		Mithila (Darbhanga) Express		
		Kamrup (Guwahati) Express		
		Rajdhani Express		
		Chambal Express		
		Asansol Express		
		Ranchi Express		
		Jodhpur Express		
		Gitanjaliyan Express		
		Ganadevta Express		
		Chambal (Gwalior) Express		
		Dep: Mon., Tue. & Thurs., Arr Mon., Thurs. & Fri.		
		Sapta (Indore) Express		
		Dep Wed., Sat. & Sun., Arr Sun., Wed. & Sat.		
		Shaktidi (Bhopal) Express		
		Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep: Fri., Arr Tues.		
		Sealdah		
		Howrah-Puri Express		
		Howrah Mail		
		Lal Kuan Express via Main Line		
		Ganadevta Express		
		Puri Express		
		Puri Express via Cuttack		
		Dep., Mon. & Fri., Arr: Wed. & Sun.		
		Kalka Express		
		Howrah-Puri Express		
		Howrah-Puri Express via SRC Loop		
		Howrah (Jaleshwar) Express		
		Howrah-Puri (Bhubaneshwar) Express		
		Dep. & Arr: Tues., Thurs. & Sat.		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
		Howrah		
		Madras Mail		
		Mumbai Mail via Nagpur		
		Ghaziabad (Sealdah) Express		
		Shalimar (Howrah) Express		
		Dep. & Arr., Except Saturday		
		Ahmedabad Express		
		Kalka Express via Nagpur		
		Coromandal (Chennai) Express via Cuttack		
		Fakirmohan (Balasore/Howrah) Express		
		Tata Steel Express		
		Ajad (Bhubaneshwar) Express		
		Sambalpur-Howrah Express		
		Howrah Kalka Express		
		Puri Express via Cuttack		
		Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express		
		Dhauli (Bhubaneshwar) Express		
		East Coast (Hydrabad) Express		
		Purulia Express		
		Dep: Except Saturday		
		Arr: Except Sunday		
		Tirupati Express		
		Azad Hind (Porna) Bi-Weekly Express		
		Dep. & Arr., Tuesday & Sunday		
		Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only		
		New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (vna Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only		
		Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only		
		Trivandrum Central - Howrah - Guwahati Express Tuesday only		
		Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only		
		Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only		
		Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep. & Arr. Friday & Monday		
		Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only		
		Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only		

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Best

A CUT ABOVE



Crystal is less expensive than you think and widely available. Rajlakshmi Bhattacharyya reports

LIGHT AND GLITTER
Good quality crystal can outshine precious gemstones in cut, clarity and luminosity. In India, crystal manufacturers mainly produce crystal glasses and a few gift items

A bejewelled world called Kristallwelten in Austria continues to dazzle collectors of crystal. It is a cave that Daniel Swarovski built. Showcasing modern craftsmanship and the most expensive crystal, it outshines precious gemstones in cut and clarity.

Swarovski created a brand after his name which even today enchants connoisseurs of beauty. Former USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev is reported to have commissioned a Swarovski crystal chandelier for the presidential apartments. The late Princess Diana wore crystal-encrusted gowns on a number of gala occasions.



During the sale of her gowns which went under the hammer at Christie's in New York, an ensemble by Hiachi with embroidered gold and crystal motifs sold for $75,100. Such is the craze for Swarovski, that couturiers — including our own home-grown designers Ravi Bajaj and Suneet Varma — use it to add sparkle to their fashion collections.

Swarovski made a debut with the miniature mouse (in 1976) which acquired an almost iconic status, and added replicas of musical instruments, animals, birds and figurines. Each year, the company comes up with a theme animal which goes off the shelves once the year is out.

Last year was dedicated to the dragon (Governor Christopher Patton was presented with one of these on the eve of the handover of Hong Kong to China). This year, the pegasus in the finest pave crystals in 22 carat plated gold is being sold at Rs 16,000. Its purchase is limited to the members of the Swarovski Collector's Society with a 3.5 lakh membership in more than 25 countries. The limited edition pieces which the company releases periodically might be a marketing gimmick geared towards whipping up a collector's frenzy.

On the 10th anniversary of the Collector's Society, Swarovski paid tribute to an animal known to be an ardent collector itself. The bushy tailed squirrel clutching a nut between its paws was available to Swarovski's members till December 1997. The 'hoarder' had to be retired making way for the spring '98 collections.

Swarovski lays a lot of stress on nostalgia cannily introducing a pram (Rs 1,475), toy train (Rs 1,770) and baby shoes (Rs 885) in its '*Childhood Dreams*' series. Created in the same vein, are the quaint telephone (Rs 1,175), hour glass (Rs 885) and gramophone (Rs 1,475) — mementos worth keeping or gifting to those who love looking back on '*Times Past*'.

Decorative pieces with utility value (such as candle-holders and jewel boxes) are increasingly popular among crystal aficionados. Swarovski's latest arrival is a solar clock (Rs 15,770) in which crystal rays give the effect of a sun. Says Jagmohan Bose in Swarovski's exclusive shop in Delhi's Defence Colony, "The need to buy crystal is addictive. Some customers would not mind going hungry to grab a piece they like."

The company has started a jewellery line which is chic and trendy. Their mini brooches



RAVI BAJAJ
Fashion designer
I like Lalique crystal because they do simple shapes. I don't like 50 million cuts in a crystal. I like Swarovski for the range and would choose crystal as an accessory and not for decoration which I find in bad taste

vhich are inspired by tulips, daffodils, roses, herries, grapes, ballerinas and violins start off it Rs 1,075 and goes upto Rs 1,765. The pendants eaturing miniature animals come in a price ange of Rs 1,075-Rs 1,770.

Calcutta is quite a happy hunting ground for the crystal collector. One could head traight to New Market and enter Block B which s also called (rather aptly) Cutlery Lane. esides, you can also find a fair variety in idderpore's Fancy Market and Five Star Market, and at Vardaan Market in Camac Street.

Says one of the shop owners in New Market, We get most of our stuff duty-free from ingapore. These are mostly made in Japan and old here at reduced prices."

While Austrian crystal has long been regarded as one of the world's premier exemplars of ine crystal, noted specially for its purity, brilliance and splendid refractive qualities, Lalique French crystal) and Baccarat (Bohemian crystal) are equally prized, if not more expensive.

A Bohemian crystal jug can cost Rs 6,500, and ven a candy jar which looks more Victorian han contemporary can be picked up for Rs 6,700. lost shops in India buy their crystal from local nporters. In today's recession-hit market, one as only to walk into a nearby giftshop to pick p an RCR (Italian crystal) vase or a Crystal de re (French crystal) jar.

When bored with transparent crystal, you an go in for crystal fruit bowls (Rs 1,250) in blue, iolet and red from Walter, Germany, or Soga, apan. Those who like to swear by Indian goods ave a choice in Solitaire and Royal Crystals, hough they are yet to match up to the foreign rands in terms of quality. Royal Crystals produces crystal glass, using technology from UK, ermany and Sweden. "In all, we make glassare, hand cut tumblers, beer mugs, vases, owls, figures and clocks," says S. Siyal, about he company's gift collection.

There is much to distinguish crystal from lass. Explains a shopowner, "Crystal contains round 24 per cent lead monoxide." The lead, while imparting weight to the product, makes it blemish-free. Unlike ordinary glass which would emit a blunt sound, crystal is more musical to the ear. The quality of crystalware depends on the cutwork and the amount of bell metal used.

What sells most in today's market are crystal glasses—its price depending on whether they are handcut or machine moulded. In hand-cut varieties, the crystal pieces are individually mouth blown before they are crafted to capture the clarity, brilliance and sharpness of cut associated with high quality crystal.

With so many attributes, what better way can there be of adding that extra sparkle to one's life?

Additional inputs by Roshni Sengupta



INFANT PLEASURES

Swarovski pays a lot of stress on nostalgia. Each year, the Swarovski collection comes up with a theme animal like panther, monkey and also musical instruments and birds



NAFISA ALI

Actress

My mother gave me a crystal bowl and a Czech crystal vase when I was young. But I am not a collector of crystalware. If I had the money, I would rather collect antique silver



RUSSI MODY

Corporate legend

My crystal is mostly from Lalique, Daume, Baccarat, and Morano. I do have a very large and good collection of crystals. My favourite among them is a lead crystal vase from Baccarat and a crystal owl from Daume

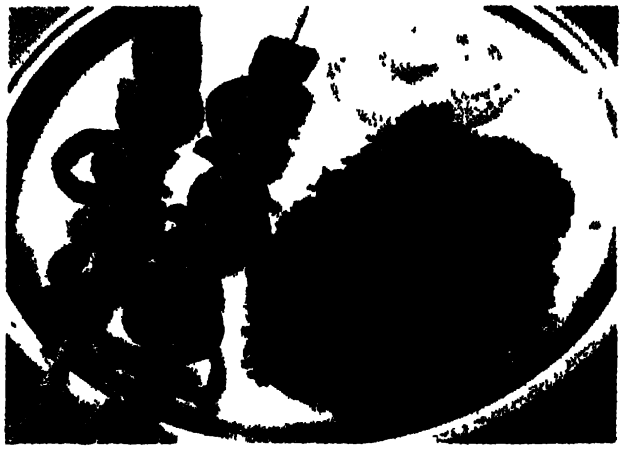
PERSONAL *Style*

GIFT OF THE GAB

Lyricist, script-writer and poet, Javed Akhtar, loves to indulge in a good conversation when he entertains

With Shabana and me busy with our respective work, we barely get to see one another. The frequency of entertaining people at our home, hence, has sadly reduced in recent times. But when we do entertain, the priority remains getting a good conversation going with like-minded people.

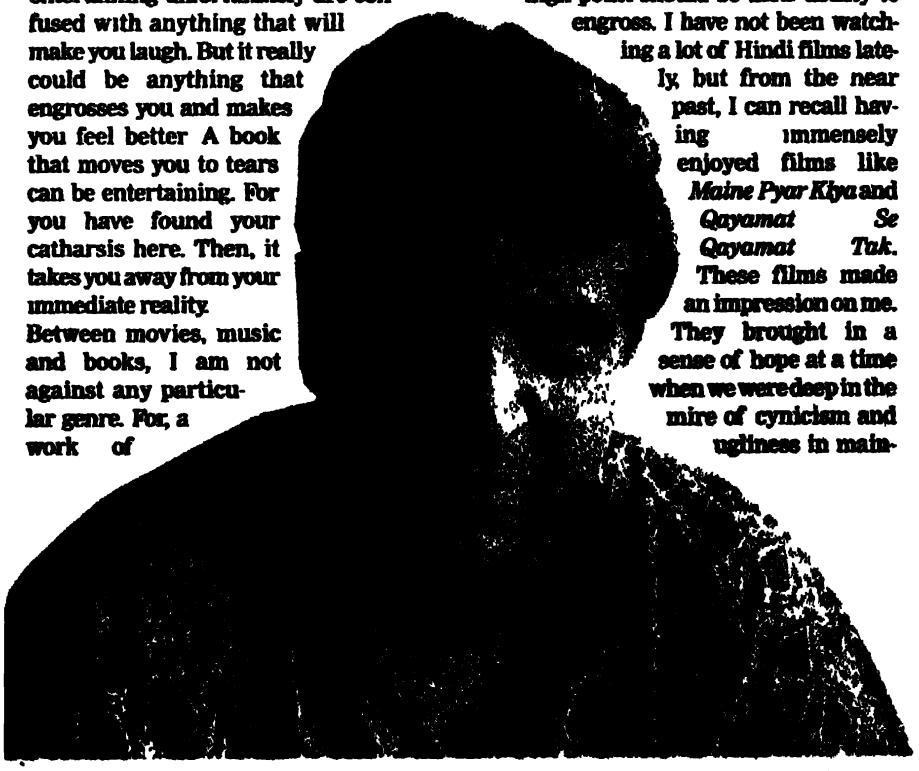
Since I gave up on booze in the last seven years or so, I let my guests choose their own poison. Our home is famous for its *kebabs* and *biryani*, so that is a must on the list of eats. Others would feel cheated otherwise, if we do not serve any of this.



MUGHLAI MEN

When we do entertain, the priority remains getting a good conversation going wit like-minded people. Since I gave up on booze... I let my guest choose their own poison. Our home is famous for its *kebabs* and *biryani*

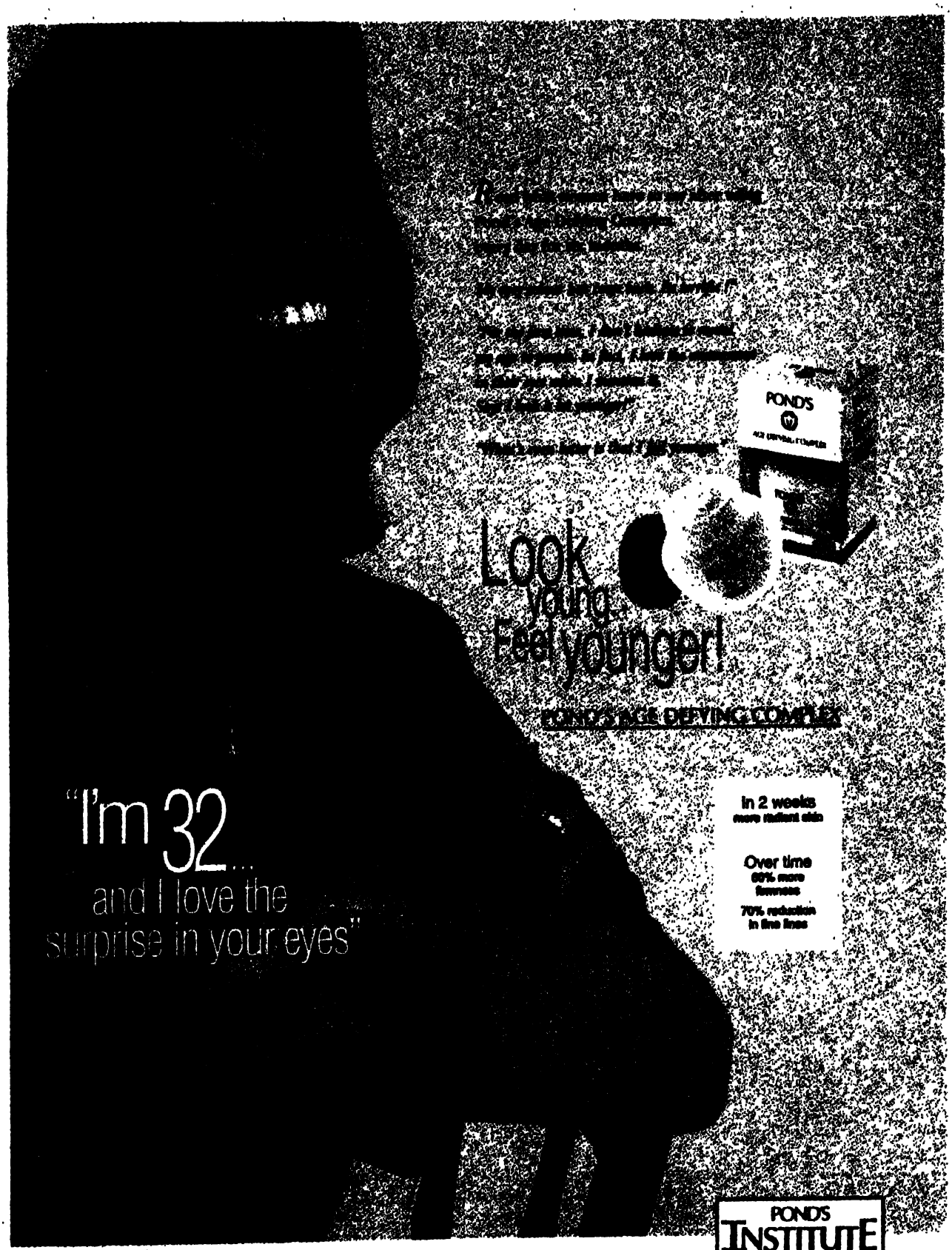
In its larger sense, entertainment and entertaining unfortunately are confused with anything that will make you laugh. But it really could be anything that engrosses you and makes you feel better. A book that moves you to tears can be entertaining. For you have found your catharsis here. Then, it takes you away from your immediate reality. Between movies, music and books, I am not against any particular genre. For, a work of art can only be either good or bad. Their high point should be their ability to engross. I have not been watching a lot of Hindi films lately, but from the near past, I can recall having immensely enjoyed films like *Maine Pyar Kiya* and *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak*. These films made an impression on me. They brought in a sense of hope at a time when we were deep in the mire of cynicism and ugliness in mainstream cinema. These are real feel-go films.



So far as books go, nowadays I am rea ing books on genes and outer space. I ha been reading one by a NASA scientist f a long time now, where he looks into t possibilities of extra-terrestrial life, a debunks the Hollywood myths of cig shaped green creatures. While on genes have been curious with this very intere ing theory that it is these structures in t human organism that help it survive a provide continuity. They form a defen machinery within themselves for this have been reading up voraciously on th topic, but cannot pick out any one writ though, at random who might ha impressed me among all.

While on the topic of outer space a the universe, what interests me the most the concept of translation, that of anoth time and another space in terms of t galaxy. While one tries to hold on to som thing that is good forever, the larger rea ty is that whatever begins must end. Th has influenced many of my poems a lyrics in the past and continues to do so.

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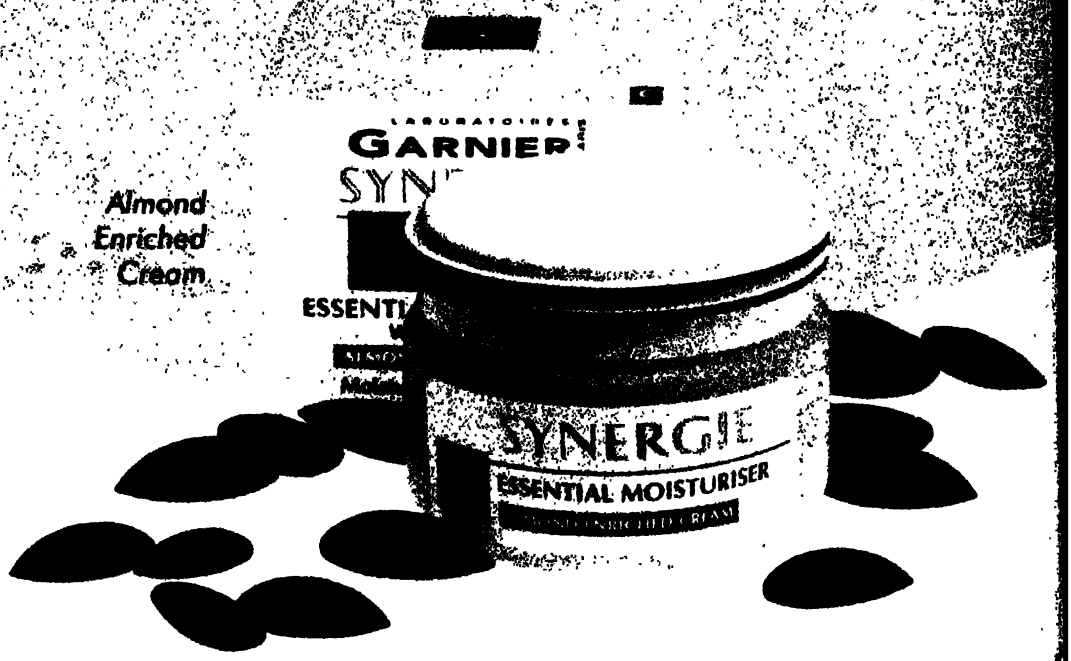


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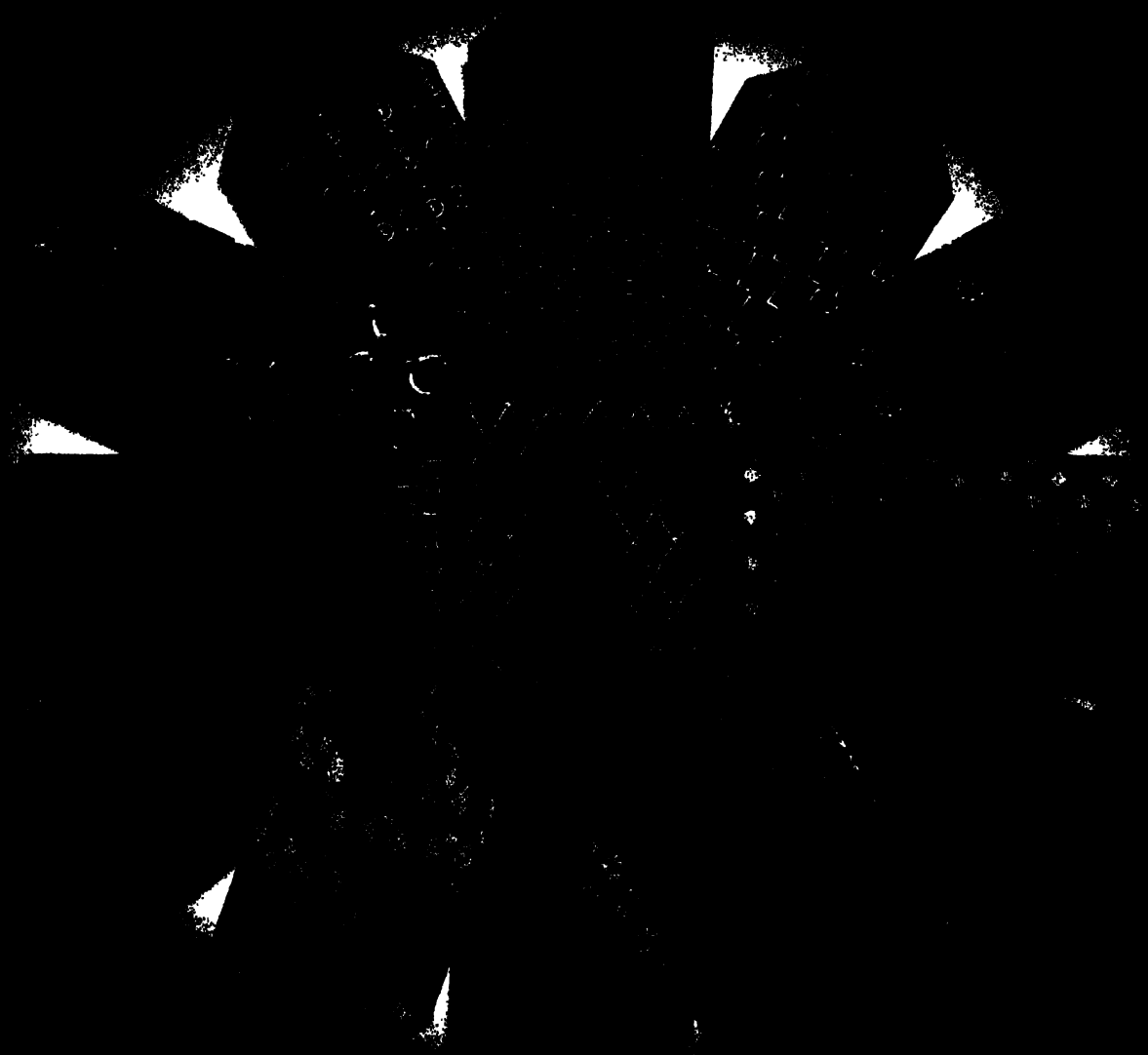
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MAN OF MANY PARTS

The cover story on T. Subbarami Reddy ('Maverick Maestro', November 8) revealed the man behind his varied roles as a politician, a philanthropist and a film maker. The egotist that he is, his chequered life is as varied as the man himself. It's a rare phenomenon that he has adeptly diversified into so many different fields — politics, culture, business and spirituality — with such ease.

SANTANU DEY, PATNA

REDDY MADE

The profile on Subbarami Reddy was very ngrossing, indeed. He is truly man of many parts given the ct that he performs so many fferent roles with aplomb: om attending *filmi* parties to arliamentary sessions. He elieves in living life to the llest, yet is concerned about s unfortunate brethren — locating funds for the ducation of rural women or uilding places of worship. We ed to derive inspiration from is philanthropist.

unil Kapoor, Delhi

Subbarami Reddy has had greatness thrust on him. has both political and onetary clout and appears to a publicity hound. I wonder what kind of a people's leader he is?

Ranga Rao, Jamshedpur

HIGH SPIRITS

The article on bars ('Bar One', November 8) featured in the Design Corner was very heady, to say the least. It's vitally important to create the right ambience when having a drink. And what better way to enjoy your pint than let the soft, muted lighting and plush no-fuss interiors take their hold on you. The theme of the bar helps create the mood. I like the English pub-style interior in one of the city's bars.

Anupama Mitra, Calcutta

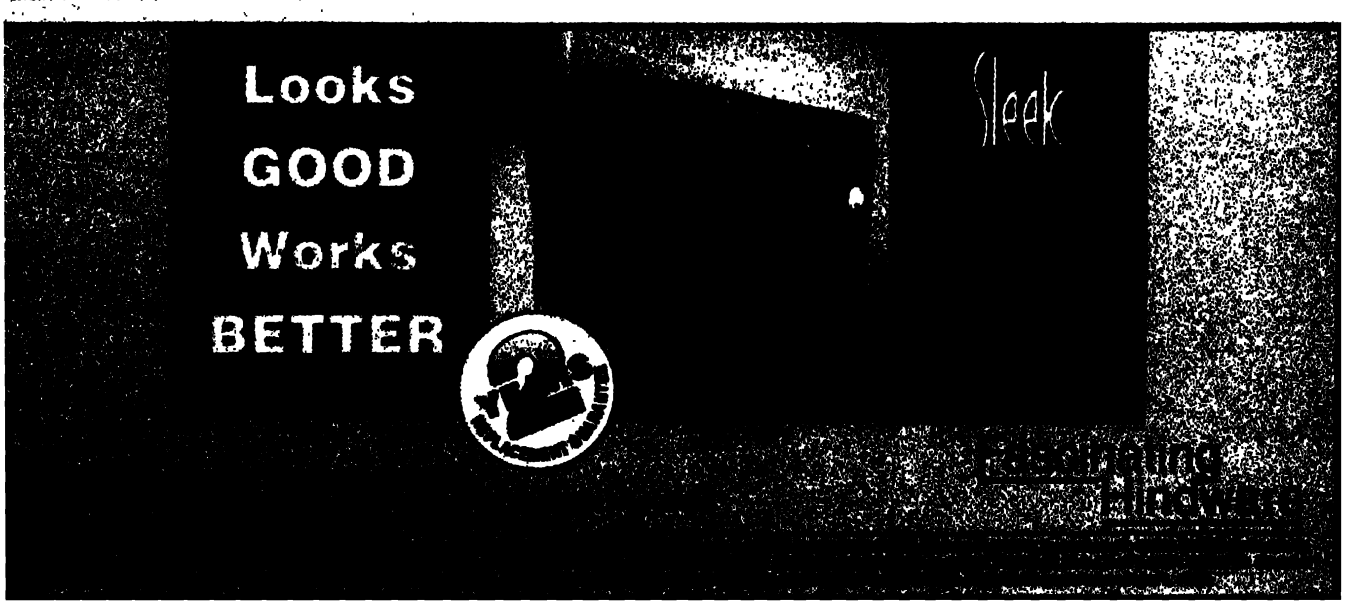
PIED PIPER

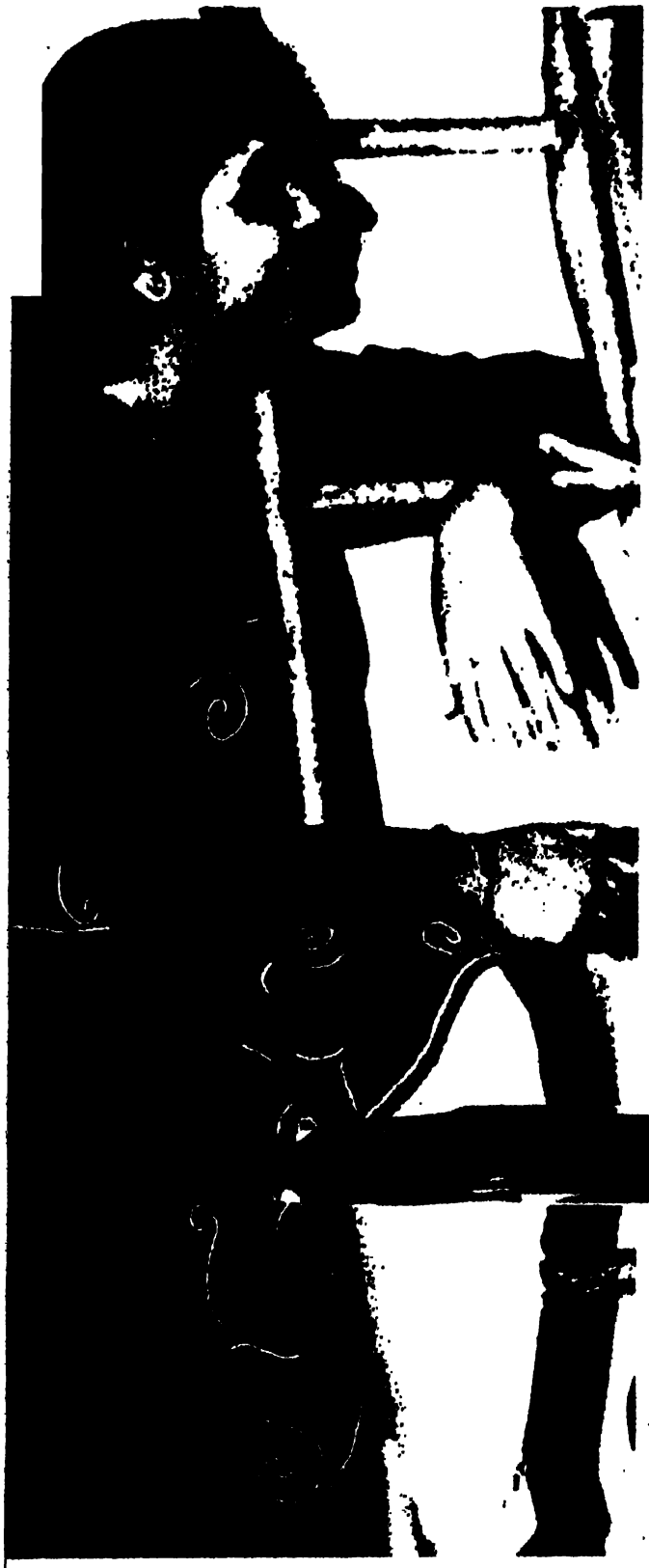
Hari Prasad Chaurasia ('Pipe Dreams', November 8) in Close Encounter was indeed up, close and very personal. Not content on resting on his laurels, the brilliant flautist is constantly in the process of reinventing himself, experimenting with the *ragas* to be able to reach a wider audience. It's a pity, though when musicians like him have to make compromises to win audience appreciation. One can only hang one's head in shame at the sad lack of music awareness in our country.

Sudhir Sen, Agartala

graphiti ★ 20 December 1998

6 CRIME AND PUNISHMENT One doesn't always follow the other **12** OUT OF THE CLOSET Shahnaz Husain's favourite piece of clothing is the kaftan **15** SMALL TALK We don't need no thought police **28** THE BEST Fish remains an enduring passion of the Bengali **30** MY PERSONAL STYLE David Abraham likes to keep his interiors light and bright





Rage is instant, memory is short. One morning the newspapers greeted readers with the news o a woman's half-burnt body having been found in a *tandoor.* Apparently, she had been killed by her hus band, who then tried to dispose off her body in this gruesome and bizarre manne The revulsion that followed was accompanied by a strident demand for justice for the murdered woman.

A year later, a case of triple murder hit the headlines. This involved love, blackmail, money and beautiful women. Again, there was a huge clamour to bring the perpetrators to book.

But this clamour lasted only as long as newspapers found space for it. Gradually, the stories moved from page one to the inside pages, finally disappearing altogether. Public memory is proverbially short, and by now it had moved on to the new hot story of the day.

But have these cases been pushed on to the backburner? Or is it just a case of justice being delayed rather than denied? *Graphiti* looks at how some celebrated cases are progressing in the courts — and out of them.

ONE DOESN'T ALWAYS FOLLOW THE OTHER. A LOOK AT SOME CELEBRATED CASES WHERE JUSTICE IS STILL AWAITED

Crime and Punishment



KILLER INSTINCT
Sushil Sharma, the former Youth Congress leader, charged with killing his wife, Naina Sahni (extreme left), and then burning her body in a *tandoor* in a Delhi hotel

THERE are no hushed whispers, no pointing fingers in judge G. P. Thareja's court in New Delhi's Patiala House. Former Youth Congress leader Sushil Sharma, charged with killing his wife, Naina Sahni, and trying to burn her remains in a *tandoor*, enters the room and walks briskly towards the judge's desk, almost unnoticed.

Unperturbed by the lack of attention, Sharma is both alert and confident. Three years of incarceration have done nothing to destroy his spirit. Stylishly unshaved and dressed in a sky blue shirt with dark trousers, he looks well. He glances across the room and makes eye contact with a small, nondescript man lurking in the corner. After a fraction of a second, Sharma turns away.

The man in question is a witness

'KAUL' OF DEATH:
Subhash Gupta's story reads like a perfect murder plot that went wrong. Having hit the good life, this well-to-do MCD contractor wanted to enjoy it, too, but fate had other designs



who has come to testify in the *tandoor* murder case. According to Inspector Niranjan Singh, who has been investigating the case, the court has examined 32 witnesses till now. "So far, three witnesses have turned hostile," he says. "All three were taxi drivers who drove Sushil Sharma to various destinations in and around Delhi."

Nonetheless, Inspector Singh is positive about the case. "It is proceeding smoothly. Both Sushil Sharma and Keshav (Sushil's partner, who was caught pouring *ghee* in the *tandoor* of Bagiya restaurant in Ashok Yatri Niwas, New Delhi, where Naina's body was burnt) are in police custody, while two other accused (the watchman and a waiter of the restaurant) are out on bail," he says.

The *tandoor* murder case hit the headlines in July 1995 and shook the public. Constable Abdul Nazeer Kunju was doing his usual rounds at New Delhi's Ashok Road on the night of July 2 when he saw flames leaping out of the first floor of Bagiya restaurant. He went in to check this suspicious fire, only to be told by an unknown person that some old posters and publicity papers were being burnt. The police suspect that this person was Sushil Sharma who later disappeared from the scene.

But Kunju was not satisfied with the answer, so he went in to investigate and discovered the restaurant manager-cum-partner, Keshav Kumar, barbecuing a human body in the *tandoor* instead of chicken. The newspapers got their headlines for the next few days.

The police investigations started after the body had been identified by Naina Sahni's former boyfriend Matloob Karim (her parents refused to identify her) and Keshav Kumar admitted to have been asked by Sushil Sharma to help him burn the body. But soon thereafter the problems began, as the second autopsy turned out to be different from the first one.

The police said that it was an open-and-shut case, that they had enough evidence to hang Sharma. But Sharma boasted to a group of journalists outside New Delhi's Patiala House after his first court appearance, "Don't worry, I will be out in a month or two."

The biggest loophole in the police case was the lack of credible motive. Various stories floated, all based on the premise that Sharma and Sahni used to have frequent violent fights. But was that enough provocation for murder?

Besides, the police only focussed on Sharma and Sahni's relationship and practically ignored Sahni's relationships with other men, including former boyfriend Matloob Karim. These are weaknesses that the defence will, no doubt, capitalise on.

Inspector Niranjan Singh, however, does not think so. "It is easy to find faults. You might think you have done a great job but I may find faults in your work, so what," he reacts agitatedly. "The investigation is complete from our side and as far as we are concerned there are no loopholes." Certainly, the police have succeeded in denying Sharma and Kumar bail.

Does Inspector Niranjan believe that Sharma will be convicted?

"The matter is subjudice, so I will not comment on it," he says. Sharma's counsel, K.K. Sood, says the same thing. "I will not disclose how we are going to plead. It is prejudicial to the defence," he says.

But as the case is still at the witness examination stage, it might take a year to reach the defence stage, and even longer to arrive at a verdict.

SUBHASH Gupta's story reads like a perfectly written plot gone wrong. He was an overweight, well-to-do MCD contractor who having hit the good life wanted to enjoy it too. Hence, the decision to join an upmarket fitness clinic where the number of calories lost were directly related to the amount of money one could spend. Enter: Personal Point, a weight-reduction centre, owned by Dr Suneel Kaul, a 35-year-old MBBS with big ambitions.

Subhash Gupta lost 25 kgs at his clinic with the help of his counsellor-cum-dietician, Sujata Saha, a young girl in her mid-twenties. But Gupta didn't just lose weight, he also lost his heart to young Saha. Unable to express his emotions to a girl half his age he wrote paeans to her in his diary. When he couldn't contain his emotions any longer he passed the diary to Saha who, in turn, handed it over to Kaul.

That's when things began to go wrong. According to Gupta, Kaul used the diary to blackmail him. He also claimed that Kaul had some photographs of Gupta with one of the

'girls' from the clinic in a compromising position which he was using to blackmail Gupta. But though the diary was recovered by the police there was no trace of the photos.

Apparently, Kaul wanted Gupta to invest Rs 1 crore in the clinic, so that he could open a branch in Mumbai. Gupta pumped in Rs 23 lakh, but that wasn't enough. At some point, Gupta's patience snapped. He hired professional criminals from Uttar Pradesh to kidnap Kaul and recover Gupta's money from him. To remain above suspicion, Gupta decided to stage-manage his own kidnapping and to surface once the ransom money was paid.

So far, so good. The plan went awry when Kaul appeared at Gupta's factory at Okhla with Sujata Saha and Deepa Gupta, executive manager at Personal Point, on June 6, 1996. The four criminals hired by Gupta were present at the factory when Kaul arrived. An argument ensued and in the scuffle Kaul was killed. Interestingly, a doctor, Hemant Kalra, was also present, presumably to administer a sedative to Kaul before his kidnapping. Finally, the sedatives were used on the two girls who were then bundled into Gupta's BMW and driven to the Agra-Mumbai highway.

By this time Gupta had lost control over the situation as the criminals took over. On the way to Agra, Kaul's body was disposed off near Hodal in Haryana. The girls also had to be eliminated because they had seen too much. They were probably killed in Agra and their bodies were thrown in the ravines of Morena in Madhya Pradesh.

Subhash Gupta proceeded to Mumbai as planned. The criminals — Ravi Prakash, Kamal alias Pinki, Vinay Choudhary — now turned against Gupta and demanded Rs 1 crore from him. Finally, they settled for Rs 50 lakh, and, according to Gupta, he had already paid Rs 19 lakh to them.

The police was quick to trace Gupta's steps and arrested him on June 9, 1996 from the Leela Kempinski hotel in Mumbai. On June 12 he was produced in a Delhi court and was remanded for seven days in judicial custody. On a tip-off, the police arrested the other accomplices and the case went to court in August 1996.

"It is an open-and-shut case," says Vivek Gogia, additional DCP, South Delhi Police. "Ravi Prakash, Pinki, Dr Hemant Kalra and Subhash Gupta are in judicial custody."

But K.K. Manan, counsel for Subhash Gupta, is confident of acquittal of all the accused. He says that his client is going to plead not guilty. "The case is going to take a long time," he says. "It is still at the evidence stage and there are about 200 witnesses. Only four-five have been examined by the court so far."

Though the police have Gupta's confessional statement, Manan dismisses it as inconsequential. "The statement is not admissible in court so it means nothing." According to Manan, unless the confession of the accused leads to a new discovery it means little. "After all, if the confession merely corroborates the police version it could be taken to have been signed under duress."

A couple of months ago, Subhash Gupta filed a petition in the High Court saying that he feared an unfair trial as the judge was biased against him. Justice J.B. Goyal transferred his case to the court of Neeraj Kumar Gupta in the first week of November 1998 to expedite the process of witness examination, though he ignored Gupta's allegations against the judge.

Gulshan Kumar Bharti, counsel for Hemant Kalra, says that his client, Kalra, is falsely implicated. "There was only one witness — the security guard, Mithilesh, at Subhash Gupta's factory — who said that he had seen Kalra there," says Bharti. "But when he was examined by the court he denied having made that statement. So there is no eye-witness to the incident."

Gupta's woes, however, increased after the deposition of a private detective, Kunwar Vikram Singh, who claimed he had been hired by Gupta to investigate the antecedents of Sujata Saha. Gupta said this was in connection with a matrimonial enquiry relating to his younger brother, but Singh didn't buy this explanation. Later, Gupta admitted that he was obsessed with Saha and thought she was having an affair with Dr Kaul.

But on July 5, one day before Sujata was kidnapped, Gupta asked Singh to stop the investigation. It was Sujata's birthday on July 6, and he had planned to meet her in a very special way. Unfortunately for Sujata, this special plan turned out to be fatal for her.

Ghazala Wahab



THE CONSPIRACY THEORY.

Nadeem, one of the key accused in the murder of Gulshan Kumar. But the police have not been able to come up with even one strong evidence implicating him, says his lawyer

ON THE morning of August 12, 1997, music baron Gulshan Kumar, well-known producer and owner of Super Cassette Industries Pvt Ltd, was on his way to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva in Juhu, Mumbai. But God had other plans for Kumar. Even as he emerged with his *thali*, he was shot dead by unidentified gunmen.

The police arrested some 12 men in connection with the murder, some of whom even confessed to the crime. On

interrogation, according to the police, the men disclosed the names of those behind this shooting.

The investigations revealed that the conspiracy was hatched in Dubai in January 1997 when gangsters from the Abu Salem group were engaged to carry out the shooting. The motive of the crime, according to the police, was business rivalry. The police, on the basis of investigations, named two persons — Ramesh Taurani, director of Tips Industries, a music company, and music director Nadeem Saifi — as key conspirators and registered cases against them.

Ramesh Taurani is alleged by the police to have given Rs 25 lakh to the contract killers. According to the police, the pager and the car (Tata Sierra) which were used in the killing were recovered from Taurani's possession. The money was directed through *hawala* transactions and was carried in two boxes by Taurani and Nadeem. The money was later used to buy arms and ammunitions, pagers, mobile phones and the two Maruti cars used in the killing.

The police filed cases against Taurani and Nadeem at the Mumbai High Court and the Bow Street Court, London, respectively as Nadeem was in England at the time. Taurani was initially remanded to judicial custody, but was granted bail by the Mumbai High Court. Today, more than a year later, while the case against Taurani is pending in the court, Nadeem's hearing is still on.

The police hope to bring the culprits to book. "We cannot say anything on the matter since the case is still in the court. Anyway, we have found some new evidence which we will be producing soon in the court," says one police officer.

While the police maintain a stony silence, the lawyers of both accused are sure of the verdict being in their favour. According to Satish Maneshinde, lawyer for Ramesh Taurani, there has been no progress in the case since February-March 1998. The High Court granted bail to Taurani early this year and the police don't have any evidence to prove his involvement in the crime.

Nadeem's lawyer, Majid Memon, on the other hand, is busy working on the quantum of compensation his client should get from the state police for the mental and emotional torture he has been through.

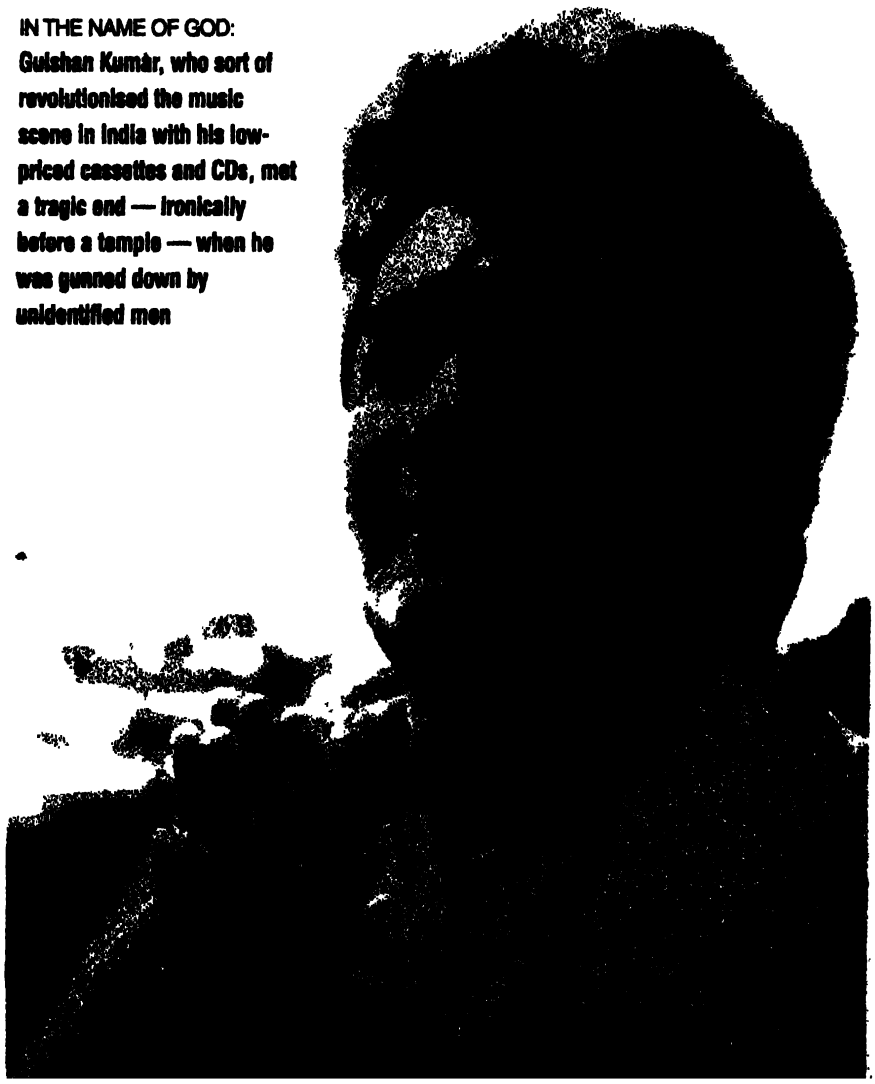
Says Memon, "The police have been making tall claims in this case but they have not come up with even a single strong evidence implicating Nadeem in the murder of Gulshan Kumar. For the past six months it is the Crown prosecution (which is representing the state police in London) that has been asking for postponement of dates. Since May 1998, the prosecution has asked for three postponements. Now the case is coming up again on December 14 and we want the hearing to take place at least this time."

Memon is hopeful that if the police don't come up with anything concrete this time, the trial court will dismiss the case. "Once the London court gives a detailed verdict dismissing the case there's no way the prosecution can win it in Bombay," he says.

Sudipta Basu

[redacted]

ON MARCH 21, 1983 two teenagers from Barrackpore, Sanjeeb Chatterjee and Tirthankar Das Sharma, left their home in a hurry. On March 22, their bodies were found on



IN THE NAME OF GOD: Gulshan Kumar, who sort of revolutionised the music scene in India with his low-priced cassettes and CDs, met a tragic end — ironically before a temple — when he was gunned down by unidentified men

the railway tracks of Pandua station. On April 5, the Officer-in-Charge of Titagarh police station was informed that a local postmaster had reported that two unidentified bodies were found at Pandua. The relatives of the boys rushed there, but could only identify the boys by their clothes. Their bodies had already been cremated in an unseemly rush.

Suicide, said the police. But there were far too many reasons to believe otherwise. To begin with, despite repeated radio and television flashes, the Bandel police station — within whose jurisdiction the bodies were found — failed to report the discovery to either the CID or the Titagarh police station in time.

Third, the bodies were found lying in close proximity to each other. The heads had been severed and were badly mutilated by the passing train. There was no evidence of any struggle or physical movement which is inevitable after a collision of bodies against a moving vehicle.

Fourth, the boys had no reasons whatsoever to commit suicide. The deaths were prematurely declared suicides even before the investigations were completed.

Consequently, there was a major furore among the residents of that area. Prompted by their ire, and a desire to search for the truth, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, the Bengali newspaper (a sister publication of *The Telegraph*), decided to appoint a private detective agency, Secret Eye, to investigate the case.

Secret Eye, led by Debabrata Dhar, a retired DIG, submitted its report to the newspaper where it described the death of the two boys as an incident of "premeditated" and "well-planned" murder perpetrated by a local businessman who ran several illegal operations in the area.

The local residents of Barrackpore appealed to the chief justice of the High Court through two letters. The first, from Sampat Lal and others, asked for an investigation by independent authorities. The second letter demanded a CBI inquiry into the matter. The chief justice assigned Justice Barua of the criminal bench to look into the matter.

Ananda Bazar stepped in its capacity as a party assisting the case of Sampat Lal and others. Justice Barua ordered a CBI inquiry after questioning the state government's line of investigation.

But even before proper investigation could begin, the state government counter-challenged the necessity of a parallel investigation to a division bench. After a prolonged hearing, on September 27, 1983, the division bench upheld Justice Barua's order.

The state government approached the Supreme Court which ordered a thorough investigation into the matter. But it also stated that there was no need to take away the investigation from the state police machinery.

It ordered a competent investigative body to be appointed by the Director General of Police. The state government entrusted the responsibility of inquiry to the then IG, Rathin Bhattacharya, who was ordered to prepare a final report.

However, 15 years later, the truth is still eluding the people. The final report, submitted three years after the deaths, was full of contradictions. It did not find a strong enough case of murder due to the lack of any substantial clues or witnesses (a friend of the two boys disappeared along with his father). But going by the post-mortem and forensic reports, it is not possible to call it a case of suicide either.

When contacted, Bhattacharya, remembers his report being "sort of inconclusive". But with the passage of time, Bhattacharya admits that his "memory has become too fuzzy to remember the details".

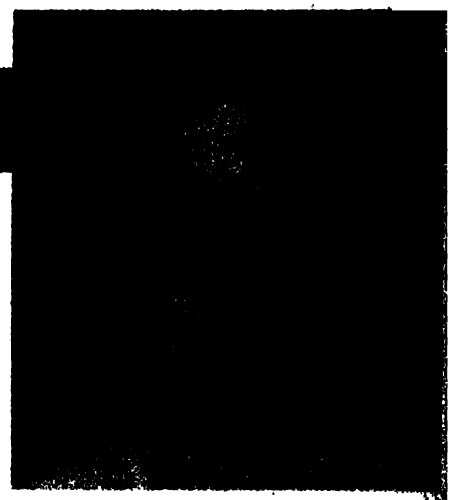
Was the report finally submitted to the Supreme Court ?

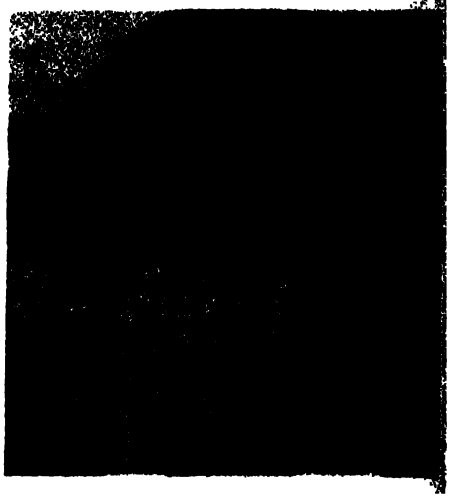
"Well, probably, it was submitted but I don't really remember..." he says.

Public memory is short-lived too. But the fact remains that two boys were found dead without any apparent reason. And their relatives and friends are still awaiting an answer to their questions — justice itself is a long way off.

Trina Mukherjee

SHROUDED IN MYSTERY:
Fifteen years ago, the bodies of Tirthanka Das (top) and Sanjoob Chatterjee (bottom) were found on the railway tracks of Pandua station. A big question mark still hangs over their death: could they have committed suicide or were they murdered?





OUT OF THE *Closet*

No designerwear for the queen of herbal care; she'd rather wear a kaftan and pile on the accessories



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

An array of garments — ranging from casualwear to formalwear — along with a range of bags, shoes, perfumes and jewellery find their way into my various wardrobes. So you'll find a stock of shoes, scarves, jackets and every other item that I might need on a daily basis neatly stacked in my cupboards.

I am very fond of the colour white. Since I also like to wear solid or single colours, what you wouldn't find in my wardrobe are printed fabrics. I guess the major reason for this liking is that I find it easier to match accesssories with outfits in single tones while prints are difficult to match.

As you can see for yourself, there is practically no designerwear in my wardrobe. On the whole, I choose to design my own outfits. When I do go for designer labels I have just one favourite — a young Indian designer, Anita Khanna of Images, who has designed some my favourite clothes. I like her garments as I think she is very creative. The only other designer garments that you might find in my wardrobe are those that I buy in London. Whenever I'm in that city I pick up dresses from Hampstead Bazaar.

Since I wear a lot of kaftans for both casual and formal occasions there are plenty of those in my closet. You might be surprised to see so many kaftans, but I feel that they are ideally suited for work while they also double up as great formalwear for a quick business lunch.

On days when I rush out to lunch I usually return to work and get caught up in a string of meetings which carry on till very late in the evening. On those

occasions when I have to dine out after such a heavy day, my kaftans carry off the evenings just as well. However, before going out, all I do is add to or change my accessories. I usually don some jewellery, change my shoes and bag or throw on a scarf.

On the other hand, if I happen to be entertaining at home, I accordingly add accessories to the kaftans and make them look more formal.

Most of my favourite outfits are those that are made in India and fabricated in black or white jersey. The kaftans that I wear are very Arabian in style and are neither Indian nor Western in their cut. I feel more comfortable in them and I think that they suit me and my personality very well.

My most favourite outfit is a brown and black zebra striped one in jersey. I have got myself handbags, shoes and scarves that are patterned exactly like the fabric of the dress. I do not wear flowery prints or prints in geometrical patterns. The reason I like stripes and single colours is that I can add on some heavy accessories.

Yes, I always co-ordinate my outfits with matching shoes and bags. As you can see, my closet contains bags and shoes to match with every dress — be it crimson, striped or parrot green. This is something that I am extremely particular about. Very often it works the other way and I pick up a pair of shoes or a handbag first and then design the entire ensemble around these handpicked accessories.

I have dozens of accessories and they play a major part in my dressing up. So they occupy quite a section of my closets. I feel that an outfit is incomplete unless I accessorise it. In fact, accessories are more important to me than the clothes that I wear.

You'll find a collection of watches and jewellery in my closet. I choose from this collection to set off different outfits. In fact, I have designed a chest of drawers in which I keep them. The chest is compartmentalised for different things so that I have no trouble finding whatever it is that I am looking for.

Unfortunately, I don't find the time to take care of the closets myself. However, I have assigned the task to two maids who are specifically trained to take care of the wardrobe and the closets. Besides, they also help me to get dressed every day. This makes life easy as they know the accessories that I like to wear with specific outfits.

I am not the one for following fads just for the sake of doing so. I think that my comfort and individuality are more important and my closet is a reflection of this maxim.

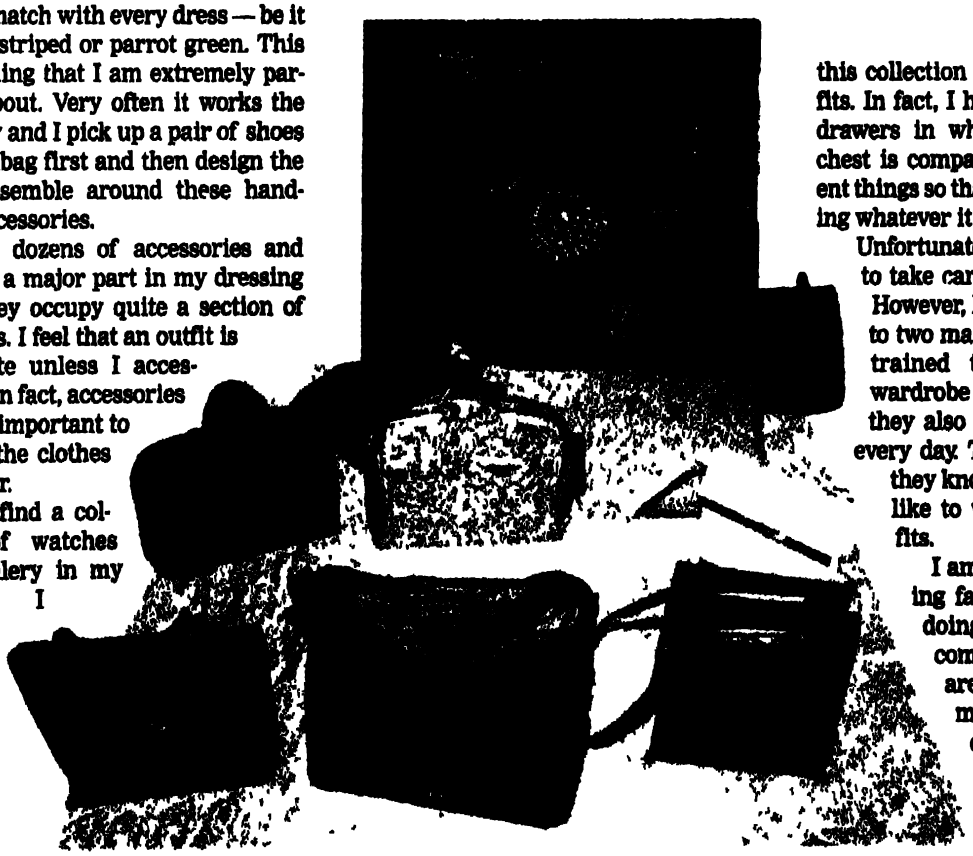
AS TOLD TO SAMITA BHATIA



COLOUR PLU

As you can see, my closet contains bags t match with every dres — be it crimson, striped or parrot gree This is something that am extremely particular about...You'll find a collection of watches and jewellery in my closet. I choose from this collection to set o different outfits

KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY



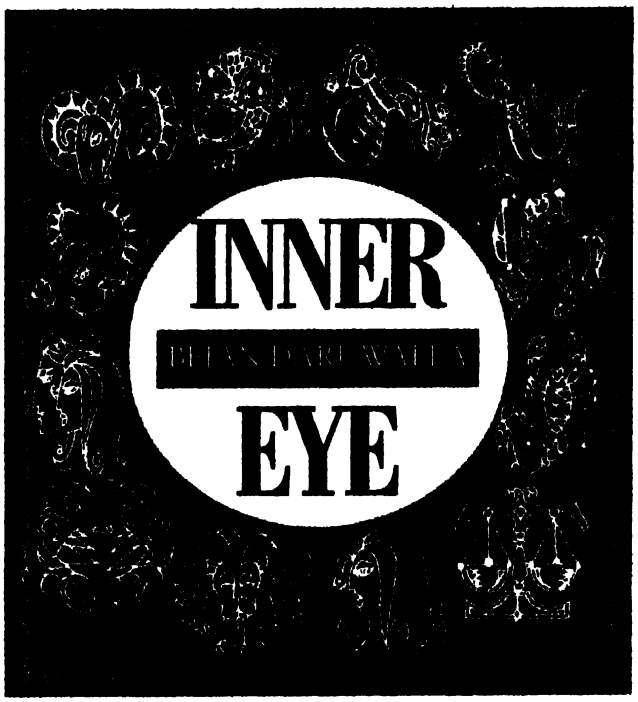
ARIES, (March 21- April 20) Your best bet is attack after planning a strategy. Those interested in sports, films, photography, have a field day. This is the right time to fuse business with pleasure, says Ganesha. The last three days turn out to be mighty eventful for Arians. Gear up for a promising phase ahead as the new moon makes you very enterprising. Romance foretold.

TAURUS, (April 21- May 20) Like a true Taurean, you will sail through opposition and ultimately reduce it to pulp. Journeys and ceremonies should please the cockles of your heart. If in for an interview or a test, the results will be gratifying. Be bold of purpose and learn to take the initiative. Your planetary ruler, Venus, helps you to live well, earn better and get along with people.

GEMINI, (May 21- June 20) Do not be upset by any undue pressure, or delays, or cancellations. Finally, matters do work for you, and work out splendidly. The new moon helps you in your finances, loans and prayers. You will have cause to remember your ancestors. A trip is a distinct possibility. Time to reach your full potential. Expect success and rewards. Children will give joy.

CANCER, (June 21- July 20) Take time by the forelock, get work done, socialise, be of good cheer, take the lead, go for the jugular. You will be like a finely tuned piano, a delicately adjusted sitar in matters of love and creativity. It is certain that things will work out for you. You will be in an introspective mood. Restlessness and anxiety could possess you. Expenses will hit the roof. Travel is on the cards.

LEO, (July 21- August 21) You will be up to your eyes and ears in work. It will be duly appreciated. You may have much to do with parents, in-laws. Home and shop, office and renovation, will also take up your time and energy. Expect news from a distant place. A contract could be signed. New ties at the cost of old ones, are destined and therefore, should happen.



VIRGO, (August 22- September 22) Those of you interested in research, marriage, education, films, commerce, computers do well. You will set up a fast clip, and others will have a difficulty coping with it. At interviews, conferences, meets, you will give your best shot and thus, win a round of applause. Changes on the home front and on the work front are ordained. Many Virgoans will be in for a new direction, a different purpose.

LIBRA, (September 23- October 22) You will have much to do with loans, finances, transactions and legal issues as well. Soon, it could be engagement time, or even wedding bells for you. What you could do now will have a ripple effect. Health and finances could well be the bugbears. On the positive side, journeys, ceremonies, rites and rituals find you in your element.

SCORPIO, (October 23- November 22) There will be the urge and the pressure to perform, to outshine and outdo the others. Mars will help you considerably to do so. Alliances and paradoxically separations are emphasised this week, because of the new moon. A journey or an outing with a stop-over is probable. A week of movement. A week of fast scoring and steady application. News from distant lands and collaborations are foretold.

SAGITTARIUS, (November 23- December 20) While health could be a bit of a problem, rest assured that you will recover, go in for a possible job hop, work extra hard. Ganesha says loans and debts have an extra edge to it. Behind-the-scenes activity will be of tremendous importance. Ganesha says, expenses will be heavy. Wedding bells, sweet and clear, peal for you. Trips and ties indicated.

CAPRICORN, (December 21- January 19) You will be just a wee bit faster than your opponents and that's the secret of your success. Yes, you will be helped by human as well as divine forces. A little bit of loving and lots of laughing is how it will go for you. Many Capricornians will be looking for adventure now. Loans may have to be returned. An uneven week. Pets and colleagues need to be handled.

AQUARIUS, (January 20- February 18) It will be just that last minute heave and tug, which will get you near the top, and you jolly well deserve to be there. Major wishfulfilment is ordained for you. Do expect visitors, relatives and foreigners to descend upon you. Home becomes the centre piece of attention. Success will attend upon your efforts. Creative juices will overflow.

PISCES, (February 19 - March 20) Long distance connections and the luck of the draw very definitely highlighted this week. Many Pisceans will be midway through a change in attitude, lifestyle, job, profession, business, or just a general outlook. Only by the end of next year will the change be complete. Many of you will be pining for new and greener pastures. Mood fluctuations will be tremendous.



SMALL Talk

Random Strokes

We don't need no thought police, says Seema Goswami

The talking point is:
The current controversy raging around *Fire*, the Deepa Mehta film with a lesbian theme. For those of you who have been living on Mars for the past couple of months, this movie tells the story of two sisters-in-law — Shabana Azmi and Nandita Das — in a joint family, both of whom are in bad marriages. They find themselves drawn to one another, and soon enter into a sexual relationship to cope with their isolation and loneliness. The film opened to rave reviews, won several international awards, and opened to full houses in India as well.

The trouble began when:
A group of women Shiv Sainiks held a demonstration at two Mumbai cinemas to protest against the showing of this movie that 'polluted' Indian culture. But not content with carrying placards and shouting slogans, they indulged in vandalism as well, and succeeded in closing down the cinema. This was followed by another violent protest in Delhi, in which Regal cinema was badly damaged by the self-appointed guardians of Indian morality.

Their objections to the movie:
Seemed to be restricted to the fact that they didn't think lesbianism reflected the Indian reality. It was not part of the culture of this country, and movies such as these would corrupt and pervert Indian womanhood.

The view:
That a three-hour film could change the sexual orientation of hitherto heterosexual women was absurd in the extreme. Who in their right minds would believe that millions of Indian women would begin experimenting with lesbianism only because they saw Shabana Azmi in a clinch with Nandita Das? Or that the fabric of Indian society would be rent asunder because two women were seen kissing in technicolour splendour?



That a three-hour film could change the sexual orientation of hitherto heterosexual women was absurd in the extreme ●

The government reacted:
In its usual knee-jerk style, referring *Fire* back to the Censor Board, apparently oblivious of the fact that the movie had been duly certified for adult viewing. No, said newly-appointed information and broadcasting minister Pramod Mahajan, the film had not been banned, but was being reviewed to see if it offended public sensibilities.

At least one section of the public:
Made it clear that the only thing it found offensive was the presumption that the government was the final authority to decide what people should or should not see. Several women activists — in the company of director Deepa Mehta — went on a vigil to protest the decision to pull the movie out of cinema halls. With placards which read 'Lesbian and Indian' it was only too clear which side this group was on.

But is this debate merely about lesbianism?:
Or even about the Indian public's right to watch a movie about this particular sexual preference? No, the issue goes far deeper. The controversy about *Fire* envelops within itself the identity of the Indian state itself.
Is our nation the kind of liberal entity we like to imagine it is, where free choice is the right of every citizen? Where people can make their own decisions about everything ranging from whom they will cast their vote for, which God they will worship, which city they will live in, and yes, which movie they will watch over the weekend? Or is it some kind of banana republic which is patrolled by the thought police, and where cultural emergency is the natural state of affairs?
On the answers to these questions rests the fate of our republic. ■

MIXED Bag

PUBLICITY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

● Just launched a new product and looking for low-key advertising? Want to hold your first exhibition and don't know how to get customers? Perhaps it would be a good idea to flip through the pages of *Media 2000, 1998*— a complete handbook on publicity and advertising sources.

Priced at Rs 596, *Media 2000* boasts of 10,900 listings in 242 categories from all over India. Apart from listings it also has brief write-ups on different categories like public relations, corporate gifts, designers, film and video producers, outdoor and display boards, point of purchase, inflatables, balloons, transilites, banners, promotional material, T-shirts and advertising agencies. The directory comes complete with addresses and phone numbers of people providing the above services.



Conceived by Baljeet S. Juneja, it was first launched in 1997 when it had 3,200 listings in 195 categories. According to Juneja, this directory aims to address the long-felt need for authentic and comprehensive information on the ever-changing world of publicity and advertising. The directory will be available in all the leading bookshops throughout the country. It can also be purchased through mail order. Alternatively, one can place an order by visiting their website, http.www.Media2K.

For your dream home



For those who like things exclusive, Studio Valentino in Calcutta promises a whole array of exquisite household items, mostly in brass, that could actually transform the look of a room. Imported or designed by indigenous designers, Studio Valentino stocks such items as premium furniture (ornamental beds in brass), brass fittings, door knobs, door locks (imported from Belgium, Austria, Australia and Spain including exclusive Venetian Murano glass knobs from Italy in bright colours).









The furniture is designed by talents from such prestigious institutes as the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, and the Jorgensson House, Denmark. Says Shiv Karnani of Studio Valentino: "Our products are targeted at that section of the buyers who are willing to pay for quality and design." Calling his merchandise, "jewellery for the home", Karnani adds there will be limited pieces per design which will help maintain exclusivity.

And exclusive things cannot come without a good price. The melamine lacquer-coated brass beds are priced between Rs 30,000 and 1,30,000 while the high security multi-pin door lock system comes for Rs 6,000. The Austrian crystal and Murano glass knobs can be picked up for Rs 400 to Rs 1,000 per piece. The door closer that can stop the door at any angle costs Rs 3,000. Italian PU foam relaxing chairs come for Rs 6,000 each.

Fashion tip of the week: Pair your saris with a cropped waistc

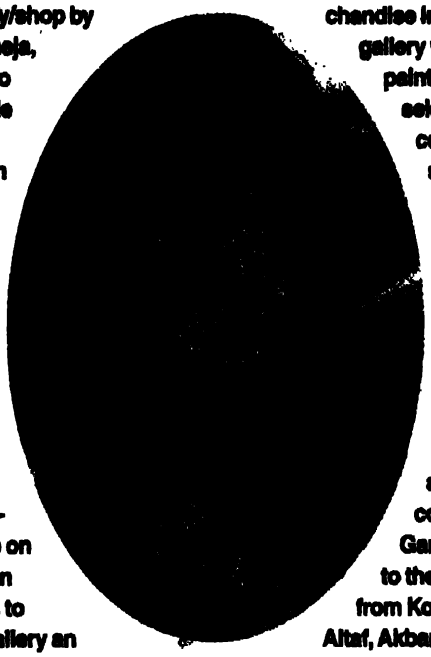
BRIDAL WAVE



It is that special day when every girl — from glamour lasses to plain Janes — wants to look her best. And she can't do better than with Ritu Kumar's recently-unveiled Bridal Celebrations. Ritu Kumar's collection for the late Nineties' bride sticks to the conventional *lehengas, ghararas*, suits and sarees with coats. But the surprise lies in the traditional weaving and embroidery which Kumar has culled for the nuptials.

Art mart

Yet another gallery opened up in Mumbai recently in these seemingly recessionary times. The Fine Art Company, designed as a gallery/shop by art dealer Geeta Raheja, however, promises to give the city "a whole new experience in contemporary Indian art". Situated on Linking Road, Santa Cruz, the gallery is on two levels. While works of art are displayed on the lower level, the upper level has a gallery/ shop with different kinds of art-related merchandise on sale. "It is designed in such a fashion so as to make a visit to the gallery an interesting and worthwhile experience for a cross-section of people, besides art lovers and connoisseurs," said Raheja, at the inauguration of the gallery.



The gallery/shop will initially house books related to all forms of performing and visual arts and printed T-shirts featuring some artists' works. Raheja has plans to extend the applications of art-related merchandise in the near future. "The art gallery will regularly showcase paintings and works of art of select artists from all over the country. Every month will see the works of a different artist adorning the walls of the gallery. This will help in promoting and building interest in the works," said Raheja.

The inaugural show (November 28 — December 25) has the works of 42 select artists from all over the country, ranging from Ganesh Payne from Calcutta to the reclusive Edwin Joseph from Kodaikanal. Others include Altaf, Akbar Padamsee, Navjot, Paresh Maity, Paritosh Sen, Wasim Kapoor and Sudarshan Shetty. The month-long show displays works in oils, water colours, mixed media, collages and drawings on canvas and paper.

YOUNG NOTES



● Since time immemorial, classical music in India has been handed down in an oral tradition. This demanded a sustained commitment and dedication on the part of the learner towards the Guru. Such immediate sharing was ideal in a family situation, and hence, music came to be part of the family tradition. Illustrious sons and daughters took on the mantles of their parents, who in their time had inherited the same musical legacy from their fathers and forefathers.



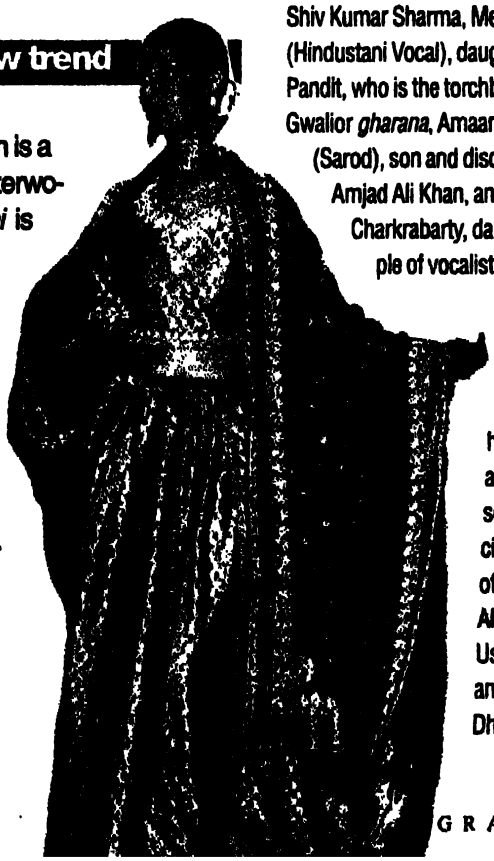
A salute to this rich tradition has come from Music Today which has launched its New Generation series with *Footsteps*, featuring debut albums by four musicians who are heirs to a musical lineage in the true tradition of Indian classical music. The young talents: Rahul Sharma (Santoor), who inherits his skill at the santoor from his father Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Meeta Pandit (Hindustani Vocal), daughter of L.K. Pandit, who is the torchbearer of the Gwalior *gharana*, Amaan Ali Bangash (Sarod), son and disciple of Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, and Kaushiki Charkrabarty, daughter and disciple of vocalist Ajoy Chakrabarty. These young musicians featured in the series has been highlighted by the accompaniment of seasoned musicians of the stature of Ustad Shafaat Ahmed Khan, Ustad Faiyaaz Khan, and Mehmood Dholpuri.

beat off the early-winter chill — and set a new trend



The highlight of the woven collection is a *lehenga, choli* and *odhni* in ivory interwoven with pure gold thread. The *odhni* is done up in paisley and small motifs. Besides this, there are ensembles in unusual shades of old rose, khaki, *mehndi* green and turquoise.

There are also the traditional wedding *lehengas*, the motifs of Rajasthan ornamented with *gota* and *zardosi*. Other wedding ensembles are in ochre, peach and *bandhini* silk with the traditional chevron design accentuated with *buties* or *ambi* motifs.



RASOI

The food column



Sweet temptation

Jiggs Kalra rustles up some festive delights

Olaf 'Picasso' Niemeier, Executive Chef at The Oberoi, New Delhi, continues his sweet magic with Rasoi for the festive season.

Flourless Chocolate Beetroot Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 250g/9oz **Cocoa powder**
- 400g/14oz **Condensed milk (sweetened)**
- 200ml/3/4 cup + 4tsp **Soda water**
- 150g/3/4 cup **Butter (melted)**
- 100g/3oz **Beetroot (cut into julienne)**
- 20g/1½tbs **Sugar**
- 120g/1/4lb **Chocolate *Ganache****

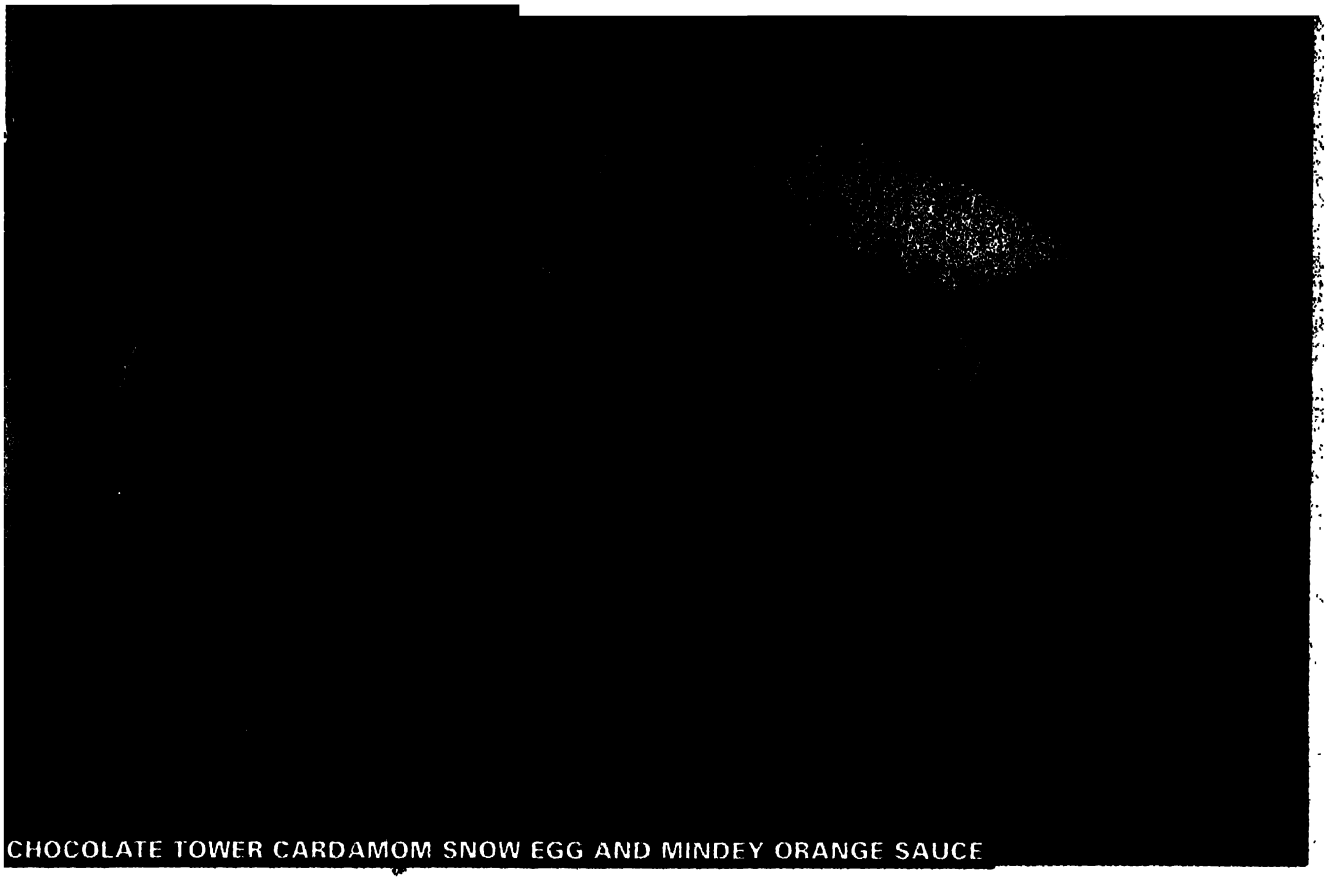
SERVES: 10
PREPARATION TIME: 55 MINUTES



FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE BEETROOT CAKE

PREPARATION

- The Cocoa Mixture: Put condensed milk in a bowl, sift-in cocoa, add soda and mix, slowly, until a smooth paste is obtained. Transfer to a baking dish, level with a spatula, and evenly sprinkle 3/4th of the beetroot julienne on top.
- The Beetroot Julienne: Boil sugar with 15ml/1tbs of water and when it comes to a boil, add beetroot and boil for 2 minutes or until caramelised.
- The Baking: Bake the cake in a pre-heated oven (180°C/350°F) for approximately 35 minutes, remove and cool. Then evenly spread the Chocolate *Ganache* on top.



CHOCOLATE TOWER CARDAMOM SNOW EGG AND MINDEY ORANGE SAUCE

TO SERVE

● Cut into wedges and serve it with a garnish of caramelised beetroot julienne.

'*Ganache* is a thick chocolate mousse in which the ratio of chocolate to cream is 1:1. For a mousse, it is 1:2.

Chocolate Tower Cardamom Snow Egg And Mindey Orange Sauce

INGREDIENTS

The Chocolate Squares
● 200g/7oz Chocolate
The Chocolate Mousse
● 200g/7oz Chocolate
● Eggs
● 500g/1lb 2oz Whipped cream
The Cardamom Snow Egg (Meringue)
● 150g/5oz Egg white
● 250g/11oz Sugar
The Mindey Orange Sauce
● 100g/3oz Sugar
● Zest of 1 orange
● Zest of 1 lemon
● 12 *Taaza pudhina*/mint leaves

SERVES: 10
PREPARATION TIME: 45 MINUTES

PREPARATION

● The Chocolate: Melt chocolate in a double boiler**, spread on a plastic sheet and refrigerate to set. Once set, cut into 1¼" squares.

● The Chocolate Mousse: Melt chocolate in a double boiler**. Remove, add eggs and mix slowly and carefully. Then slowly and carefully fold-in whipped cream with the tips of fingers. (Ensure you do not overdo the mixing, or the fat will separate and the mixture will become grainy). Remove to a clean, dry bowl and refrigerate for 6 hours.

● The Snow Eggs: Beat egg whites in a mixing bowl, add sugar and whip until stiff, but not dry. Then transfer to a piping bag with a plain nozzle. Line baking trays with greaseproof paper, pipe out 10 snow eggs roundels, ensuring that they do not touch or overlap, and bake in a pre-heated oven (300°F) for 3 minutes. Remove and cool.

● The Sauce: Put sugar and 900ml/6tbs of water in a saucepan, bring to a boil, reduce to low heat, add orange zest and cook, ensuring that the zest does not burn. When the sugar begins to caramelise, add the orange and lemon juices, mix well and remove.

TO SERVE

● Put the chocolate tower on the plate, drizzle the sauce around it, garnish with mint and serve.

** Break into small pieces and put in a round-bottom bowl. Boil enough water in a large pan, reduce to low heat, put the bowl in it and simmer until the chocolate just melts. (Ensure the chocolate does not overheat). Remove and keep aside. ■

SURVIVAL
Strategies



Namita Gokhale offers solutions to your personal problems

THREE WAY LOVE

Q: We are both 17 year olds and very good friends. I had developed strong feelings for a 16-year-old girl but was unable to disclose my true feelings for her. Meanwhile, my friend has gone and expressed his love for her. She is apparently very thrilled. But I get the feeling she has been pressurised by my friend into saying 'yes'. The girl I feel is now two-timing us. She can't have her cake and eat it too. So, please tell us as to who is supposed to take a decision? She's a putting a strain on our friendship. Please advise.
SUKUMAR & MOLOY DURGAPUR

Come on boys, give her a break! She is probably just feeling flattered at the double attention she is receiving, and is completely unaware of the strain she is putting your friendship under
There are several ways in which you can tackle this situation You could decide that girls are not worth fighting over, in which case both of you cool off in your relationship with the young lady The second way is to diffuse the romantic element, and all three of you continue as good friends
The third way to handle this is to sit together and talk it out, with all of you discussing what your friendship and commitments mean to each other, and how you are going to resolve them Whatever you do, keep things in perspective, the eternal triangle is one of the facts of life and you may as well take it in your stride

DUBIOUS DALLIANCES

Q: I am a 19-year-old boy and have been in love with a 16-year-old girl for the past two years. Her mother's a divorcee and has a dubious reputation. My fiancé of late seems to have liaisons with other men as well. I want to sever all connections with her. But she has threatened to blackmail me with the love notes that I had written to her. Her uncle and mother have political backing and have coerced me into marrying me off with her in court. I am in a dilemma and need your help in this regard Please advise.

R K, ORISSA

First of all, you are both under age t get married, as the legal age for getting married happens to be 21 for men and 18 for women Therefore, any marriage registered before both of you reach the legal age will be void in law. In any case, blackmail and coercion are the worst possible basis for a relationship. Submitting to blackmail or trying t

REBEL WITH(OUT) A CAUSE

My school friends are real cool and hip and go to all the cool joints. They tell me that's one way of gaining acceptance. They want to initiate me into the forbidden pleasures of dancing with men by taking me to the discotheque. I want to be 'cool' like them and want to have friends from the opposite sex. My parents are dead against this and never seem to understand what I want in life. I want to enjoy myself like them. Am I wrong in thinking this way? Please advise.
SMITA, CALCUTTA

It is no use just rebelling against your parents, it's better to win them over rationally. Your parents' views are surely motivated by love and a genuine anxiety about your welfare. Behave in a responsible manner and never deceive or lie to them. Explain to them that you are now approaching adulthood, and that unless you are given a chance to behave as young adults, you will never learn to conduct yourself responsibly. As you grow older, you can naturally begin to take your life in your own hands, going to discos whenever you like or whatever else you choose to do.

appease those who bully you will mark you out as a victim for life You are a young man and the world is a very large place, so I would suggest that you leave your hometown for a while and move into some other town or city where you can concentrate on the more important task of building up your career and life plans Getting entangled in messy emotional relationships can deflect you from focus a and perspective on the really important issues So first things first, and do not get bullied by big mouthed threats and make a quick strategic retreat from the scene

FACE VALUE

Q: I am a 32-year-old woman. My problem is that I have an extremely puffy face which looks bloated to the point of being grotesque. People take an instant dislike to me. I find it very difficult to make friends. My parents find it impossible to find a groom for me. As a result, I've developed a complex and shie away from people. I've even started to feel self-conscious amongst people This has made me a loner. Is there a way out for me? Please advise.

SHALINI, CALCUTTA

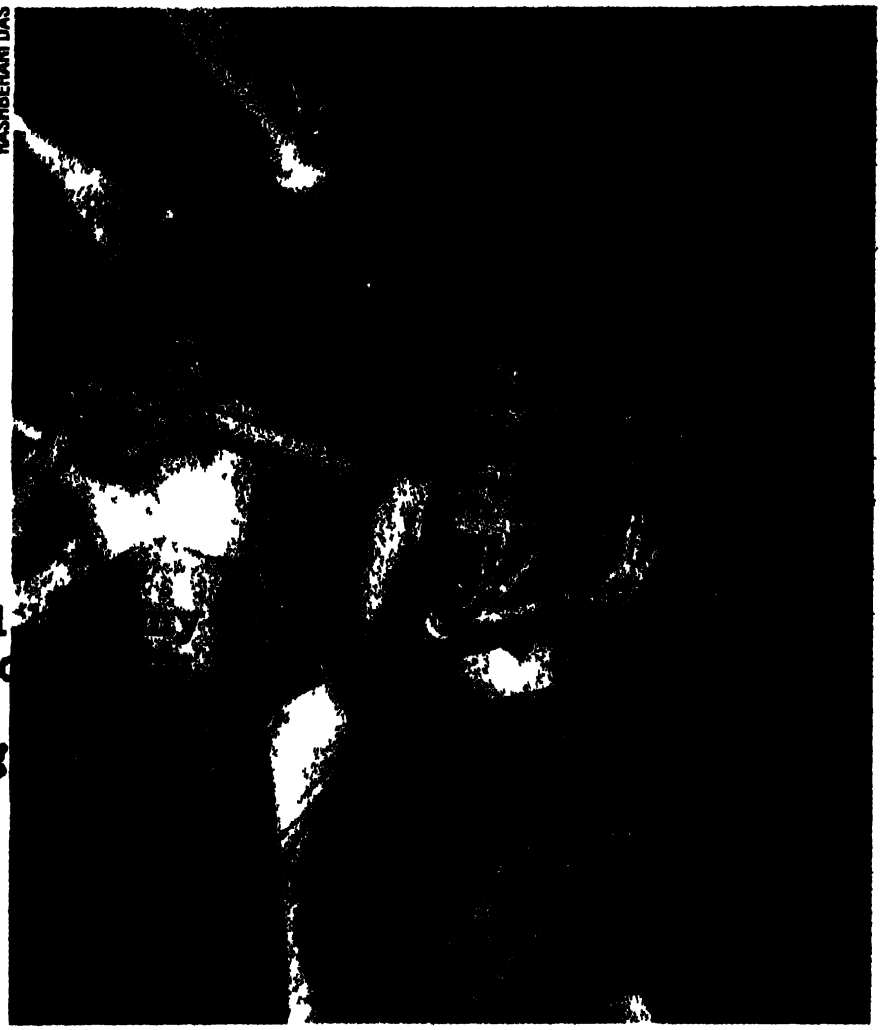
Loneliness, self-consciousness and alienation form a self-sustaining vicious circle that feeds on itself Perhaps you should see a doctor to see if your puffy face is caused by water retention or oedema and if there are is a medical solution to your problem Concentrate on your good features and on grooming yourself and dressing well A pleasant smile can light up the most ordinary face.

RIGHTFUL CLAIM

Q: I am a 26-year-old woman and a mother of a three year old son. I had been married for the last five years but due to reasons purely personal, I've decided to annul our marriage. It was a mutual decision but my in-laws refuse to grant me any alimony and claim to have a right over their grandson. I've been abdicated of all my rightful dues. Can I legally seek redress and and have a rightful claim over my son, jewellery and other belongings given by my parents? I need your advise in this regard.

NAME WITHHELD SIKKIM

Any legal battle about custody, maintenance and alimony is a long and exhausting battle which you must embark upon with a realistic understanding of the time spans involved Of course, you must fight for your rights, but be very careful in the choice of a lawyer, and find somebody you can relate to who is sympathetic to your situation Since you have apparently already surrendered your legal rights in your divorce, I am not in a position to give you specific legal advise It may be better in view of your isolated position not to seek custody of your son straightaway, but to rather insist visiting rights Seek the advise of your local legal aid committee attached to your High Court, and read up the law yourself and acquaint yourself with your rights You could also use an inter-mediary such as a common friend or a mature relative, to start a dialogue with your estranged in-laws Don't just get completely involved in the negative aspects of lawsuits and such like, though you must of course, initiate the action and get redressal What I mean to say is that please remember to carry on with your normal life as well, and don't at any cost neglect positive plans regarding your own future ■



RASHBEHARI DAS

I want to be cool
friends and disc
orbidden pleasures
discos and dancing

TIME TABLE

All arrival and departure times are for Calcutta

Days of operation using 7-day code: ① MONDAY ② TUESDAY ③ WEDNESDAY ④ THURSDAY ⑤ FRIDAY ⑥ SATURDAY ⑦ SUNDAY

(As these pages go to press two weeks in advance readers should check with respective airlines and railways for last minute change in timings)

FLIGHTS — DOMESTIC

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
AGARTALA					
IC 741	0845	1 3 5 7	IC 742	1500	1 3 5 7
IC 743	1240	daily	IC 744	1110	daily
AHMEDABAD					
CD 267	1430	2 4 6	CD 268	950	2 4 6
CD 269	1620	1 3 5	CD 270	2125	1 3 5
BAGDOGRA					
IC 721	1350	1 5	IC 722	1620	1 5
IC 721	1240	2 6	IC 722	1510	2 6
BANGALORE					
IC 771	0615	daily	IC 772	1150	daily
9W 511	1405	daily	9W 512	2140	daily
BHUBANESWAR					
IC 966	1015	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 777	1400	1 5	IC 778	1300	1 5
CHENNAI (MADRAS)					
IC 966	101	2 4 6	IC 965	0925	2 4 6
IC 765	1630	daily	IC 766	2135	daily
CD 267	1430	2 4 6	CD 268	1950	2 4 6
DELHI					
IC 263	0700	daily	9W 901	0810	daily
9W 904	0845	daily	AI 682	0925	1
IC 402	1 30	daily			
			IC 401	0855	daily
9W 912	2010	daily	9W 911	1920	daily
			IC 264	2025	daily
CD 412	1715	2 4 6 7	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
IC 890	1200	4 7	IC 889	1545	4 7
DIBRUGARH					
IC 701	1100	1 3 5 7	IC 702	1450	1 3 5 7
DIMAPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD 215	1455	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1 4
GUWAHATI					
IC 703	0700	2 4 6	IC 704	1640	2 4 6
9W 611	000	1 2 4 7	IC 210	1310	daily
IC 890	1200	4 7	9W-612	1250	1 2 4 6 7
IC 229	1000	daily	IC 889	1545	4 7
HYDERABAD					
9W 511	1405	daily	IC 770	1300	3 7
IC 777	1400	1 5	IC 778	1300	1 5
IC 769	1400	3 7	9W 512	2140	daily
CD 572	1020	2 4 6	CD 571	1250	2 4 6

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
IMPHAL					
CD 255	0550	1 3 5	CD 256	1020	1 3 5
IC-890	1200	4 7	IC 889	1545	4 7
JAIPUR					
CD-269	1620	1 3 5	CD 270	2125	1 3 5
JORHAT					
9W 621	1000	3 5	9W-622	1315	3 5
CD 257	1100	1 4	CD 257	1455	1 4
LUCKNOW					
CD 412	1715	2 4 6 7	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
MUMBAI (BOMBAY)					
9W 202	0625	daily	IC 675	0835	daily
IC 676	0630	daily	9W 201	0920	daily
CD 269	1620	1 3 5	CD 270	2125	1 3 5
AI 305	2025	3	AI 306	1835	5
9W 212	2000	daily	IC 274	1855	daily
IC 273	1950	daily	9W 211	1915	daily
AI 679	0010	2	AI-681	2310	1
NAGPUR					
IC 769	1400	3 7	IC 770	1300	3 7
PATNA					
CD 412	1715	2 4 6 7	CD 411	2120	1 3 5 7
PORT BLAIR					
CD 285	0530	2 4 6	CD 286	1005	2 4 6
CD 285	0530	7	CD 286	1005	7
PUNE					
CD 267	1430	2 4 6	CD 268	1950	2 4 6
SILCHAR					
CD 253	0550	2 4 6	CD-254	0820	2 4 6
CD 255	0550	1 3 5	CD 256	1020	1 3 5
TEZPUR					
CD 215	1100	3 5	CD-215	1455	3 5
VISHAKHAPATNAM					
CD 572	1020	2 4 6	CD-571	1250	2 4 6

FLIGHTS

AMMAN					
RJ 185	1455	4	RJ 184	0645	4
AMSTERDAM					
KL 476	0415	7	KL-475	0230	7
BANGKOK					
KB-105	1025	2 6	KB 106	0915	2 3 7
KB 105	1010	4			

IC 731	1005	4	TG-313	1235	1 3 6
IC 731	1300	7	IC 732	1900	7
IC 855	0800	2 6	IC 732	1610	4
TG 314	1350	1 3 6	IC-856	1400	2 6
AI 306	1950	5	AI-305	1905	3
GAYA					
BG 698	1250	2 5	BG-697	1210	2 5

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No	Time	Days
DHAKA					
BG-092	0915	1	BG-091	0815	1
BG 092	1150	3 4 5 6 7	BG 091	1110	3 4 5 6 7
IC 723	1620	1 5 6 7	IC 724	1650	1 5 6 7
IC 723	1420	3	IC 724	1650	3
BG-094	1645	2	BG-093	1545	2
BG-096	2105	daily	BG-095	2025	daily
DUBAI					
BI 107	2040	3 6	BI 108	0730	4 7
KATHMANDU					
IC 747	0945	1 3 5 6	IC 748	1315	1 3 5 6
IC 747	0955	2	IC 748	1325	2
RA 214	1525	2 6	RA 213	1425	2 6
LONDON					
BA 142	2100	2	BA 143	1550	2
BA 142	2100	6	BA 143	1550	6
MOSCOW					
SU 536	1100	4	SU 537	0930	4
SU 536	2130	7	SU 537	2100	7

Departures			Arrivals		
Flt No	Time	Days	Flt No.	Time	Days
PARO					
KB 106	1000	2 3 7	KB 105	0940	2 6
			KB-105	0925	4
SINGAPORE					
BI 108	0830	4 7	BI 107	1940	3 6
SQ 415	2345	2 5	SQ-416	2235	2 5
IC 727	1505	2 6	IC 728	1000	3 7
TOKYO					
AI 306	1950	5	AI 305	1905	3
YANGON					
IC 727	1505	2 6	IC 728	1000	3 7

AI Air-India • BA British Airways • BG Biman Bangladesh Airlines • BI Royal Brunei Airlines • CD Alliance Air • IC Indian Airlines • KB Druk-Air • KL Royal Dutch Airlines • RA Royal Nepal Airlines • RJ Royal Jordanian Airlines • SQ Singapore Airlines • SU Aeroflot • TG Thai Airways International • 9W Jet Airways

TRAINS

EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
2313	19-15	Delhi-Kalka Mail	6-45	2312
3005	19-20	Amritsar Mail	7-35	3006
3003	20-50	Mumbai Mail via Allahabad	13-15	3004
2381	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Gaya Varanasi Dep Wed Thurs & Sun Arr Tues Wed & Sat	18-15	2382
2303	9-15	Poorva (New Delhi) Express via Patna Dep Mon Tues Fri & Sat Arr Mon Thurs Fri & Sun	18-15	2304
2381	17-00	Rajdhani Express via Gaya Dep Mon Tues Thurs Fri & Sat Arr Mon Wed Thurs Fri & Sun	10-45	2382
2305	13-45	Rajdhani Express via Patna Dep Wed & Sun Arr Tues & Sat	12-45	2306
2307	23-30	Jodhpur Express	4-40	2308
2019	9-05	Shatabdi (Bokaro Steel City) Express Except Sunday	21-10	2020
3073	23-00	Himgiri (Jammu-Tawi) Express Tri Wkly Dep Tues Fri & Sat Arr Tues Wed & Sat	11-35	3074
3045	22-00	Guwahati Saraighat Express Dep Tues Wed & Sat Arr Tues Fri & Sat	09-00	3046
5049	23-00	Gorakhpur Express Dep & Arr Thursday	11-35	5050
5047	13-00	Purbanchal (Gorakhpur) Express Dep & Arr Sun Mon Wed & Fri	4-15	5048
3009	20-15	Doon Express via Grand Chord	7-00	3010
3007	9-45	Udyan Abha Toofan Express via Main Line	19-10	3008
9039	21-05	Delhi Janata Express	5-15	9040
3049	13-10	Amritsar Express	16-30	3050
9019	21-45	Kathgodam Express	11-25	9020
3021	16-00	Mithila (Raxaul) Express	5-00	3022
3039	19-20	Kamrup (Guwahati) Express	9-30	3040
3017	6-15	Black Diamond Express	21-35	3018
3035	17-17	Coalfield Express	10-30	3036
3033	18-20	Asansol Express	6-45	3034
3231	21-45	Danapur Express	6-30	3232
3071	22-30	Jamalpur Express	5-10	3072
3015	9-55	Santiniketan Express	15-40	3016
3017	6-05	Ganadevta Express	21-45	3018
1159	19-15	Chambal (Gwalior) Express Dep Mon Tue & Thurs Arr Mon Thurs & Fri	7-45	1160
3005	15-45	Shipra (Indore) Express Dep Wed Sat & Sun Arr Sun Wed & Sat	7-05	3006
1457	14-50	Shaktipunj (Chopan) Express	5-30	1458
1151	19-15	Chambal (Agra Cantt.) Express Dep Fri Arr Tues	7-05	1152

Sealdah

3141	19-40	Teesta-Torsa Express	6-05	3142
3147	19-05	Darjeeling Mail	6-15	3148
3171	21-05	Lal Quila Express via Main Line	7-15	3172
3179	21-10	Kanchanjunga Express	06-30	3180
3181	21-30	Gour Express	6-15	3182
3183	21-45	Uttar Banga Express	6-45	3184
		Dep Mon & Fri Arr Wed & Sun		
3185	22-00	Kalimpong Express	4-15	3186
3187	22-30	Jammu-Tawi Express	05-30	3188
3189	22-45	Mughal Sarai Express via LBG Loop	05-00	3190
3191	23-00	Bhagirathi (Lalgola) Express	05-00	3192
3193	23-15	Ganga Sagar (Darbhanga) Express	4-00	3194
		Dep & Arr Tues Thurs & Sat		

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY

Departure			Arrival	
Up	Time	Howrah	Time	Dn
6033	19-45	Madras Mail	7-40	6034
8002	19-20	Mumbai Mail via Nagpur	4-25	8001
2855	12-15	Gitanjali (Bombay) Express	15-30	2856
2821	6-00	Shatabdi (Rourkela) Express Dep & Arr Except Saturday	21-00	2822
8154	20-15	Ahmedabad Express	6-45	8153
8030	19-40	Kurla Express via Nagpur	13-20	8029
2841	19-15	Coromandel (Chennai) Express via Cuttack	13-35	2842
2703	7-45	Falaknama (Secunderabad) Express	13-40	2704
8013	17-30	Tata Steel Express	10-25	8014
8011	6-50	Ispat (Sambalpur) Express	21-35	8012
8025	20-40	Sambalpur-Rayagada Express	5-40	8026
8015	21-35	Ranchi Hatia Express	5-30	8016
8027	21-45	Puri Express via Cuttack	5-20	8028
8409	18-25	Sri Jagannath (Puri) Express	5-00	8410
2821	6-15	Dhauli (Bhubaneswar) Express	22-15	2822
7045	9-35	East Coast (Hyderabad) Express	18-15	7046
8017	18-40	Purulia Express Dep Except Saturday Arr Except Sunday	11-30	8018
7479	23-30	Tirupati Express	4-00	7480
1039	15-45	Azad Hind (Pune) Bi Weekly Express Dep & Arr Tuesday & Sunday	5-15	1040
2421	17-00	Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Sunday & Wednesday only	18-35	2424
2422	11-45	New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express (via Howrah) Tuesday & Saturday only	18-45	2423
8538	09-50	Guwahati - Howrah - Trivandrum Central Express Thursday only	09-30	8539
8627	14-10	Trivandrum Central - Howrah Guwahati Express Tuesday only	13-45	8627
8629	14-10	Cochin Harbour Terminus - Guwahati Weekly Express (via Visakhapatnam & Howrah) Thursday only	13-45	8623
8624	09-50	Guwahati - Cochin Harbour Terminus Weekly Express (via Howrah & Visakhapatnam) Sunday only	09-30	8624
8624	22-25	Howrah-Trivandrum Bi-Weekly Express Dep & Arr Friday & Monday	13-45	8625
8626	03-50	Guwahati - Bangalore City Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Wednesday & Monday only	03-30	8625
8625	14-10	Bangalore City - Guwahati Bi-Weekly Express (via Howrah & Cuttack) Saturday & Sunday only	13-45	8626

ENQUIRIES. For round the clock information of Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, please dial 2203545-54 for in-coming trains; 2208535-44 for all other information. For information about reservations on Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway trains, dial 2203498-3500 (from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays and 8 am to 2 pm on Sundays and gazetted holidays). In addition, dial 1331 (for recorded information on train running), 131 (regarding train operations) and 135 (regarding reservations). Train service enquiry at Sealdah: 3505535/37

Interactive Voice Response System (8 am to 8 pm everyday from Monday to Saturday; 8 am to 5 pm on Sunday): For reservation status, dial 136 (computerised), Dial 2203498 (manual enquiry)

BEAUTY

THE NATURAL WAY



Suparna Trikha offers you home remedies for every beauty problem

I am a 16-year-old girl and love wearing tight clothes especially when going out in the evenings. I have recently discovered that the upper part of my body is thinner than the lower part. Is there any way I can overcome this defect?
GAGARI B CALCUTTA

You need to exercise the lower part of your body with specific exercises like thigh and tummy exercises You can even start cycling and swimming which helps to reduce excess flab Hip exercises are also important and it would be advisable for you to visit a gym in your locality and go for regular workouts to reduce fat on those areas Also try to avoid sitting or taking a nap after meals Go for a stroll after a meal

I am a 25-year-old man and am recently trying to overcome my smoking habit. In order to divert myself, I keep gorging on sweets or salties whenever I get the urge to smoke. As a result, I am gaining weight.
NIKHIL MOHAN CALCUTTA

It is very commedable that you are trying to avoid smoking in spite of the withdrawal symptoms that you are having Smoking tends to kill the hunger So, when you stop smoking you do feel more hungry I would suggest that instead of eating munchies, why not eat fruit so that you do not gain those extra unwanted calories Also, I would suggest that you keep a few almonds in your pocket that everytime you get your withdrawal symptoms, put the almonds in your mouth Try and take a brisk walk as you have already decided to lead a fitter life so why not go all the way?!

I am 41 years old and suffer from stress. And so my hair is greying very fast. Please advise. I do not have liver or any major health problems.
DIPAK DAS, CALCUTTA

Stress and worry are not going to help you so just relax Why not start to use a *bhringraj* based oil and henna your hair that will darken it naturally You can also try *amla* Take one cup of *amla* powder and heat it in an iron vessel until it totally ashens Soak it overnight in a litre of water and apply to the hair and leave on for two hours Shampoo normally It should be done daily for a month for best results You can make the *amla* water for a week in one go

I am a 35-year-old woman and have recently had a baby. But now, I am losing a lot of hair and fear that I ultimately go bald. Please advise.
SUMITA DASGUPTA, CALCUTTA

With hormonal changes in the body, women often undergo hair loss I would suggest that you oil your hair with almond oil, coconut oil and castor oil mixed in equal quantities Steam the hair and apply henna after about half an hour This will condition the hair as well as promote growth Start taking vitamin capsules or even a good quality *chywanprash* with hot milk daily This will provide internal nourishment as well as improve the condition of the hair Many women completely neglect themselves after delivery as they are spending too much time looking after the baby For god's sake do not do this and get started right away.

I want to get rid of my moustache without too much pain. Please suggest a painless method of hair removal.
ANINDITA CHATTERJEE, DARJEELING

TO PREVENT GREY HAIR

Apply a *bhringraj* based oil and henna. Heat powdered *amla* in an iron vessel until it ashens, add water to it and use the mixture



Vatika TIP OF THE WEEK

The hair tends to get dry in winters. If you do not have long hours to condition it, add a tsp of honey to a litre of water and use this as a last rinse to your hair after shampooing. Feel it soft and silky—naturally



The best way to get rid of it is to get it waxed. Threading is actually a better method but many women cringe when the hair is being removed. Any local beauticians can help you solve this problem in no time. But remember, always use a cold compression afterwards in order to close the pores as well as tone the skin.

I have black patches on my back. In spite of using a back brush, I cannot seem to get rid of them. Please advise. Is there any pack or ointment which I can apply to get rid of these ugly patches?
SUCHITRA DAS, SILCHAR

You seem to be suffering from some sort of pigmentation. It could be due to a hormonal imbalance. I would suggest that you consult a local doctor and get a hormone test done. Also, make a pack of the following ingredients—powdered almonds, powdered cashewnuts, sandalwood powder, lemon juice, china clay, fresh cream, grated potato and a pinch of turmeric. Make a thick paste and apply this on the whole area and leave for about 15 minutes. Scrub the area well in circular motion and wash off with half a cup of milk. This must be done everyday for about two weeks for effective results.

I am a 23-year-old working woman. My problem is after hours of computer related work, my eyes start watering and swell up. I splash cold water on my eyes which offers temporary respite. But what else can I do to keep my eyes clear and healthy?
JOYEETA MITRA, HOWRAH

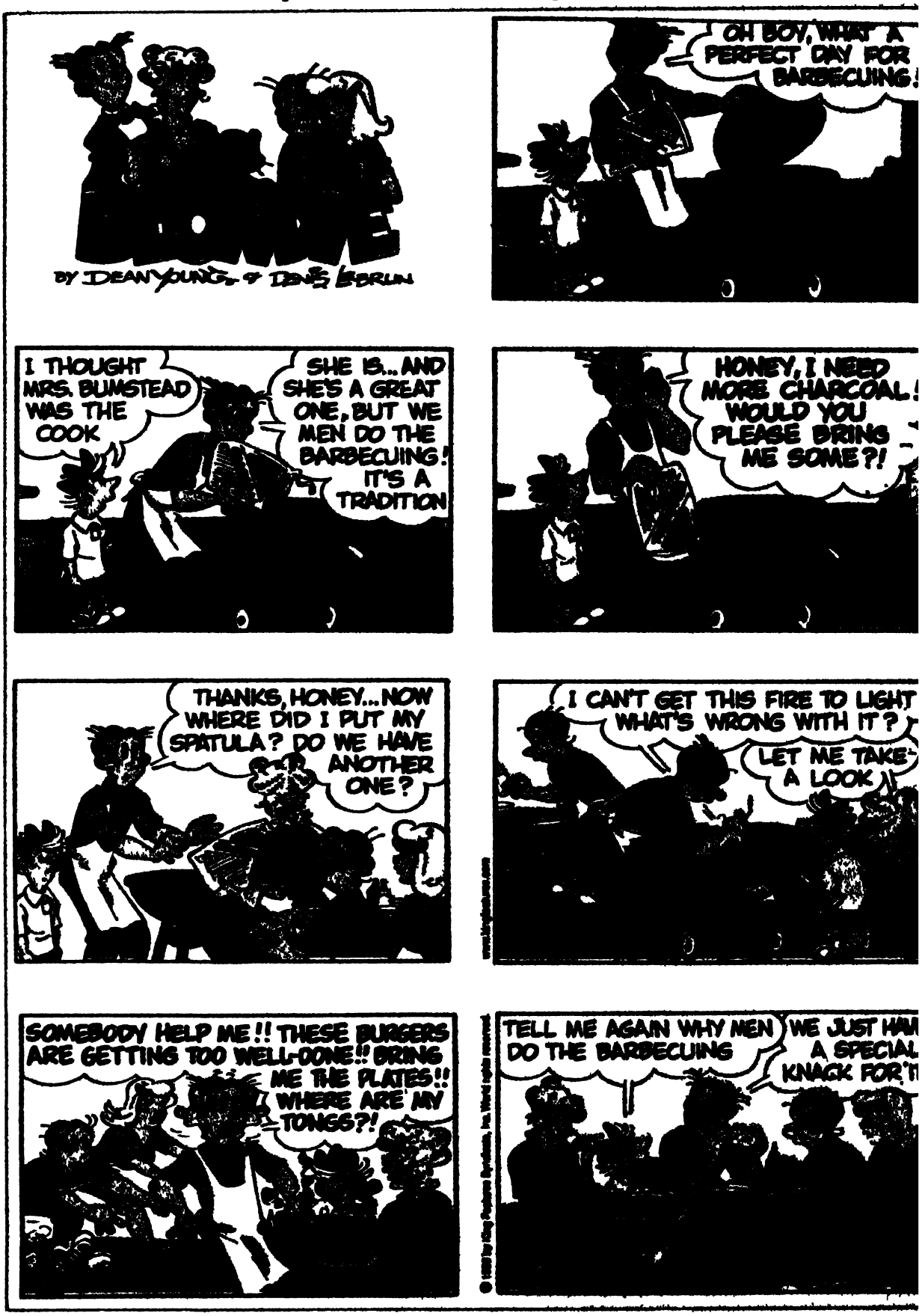
Apart from computer related stress, the amount of smoke and pollution that one has to face, aggravates eye problems. Continue to wash your eyes with water, preferably, with ice-cold water and also keep potato slices immersed in ice-tray in the fridge. You can also keep cucumber slices which feel great or even used tea bags. You do not require an eye pack for the problem but a natural soother and this is bound to make an immense difference if done on a regular basis. It would also be a good idea to use an ayurvedic eye cleanser or eye drops to soothe the eyes. Try and use I-tone that is available in the market. It is extremely good for the eyes.

My nails are extremely soft and break easily. Please suggest a natural remedy to make them stronger.
SHALIMOLIE RAHA, CALCUTTA

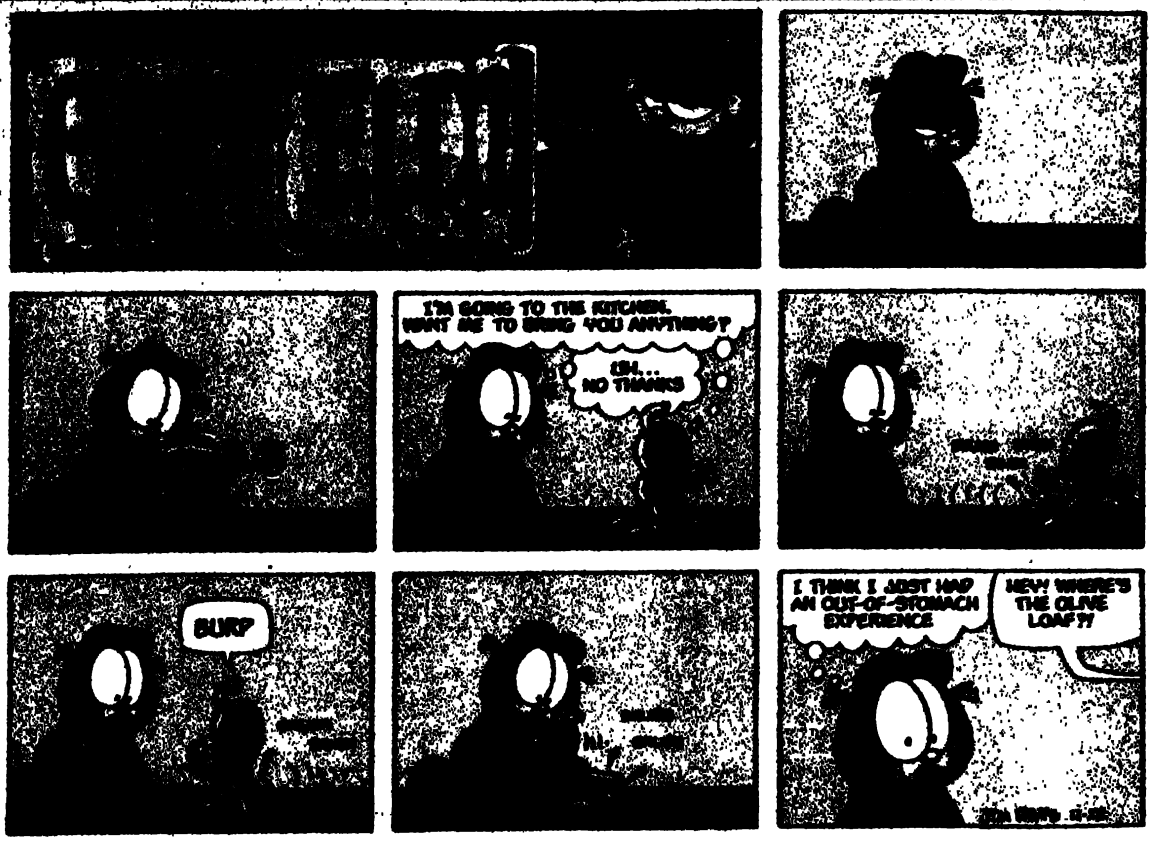
You need to nourish your nails as they, too, require nourishing. You can massage your nails with glycerine or lemon peel daily to make them strong. Also start to take one spoon of gelatin for 10 days internally. Also, when filing your nails, ensure to give your nails a roundish or squarish shape rather than a pointed one.



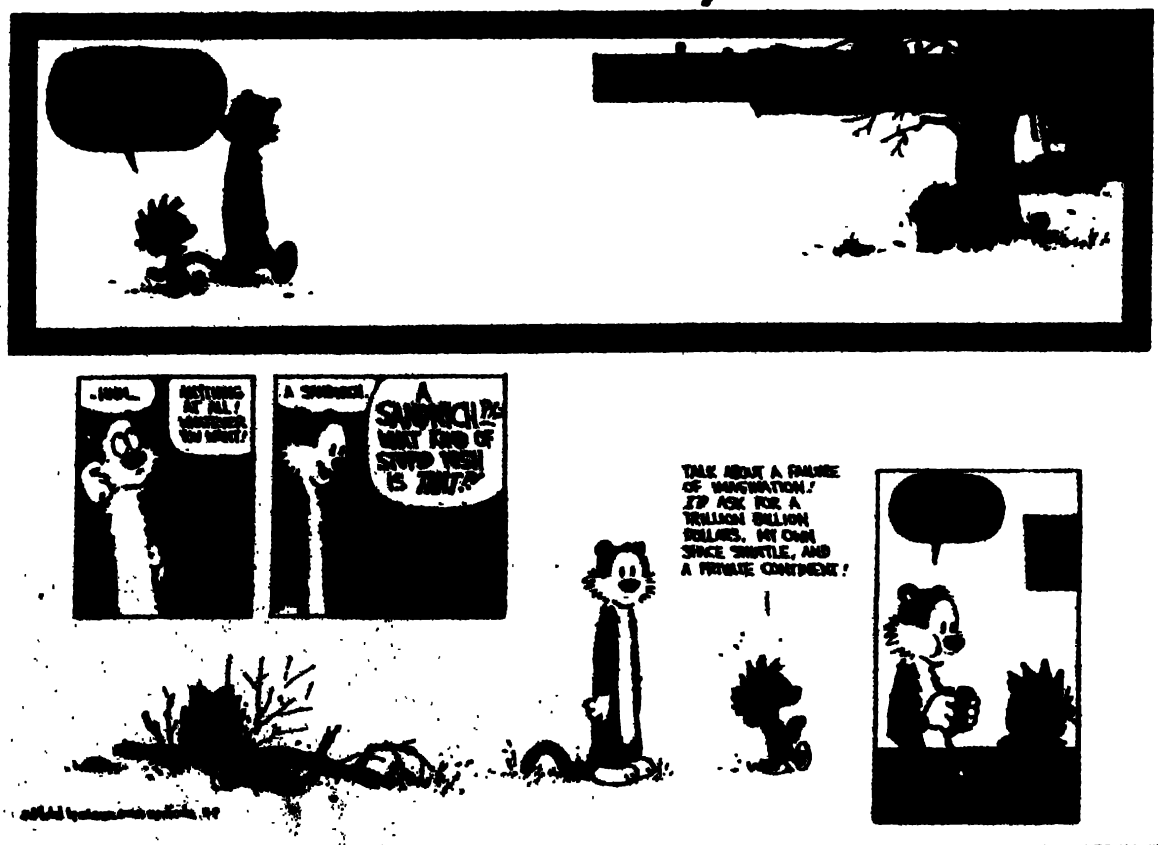
BLONDIE by Dean Young & Denis Lebrun



GARFIELD by Jim Davis



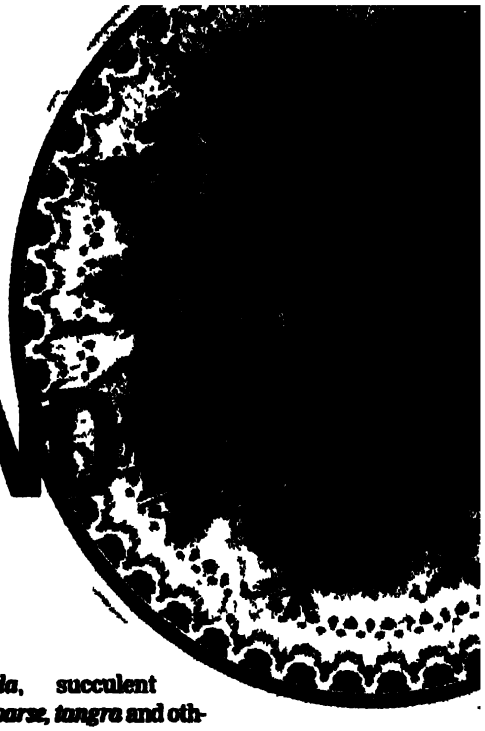
CALVIN & HOBBES by Watterson



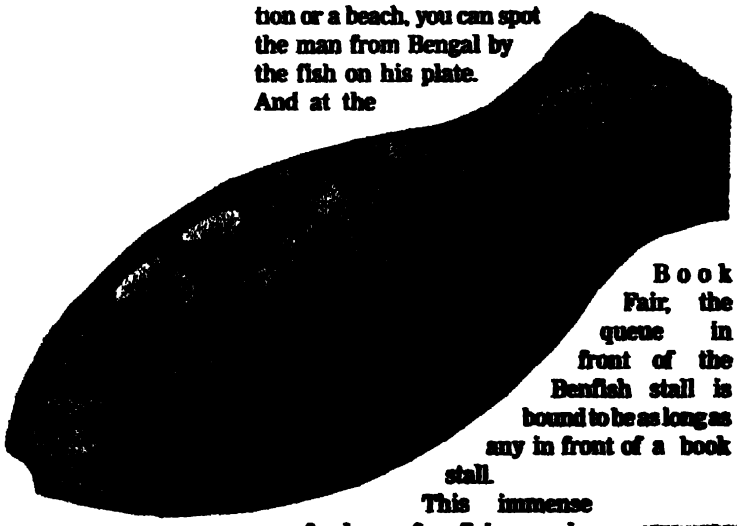
THE Best

Fish remains an enduring passion with the Bengali. Trina Mukherjee reports

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER!



The phrase used most often to describe Bengalis is '*Macche Bhaate Bangali*'. In order to test the veracity of the adage, just visit any tourist spot or even the Calcutta Book Fair. Whether it is a chilling hill station or a beach, you can spot the man from Bengal by the fish on his plate. And at the Book Fair, the queue in front of the Benfish stall is bound to be as long as any in front of a book stall.



This immense fondness for fish can be attributed to Bengal's physical proximity to both rivers and the sea. In the days of the Raj, Bengal had the best of both the Ganga and the Padma. One became a true blue Bengali only after sampling *ilish* from the two rivers and deciding which was superior.

Till today, however, the issue remains unresolved and the battle royal between *Epar Banglar Ghoti* (West Bengalis) and *Opar Banglar Bangals* (East Bengalis) rages on.

Before Independence, huge quantities of sparkling *ilish*, pabda, succulent *parse*, *tangra* and other sweet water varieties of fish would arrive from the vast wetlands of erstwhile East Bengal. Now, of course, the picture is different. The ever-increasing demand for fish in the domestic as well as international market has made it an expensive catch. Pisciculture and export of prawns, shrimps, lobsters, pomfrets and even *bekti*s sounds great in terms of statistics but very little reaches the local market. And the price? Well, it's enough to make you head for the 'lesser fish' varieties.

But are you any worse off eating the smaller varieties? Not really. In terms of nutrition, healthy dentures (required to negotiate, masticate and even grind fish bones to a powder) and ensuring a low level of cholesterol, small fish like *parshe*, *puti* or *mourala* are in no way inferior to their big brothers.

Go to a nearby fishmarket, and fish appears to be in abundant supply. In fact, Calcutta has markets like Maniktolla Bazaar or the Baithak Khana

BIG AND SMALL
Big ones like *rohu*, *chilwi* and *katli* fish are preferred because it is easier to clean the bones. But the smaller varieties are sought after for their distinctive tastes



SUNIL GANGOPADHYAY

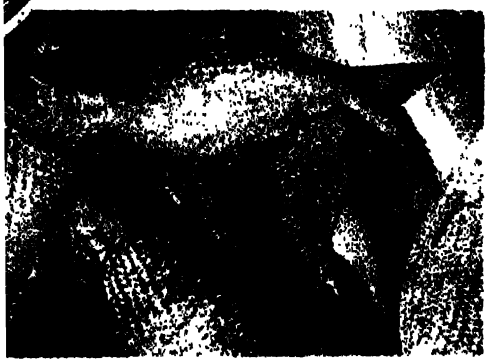
Author

I am game for sampling fish a over the world. I have even tried out 10 varieties of raw fish in Japan. They were soaked in warm water and seasoned with season and were simply delicious. I prefe to have sweet water fish in Bengali housewife and sea fish in non-Bengali houses



bazaar where you can find all the fish you fancy, including tuna, shad or even haddock. There are even some like Jadavpur Market which cater to the caterers! After all, no Bengali wedding menu is complete unless you toss in a fish-based dish or two. It may be the very crispy and very un-Bengali fish fry or batter fry or the traditional *rui kalia* and even *chingri malaikari*.

But the demand for fish far exceeds its supply and the price remain the chief bone of contention. Despite financial and other assistance from the World Bank, prizes galore for inland fishing, pisciculture remains in trou-



)led waters for Bengal in terms of capital and nfrastructure.

"We have come a long way over the last 20 'ears," says P.K. Sarkar, General Manager, Benfish, "and having a minister (Kiranmoy Nanda, minister of fisheries, West Bengal) who s actively involved in all our projects, helps a ot." Some new schemes in the pipeline to tide ver these problems include value-added exports f Bombay duck, shrimp and dry fish and building a state-of-the-art fish processing zone on the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass.

Now from the market to the kitchen. Choices abound in the Bengali kitchen itself. One can gorge on the oily, spicy, hot and lipsmacking *jhaal, jhol, sarshe* or *paturis* from East Bengal. Or savour the lightly cooked, gently spiced and seasoned gravy dishes of West Bengal. But barring a few dishes like *paturi* or *bhapa ilish* or *bekti* which are steamed, Bengalis prefer to fry the fish before cooking, mostly in mustard oil.

One can even use different parts of a fish to cook or enhance a particular dish. A fish head can be broken up and added to *moong daal* or made into a rich *murighonto* with a sprinkling of rice. The tail, coated in mustard and spices, can also be reinvented as *leja sarshe*.

Adds Nondon Bagchi, food columnist and an avid fish lover, "The process of frying the fish before cooking is very typically Bengali. The Keralites simmer the raw fish in spices and gravy and cook it in coconut oil. The Goans like it hot and tangy— red chilli paste, spices and a full bodied Goan vinegar for added piquancy."

The Andhraites, says Bagchi, prepare an unexpectedly light gravy using coconut milk which is not hot at all. And fish *tikkas* and *kebabs* are best made in Hyderabad in a typically *kebabi gharana*. Even Himachalis, used to a typical vegetarian fare and chicken have fried fish as a snack. Northeastern cooking, too, include preserving dry fish and using it to flavour main dishes like soups and stews. "Or," adds Bagchi, "it is roasted and ground along with onion, garlic and chillies and made into a sizzling chutney".

But notwithstanding this fish fixation of Bengalis, quite a few youngsters seem to be averse or even unable to tackle a tricky fish dish. Why? "Well, the reason is obvious," replies Bagchi, "lack of time. No young wife or even a fish eater likes the *hungama* of preparing an elaborate fish recipe. And negotiating bones is definitely an acquired skill over the years."

And some of the young lot are quite unprepared, if not unequipped, for tackling *tel koi* when their teeth and tastebuds can just about ingest a hamburger. ■



FISHY DELIGHTS

Pisciculture of lobsters, prawns and even *bekdi* may fill the coffers of the fish exporters but very little reaches the local markets



SUTAPA TALUKDAR

Classical dancer

I am very fond of *hilsa* and *pabda*. I love the former cooked in a typical *bengal* way — *kalajeerar jhol* — with a dash of chilli and mustard oil. And I also love *pabda* cooked with coriander leaves, chillies and *hoili*, of course



KHUSHWANT SINGH

Media personality

My top favourite is the *hilsa*. I had it first —what you might call the real Padma *hilsa*—in Dhaka. Thereafter, whenever I am in Calcutta, I order *hilsa* though I am not too comfortable with its bones. In Delhi, we have fish— mostly *pomfret*— every alternate day

MY PERSONAL *Style*

FABRIC FINISH

Designer David Abraham likes to keep his interiors light and bright

I love collecting things. Whether it is some sofa, chair, or an exclusive piece of furniture—I take my time in selecting them. It is much better to locate old furniture in shops that specialise in them. There is a *kabari* area at Lajpat Nagar to which I have been going every Sunday. I am fond of antiques and dark wood. Some chairs that have a carved back and rattan on the sides are my favourites though I am not too fond of heavily carved wood.

It is reassuring to have furniture with a history behind it. I don't mind if it is second-hand- it looks old and lived in. I have used many of the Abraham and Thakore furnishings for my home. We do bed covers, cushion covers and table linen. I have the advantage of getting things stitched in our factory.

I pay a lot of attention to colour coordination. Right now, I have used terracotta, brick, rust and maroon—colours that help to brighten up the rooms. I change them quite often. In summer, when it gets warmer, my preference will shift towards lighter hues.

My interiors are filled with an assortment of objects—mainly old brass and carved wooden bric-a-brac. They do not have a function, and yet, I like having them. I am quite adventurous in certain areas and prefer things to have a sense of humour. I go by shape and texture.

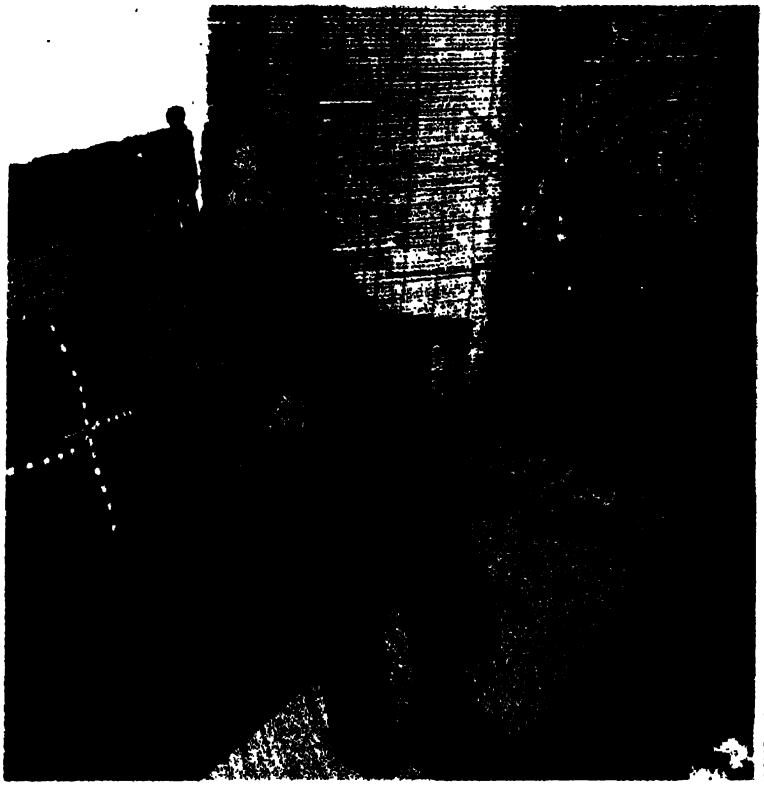
I use plants for my decor but they seem to die too soon. Only the cactii with spiky leaves can survive a certain amount of neglect. Actually, it depends on who is watering them. My travel schedule does not permit me to do the needful. I have a small terrace covered with a split bamboo thatch where one can get plenty of sunshine. It has a couple of tables and chairs, but the problem is, it gets too cold in winter and very hot in summer. That is why I don't use it too much.

My bedroom is crammed with objects with which I am comfortable: books, CDs, framed textiles and old brocades take up a lot of space. When I am at home, I spend most of my time in my bedroom. I watch television, have a couple of people over or even work on a desk which I keep moving in and out of the bedroo In a way, I am a one-room person.

I am not at all fond of curtains and have *chik*s which are much better substitutes. They don't need to be washed unlike those heavy curtain linens. In th living room, I have put in some wall-to-wall *chattai*s. There are a couple of the in the guest room, too, which is done up simply.

The same colours and textiles run through the entire flat. Did I say that I also pick up some of my handloom furnishings from Fabindia? That is, beside our brand, Abraham and Thakore (A& for my home interiors.

AS TOLD TO RAJLAKSHMI BHATTACHARY



KALYAN CHAKRAVORTY

GREEN LOOK

I use plants for my d but they seem to die soon. Only the cactii spiky leaves can surv a certain amount of neglect. Actually, it depends on who is watering them. I have small terrace covere with a split bamboo thatch where one can plenty of sunshine



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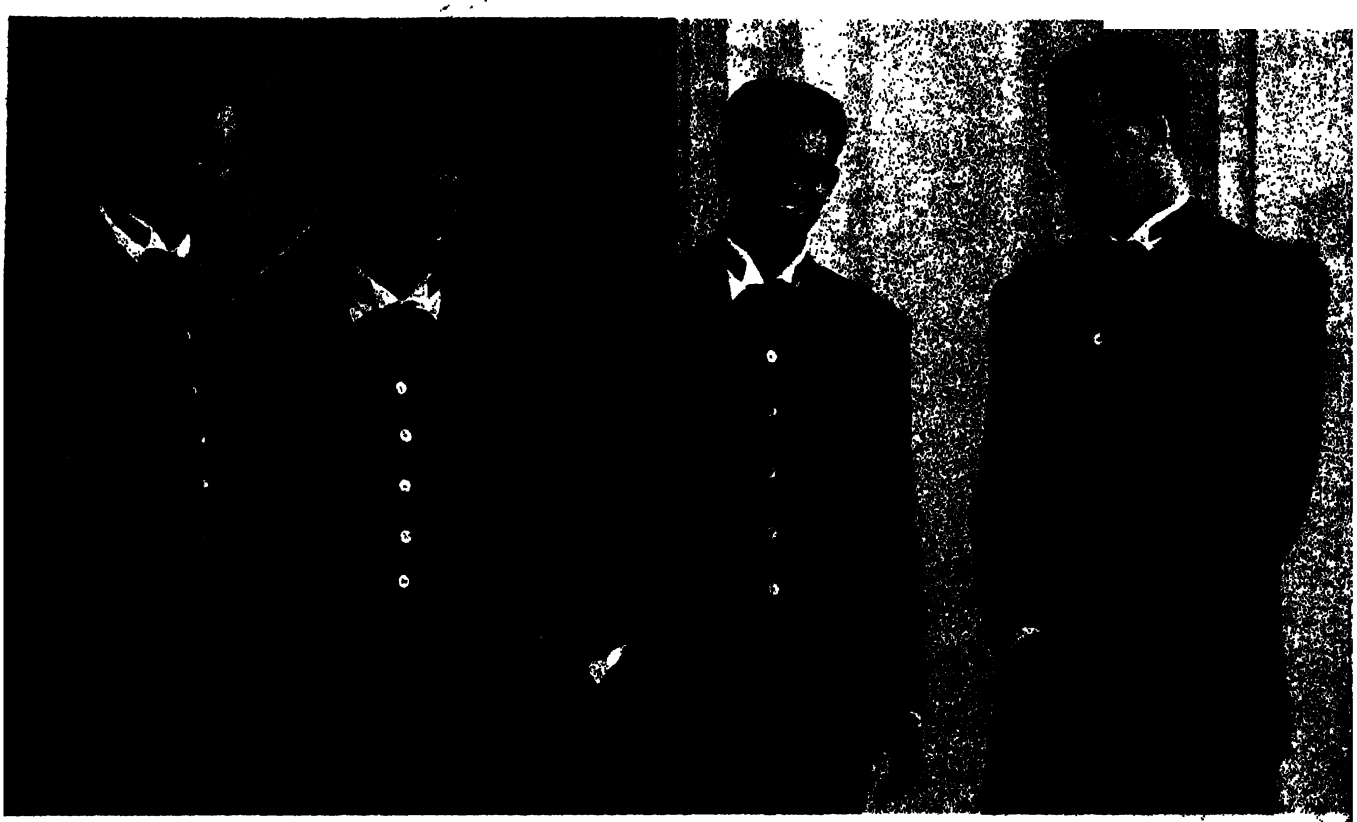
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be a world player



Steve Waugh looks classy in a grey pin-striped dinner jacket perfectly complemented with a deep blue cravat.

Nayan Mongia is ready to paint the town red with his burgundy waist coat set off against a blue blazer.

Hrishikesh Kanitkar plays the blues with a rich navy-blue suede vest paired with a blue blazer, cravat and matching grey trousers.

Heath Streak sports a grey blazer and trouser combined with a black vest and red cravat.

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